



DISCUSSION GUIDE: Hope that Overcomes Fear [January 7-8, 2012]

Notes for the discussion leaders are in italics.

Discussion Opener

1. What is your image of a totally intimidating person?
2. When will people root for the underdog, even when there is little or no chance of victory?

Message Thoughts

David's conquering of the giant Goliath in 1 Samuel 17, and the subsequent story of David's life, speak to us about how we can have the Hope to Overcome Fear. We learn that as we know God, Trust God, Love God and understand the depths to which He loves us – we have the Hope that can overcome any giant sized fear, worm size fear, scary situation, or storm that we may be experiencing today or in the future.

God does not want us to live our lives in fear. He tells us time and time again throughout His word to FEAR NOT. God wants us to experience the GREAT Hope that we have in Him. It is by knowing and trusting and loving Him where we find Hope in the darkest of days. God sent his one and only son to earth, to live and die for us, because He loves us so. And it is because of Christ that we have eternal hope – Praise God!

Discussion

Read the story of David and Goliath, 1 Samuel 17

1. What was Goliath challenge to the Israelites? How did Saul's army react?
2. In David's view, why should the Israelites not have been intimidated by Goliath?
3. Why was the army paralyzed in the Valley of Elah?
4. How confident was young David when he met the king?
5. What experiences helped David to believe that God would protect him?
6. What circumstances can make a group of people, or even one person, lose heart?
7. In this story, what "weapons" were most powerful?

Read Psalm 27

8. What evidence of fear do you see around you?
9. Where do you see fear in your own life?
10. What is David's attitude toward fear?
11. How does his attitude of fear give you counsel when facing your own fears?
12. In what concrete way can you confront a "Giant" problem, fear or storm with faith?

Prayer

Meditate on Psalm 27, particularly 27:1-5. What fears "encamp" around you this week, or in this New Year? Trust God with them and lift them to Him and ask that He be the "stronghold" of your life.