

5 Ways to Win Battles as an Overwhelming Underdog

Mercer beating Duke. Frasier over Ali. Yang out-stroking Tiger. Jim Valvano's North Carolina State Wolfpack taking down Akeem The Dream's Houston Cougars in 1983. Namath's Jets shocking the Colts. Buster Douglas knocking out Mike Tyson. And perhaps the greatest sports upset of all time ... the 1980 "Miracle on Ice" U.S. Olympic Hockey Team beating the high-powered Soviet Union.

But there's another upset that tops 'em all. Imagine facing a perennial No. 1 warrior, 9-foot tall monster of a man with a menacing reputation and master of psychological and physical warfare, covered head to toe in armor and carrying weapons with physical power never before seen by a man on earth?

We all love the Cinderella story. But when you're facing a giant like this, courage alone can only get you to the battlefield. To win, you've got to have something extra.

Ask David. He was a shepherd boy, taking care of sheep and serving his brothers snacks while they were on the front lines of battle. He was hardly the makings of a warrior.

He wore loose and light clothes, sandals, maybe had a shepherd's staff and a slingshot. Although David was underestimated, his greatest assets were not external, visible or even quantifiable.

He had heart, passion, fearlessness, compassion—and God on his side.

When David heard Goliath defying the Israelite army and mocking God, it triggered a tsunami of emotions, energy and holy inertia that no one could have predicted. The stage was set: A physical giant would take on a spiritual giant, which

would be the most outlandish confrontation in history.

The fact is, we all face battles with insurmountable odds against us at times in our lives. Our faith, being one of them. We are designated by God to be strangers deployed in a foreign land that is at its roots openly hostile to our faith and seeks to tear it to pieces. That may not be the way we want it, but that is the way it is.

Jesus was up front about the reality of identity in Him and the reality of cultural hostility:

- “Since I chose you out of the world, the world therefore hates you. ... If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. ... But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me” (John 15:19-21).

How to Win Battles With Odds Stacked Against You

When you face a battle, whether it’s physical, emotional, relational, financial, mental or spiritual, here are ways to tips the scales in your favor and become a giant-killer.

1. Recruit a ringer. This may sound like cheating, but that’s not the intent. The first step to winning a major battle is to be on the right team, God’s team. If you believe in God, follow His ways, fully surrender to Him and trust His will, then you have a ringer. With God on your side, all things are possible.

- “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31).

2. Pick a giant. Now, what battle needs to be won? Pick one. Do you have an estranged relationship? Financial trouble? Secret sin? Major challenge? Be specific and decide to do battle. That’s what David did. He heard God being mocked and decided to do something about it.

3. Power up. Next, ask God for help. Like David, we have an

intangible and mighty Spirit serving as our advocate and who can intervene on our behalf. It's like a guarantee. Even if the result doesn't appear to be a "win," with God and the Spirit on your side, the plan will surely work out. The Bible says every knee will bow at the name of Jesus.

- "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Is. 11:2).

4. Run to battle. With God on your side, the battle in front of you and the Spirit behind you, you can face your battle with confidence! Don't walk. Run. Run to the battle with faith that God's plan will prevail. And His plans are good ones—that's a promise.

- "When the Philistine arose and came near to meet David, David hurried and ran toward the battle line to meet the Philistine" (1 Sam. 17:48).

5. Shock the world. Now execute your plan. God has a way of making your weakness turn into strength. You may not know how or when the battle will be won, but it will be. And the world will be left to wonder, "How on earth did that happen?" And you can answer, "I am with God, and He is able."

If you find yourself a little weak in the knees, repeat the following truths out loud to yourself when you have a Goliath in your life:

- God has prepared me.
- The Holy Spirit is in me.
- Nothing can stop me.
- Nothing can hurt me.
- God is for me.
- He will redeem me."

Besides, everybody loves rooting for the underdog.

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