

# FACING THE GIANTS

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“Some years ago, a young man ran for the legislature in a large state and was badly swamped. He next entered a business, failed and spent seventeen years of his life paying off the debts of a worthless partner. He was in love with a beautiful woman to whom he became engaged, and then she died. Reentering politics, he ran for Congress and was badly defeated. He then tried to get an appointment to the US Land Office but failed. He became a candidate for the US Senate and was badly defeated. Two years later, he was defeated again. One failure after another, bad failures, great setbacks. His name was Abraham Lincoln, one of our greatest and most original presidents.”

I want to tell you another story. Do you have your Kleenex ready? When I was in Bible College it seemed that I was over-looked all the time. I tried out for the Ensemble, a traveling singing group, and didn't make it. Maybe it was because I never combed my hair. Then they had a special summer training program in which 25 students were asked to attend for some intense training. I was not asked. I was later asked to join the singing group when one of the guys said that he couldn't go on the summer trip because of an ongoing illness. And they did ask me to come back for the training when a few of the other students couldn't make it back. And even Helen, when she first met me she really didn't want anything to do with me. It wasn't because I was ugly, but because she thought that I was only there to goof off. But next week we'll celebrate 31 years of life together.

Through all these situations, God has taught me one thing. And I wanted to talk about that this morning.

Each of us has situations, setback, and events in our life that appear to be failures. We each have giants or huge obstacles to overcome before we feel that we've "made it" in this world.

What is it in your life?

Do we have money issues, boss problems, rebellious children or a marriage going sour?

What about our health?

What would it take to make us truly content in this world?

I want to look at Scripture and see how different ones handled the giants and battles they faced.

**Abraham: Genesis 15:1 - 6 (NASB)** <sup>1</sup>After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward

shall be very great.”<sup>2</sup> Abram said, “O Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?”<sup>3</sup> And Abram said, “Since You have given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir.”<sup>4</sup> Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.”<sup>5</sup> And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”<sup>6</sup> Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

**Joseph: Genesis 41:9 - 17 (NASB)** <sup>9</sup>Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh, saying, “I would make mention today of my *own* offenses.”<sup>10</sup> Pharaoh was furious with his servants, and he put me in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard, *both* me and the chief baker.<sup>11</sup> “We had a dream on the same night, he and I; each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his *own* dream.”<sup>12</sup> “Now a Hebrew youth *was* with us there, a servant of the captain of the bodyguard, and we related *them* to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us. To each one he interpreted according to his *own* dream.”<sup>13</sup> “And just as he interpreted for us, so it happened; he restored me in my office, but he hanged him.”<sup>14</sup> Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh.<sup>15</sup> Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it; and I have heard it said about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.”<sup>16</sup> Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, “It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.”

**Peter: Matthew 14:22 - 33 (NASB)** <sup>22</sup>Immediately He made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away.<sup>23</sup> After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone.<sup>24</sup> But the boat was already oa long distance from the land, battered by the waves; for the wind was contrary.<sup>25</sup> And in the ofourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea.<sup>26</sup> When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear.<sup>27</sup> But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “**Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.**”<sup>28</sup> Peter said to Him, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”<sup>29</sup> And He said, “**Come!**” And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus.<sup>30</sup> But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!”<sup>31</sup> Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said\* to him, “**You of little faith, why did you doubt?**”<sup>32</sup> When they got into the boat, the wind stopped.<sup>33</sup> And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, “You are certainly God’s Son!”

Let's look at a modern example: "When Mother Theresa was laughed at because she wanted to build a great orphanage and had but 3 shillings to begin with, she answered: 'With 3 shillings Theresa can do nothing; but with God and 3 shillings there is nothing that Theresa cannot do.'"

I want to show you a clip of a movie. This is a true story of a high school in Georgia that was struggling, not just on the football field, but also within the school. There was a complacency and apathy that hung over the student body. A miracle took place there and the whole school won.

What do all of these have in common? FAITH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Faith is the basis of our whole life. Without it we would cease to exist.

Hebrews says: that "without faith it is impossible to please God." Faith is mentioned 27 times in Heb. 11

When the writer of Hebrews talks about the faith of all the OT saints he's talking about people who didn't have the Bible or pastors or churches or anything. These folks believed God and that faith was counted to them as righteousness.

"A young Chinese was traveling from China to America to study at one of the universities. A fellow passenger noticed him reading his Bible on the deck of the ship. He engaged the Chinese in conversation. He spoke disparagingly of the Bible, endeavoring to create doubt in it, adding, 'I would not like to disturb your faith in Christ, however.' The Chinese replied, "Sir, if you could disturb my faith in Christ, He would not be a big enough Saviour for me!"

We as a church need a new building. Can we believe God to provide one for us that same way He provided this one we are presently in? One of the most admired aspects of our church is that we have no debt. And we want to keep it that way. Let's put our faith to work and together start praying and believing God for a bigger building that can handle our growing congregation and ministries. I believe that He can and will do it without going into debt.

What about our mission trips. I have had a number of you tell me that you would love to go but you just can't afford it on your limited budget. Who is God? Has He provided for your daily needs? Can He provide for you to go and do HIS WORK? Let's believe Him.

Over the years I have seen God do some really amazing things and I want to see that you also get to experience that.

If you have something huge, a giant in your life that you need and want to see God work out for you, please stand up now. Let's put God's Word to action and face that giant.