

Transformation Life Church

SERMON: Doing Exploits for God

July 14, 2024

Today, we delve into the inspiring account of Jonathan and his armor-bearer from 1 Samuel 14:6-15, a story that showcases remarkable faith, courage, and God's divine salvation. In this passage, we witness how two individuals, driven by an unwavering belief in God's power, took bold steps to challenge the oppressive Philistine forces, resulting in a miraculous victory. As we explore this narrative, we'll uncover valuable lessons for evangelism, drawing parallels between Jonathan's approach and our mission to share the gospel in a world oppressed by sin. Just as Jonathan and his armor-bearer relied on faith, took courageous action, partnered in their mission, and trusted in God's intervention, we, too, can adopt these strategies to effectively evangelize and bring spiritual salvation to those in need.

The Passage: 1 Samuel 14:6-15 *"Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few."*

Key Thought: God will do his part if we do our part. NOTHING CAN HINDER GOD!

TEACHINGS:

In order to accomplish great things for God, three elements must be in place: the right reason, the right time, and the right action.

1. Right Reason: The people are oppressed and threatened. They need to be saved.
2. Right Timing: The Philistines have amassed an overwhelming army to destroy Israel. The time is now.
3. Right Action: The problem was a God-sized one. Faith pleases God and moves him to work on our behalf. Trust in the Lord's salvation caused Jonathan and his armor-bearer to engage the enemy. They were confident that God would act on their behalf.

Are exploits for God needed today?

"The straightforward answer is yes. Although our enemy is not 'flesh and blood,' he is formidable and roams around like a lion seeking whom he may devour. We have been commissioned to rescue the perishing and set the captives free by preaching the gospel to all nations, making disciples who love and obey the God who delivers them." Rev. James M. Armpriester, Jr.

1. Right Reason: We have a real enemy that has amassed an overwhelming force to "steal, kill, and destroy." Our nation is oppressed, and our numbers are few, but we serve the same God as Jonathan and his armor-bearer. Nothing can hinder our God to save with many or a few!
2. Right Timing: Just as Jonathan realized the opportunity is now, we must understand our times and prepare ourselves for action. We can no longer delay or wait for someone else to step up. The time is now!

3. Right Actions: Jonathan's enemy was a "human" Philistine army. Our enemy is not of flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the spiritual darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places. Our weapons are not physical but spiritual and perfect for the battle we are to wage. They elicit divine power to tear down the fortresses of our enemies. Christians are called to bring spiritual deliverance through the message of the gospel.

APPLICATIONS: Here's How

1. Faith in God's Power: Christians must trust the gospel's power to transform lives, just as Jonathan trusted God's ability to save.
2. Courage to Act: Jonathan's boldness is a model for Christians to share their faith courageously.
3. Supportive Community: Jonathan's partnership with his armor-bearer reflects the importance of the Christian community in evangelistic efforts.
4. Divine Empowerment: Christians should pray and depend on the Holy Spirit for effective evangelism, relying on God's intervention.
5. Spiritual Liberation: Evangelism aims to free people from the spiritual oppression of sin, similar to how Jonathan's actions freed Israel from physical oppression.

REFLECTIONS:

1. Who do you relate to in this story?
 - Are you running away or hiding in caves and tombs from the enemy?
 - Do you find yourself in a position where you're ready to defend your faith but need to be more spiritually prepared to take the offensive?
 - Are you no longer willing to idly stand by or wait for everyone else to do something?
2. What opportunities exist for you to share the gospel and free captives?
3. Who can you partner with to discern God's will, pray, and share the good news of salvation? Remember, in partnership, there is strength and support.