**From One Giant to Another**

“And they lived happily ever after.” That is how fairy tales end. Most movies have a happy ending, unless, of course, it’s one of those chick flicks where the main character dies at the end. If David and Goliath was a Hollywood script, the army of Israel would have carried David off on their shoulders, rewarded him with great wealth, and Saul would have immediately given David his crown.

But that’s not how it went down. Following the killing of Goliath, David descended into one of the deepest, darkest, longest valleys of his life. Some of his most despondent and despairing Psalms were written during this period. He faced the vicious jealousy of King Saul.

He experienced betrayal. Attempts were made on his life. Every crutch, on which he tried to lean, was removed. He lived on the run. He lived in hiding. He lived in exile. He found himself seeking refuge amongst the enemy. He even feigned insanity. It was a desolate time of loneliness and frustration. This was not a valley lasting weeks or months, but this went on for several years.

Goliath wasn't the biggest giant David had to face, just the most obvious one. Most of the giants you face in life won't be Goliath type giants. They won’t be easy to spot, and it will be easy to miss the danger they pose. Most giants are much more subtle, and they usually aren't finished off in a single, valiant blow between the eyes. Rather, it takes many battles over a long period of time. These are the giants David would face as he became a man.

In the immediate aftermath of his giant victory, things seemed to go quite well for David. He enters into Saul’s full-time service. 1 Samuel 18:5 says, “*Whatever Saul sent him to do. David did it so successfully that Said gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the people, and Saul's officers as well*.” David proves to be one of Saul's most capable and loyal men, and everyone loves him. . . except for Saul.

Saul sees David as a political threat. David's a rising star on Israel's political landscape. His job approval ratings are sky high and opinion polls through the roof.

But there is no “happily ever after.” In the early part of 1 Samuel 18, things already start to turn sour for David, for all of the attention and praise that David was getting, meant that someone else wasn't getting it.

On the very day the army returned home from its victory over the Philistines, mobs of women came out of Israel's cities dancing and singing the praises of David. Even though Saul was the King and he would have been leading the procession, the women were singing a song that gave David more honor than Saul. The number 1 song in the nation had these lyrics.

*Saul has struck down his thousands,*

 *And David his ten thousands*

Imagine how that made Saul feel, especially when David has only killed one dude. He was a big dude, sure, but come on! I Sam 18:8-16 says,

(3 Slides) *8 Saul was very angry, this refrain galled him. “They have credited David with tens of thousands,” he thought, “but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?” And from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David 10 The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully upon Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the harp, as he usually did Saul had a spear in his hand* (Next Slide) *11 and he hurled it saying to himself, “I'll pin David to the wall.” But David eluded him twice.*

*12 Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had left Saul. 13 So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns.* (Next Slide) *14 In everything he did he had great success, because the LORD was with him. 15 When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. 16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.*

(Next Slide) For a while, it appeared that David had no enemies. But not all was well in Saul's heart. Though he honored David outwardly, an inner struggle was brewing. A simmering Jealousy was reaching a boiling point in Saul's heart. From the beginning, David's popularity threatened Saul, because his confidence was not placed where it should have been.

Now Saul had been a great military leader. He had led Israel to many great victories, and this song just grated his nerves. You can almost see the steam coming out his ears each time he heard it. This song triggered feelings in Saul that he would never be able to forget, or let go.

Over a short period of time we see these feelings, twist and turn until they are woven into an unquenchable jealousy that consumed Saul. I want talk today about jealousy, because it was the biggest giant David had to face. There is nothing new or unusual about jealousy. It's been around since the very beginning, when Cain was jealous of Abel's sacrifice and the acceptance his brother received from God.

Jealousy is also a natural human emotion. Jealous feelings are not wrong in and of themselves. God created us with emotions. Having feelings is not wrong. It’s how we respond to them. It’s what we let them do to us. Our emotions should not rule or control us. They should not be the final decision maker in our lives.

We have to quit listening to the world. Our culture preaches this message – “Follow your hearts,” which is just a nice sentimental way of saying let your feelings decide.

(Next Slide) But really, if the cultural gatekeepers were so smart, how do you explain “Me too” and all the sexual abuse scandals? How do you explain marriages that don’t last as long as the weddings? If they are so good at making choices how come all the multimillion dollar lawsuits, the endless parade of overdoses and stars entering treatment? Why does Hollywood have the highest percentage of therapists? Do you realize the people who sing our favorite songs are more likely to die young, and the leading cause of death is suicide? The people who are constantly telling us what to do, don’t know anything.

Just imagine how the world would he if everyone simply acted out their feelings. Think of how many rapes, murders, bloody noses, and automobile crashes there would be, if everyone did what they felt like doing. After all, our natural impulse isn't usually to let the other guy go first. It would be a barbaric, cruel, and selfish world.

Following your heart can be horrible advice. God warns us in Jeremiah 17:9, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it.” Instead we must always consider our emotions in light of the truth of God's word, we must weigh them against counterbalance of reason. We must sift them through a filter of love. Just because you feel it doesn't mean it’s right. We must learn to control our emotions instead of letting them control us, and this absolutely applies to jealousy. However, this is a lesson that Saul never red learned

People may be jealous over many things: a boyfriend or a girlfriend, the attention and time we give to someone or something else, personal success, a promotion at work. The list is really endless. These feelings can be legitimate. There is a righteous jealousy a husband and wife can feel for their spouse. When they start giving attention and affection to someone else, there is a righteous jealousy. A parent can feel righteous jealousy for their children when they stray. Even God describes himself as a jealous God when it comes to our trust honor, and worship. He will not share His glory with another.

However, since we are sinful people, our feelings of jealousy are often not righteous. In fact they can be downright destructive. Such is the case with Saul. He let certain destructive emotions control him, and this led him in an unstoppable downward spiral that consumed him until his death.

We see in this passage three ingredients to Saul's destructive jealousy. These are three emotional signs that indicate you might have a problem with jealousy.

1. **The Recipe for Destructive Jealousy**
2. **Anger**

The first ingredient to destructive jealousy is anger. Look at what vs. 8 says. “*Saul was very angry, this refrain galled him.*” Why was he so peeved? It was that song. It was a tune he just couldn't get out of his head. One psychology textbook says that Jealousy begins with comparison, competition and the fear of being replaced. This is exactly what happened to Saul.

Saul was ticked that David was getting the credit and glory he wanted for himself. All of the sudden Saul is no longer getting invited to appear on the morning programs or the late night talk shows. David is the number one trending topic on Twitter. He has more likes, more friends, more followers.

Comparison is a poison, and once you are infected it feeds a jealous anger. Social media is constantly injecting us with these comparisons at toxic levels and it feeds a deep-seated dissatisfaction and even anger.

Again there's nothing wrong with anger in and of itself. It is a God-given emotion. Some things are worth getting angry about. It's when we get angry over things over which we have no right to be ticked off that we have a problem. Do you get mad at others when they get what you want? Be careful, you're making yourself vulnerable, especially when they deserve it and you don't. Unjustified anger paves the way for uncontrollable jealousy to come into our lives.

1. **Suspicion**

Another ingredient of destructive jealousy is suspicion. You're just sure the other person has it in for you. You might even think the others are conspiring against you. Look at the end of vs. 8 and 9. It says, “*What more can he get but the kingdom?' And from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David*.” At this point Saul lost all objectivity. Paranoia dominated his mind.

If you are often suspicious of others, that is another warning sign. If you are seeing malicious motives in others that no one else seems to see, then you could very well be headed down the same path as Saul.

1. **Fear**

The final ingredient of destructive jealousy is fear. Once we are filled with an unjustified anger at someone else and we are constantly suspicious of them, then we become fearful of that person and what they might do. That fear begins to dominate all that we think, say and do.

Our text mentions twice that Saul feared David, in vs. 12 and 15. And we can see how off his rocker Saul had become. Vs. 12 tells us that Saul knew that God was with David, but not with him. Saul's emotional problems were actually a symptom of a much deeper spiritual problem. Saul was not where should have been in his relationship with God. He had sin in his life he had not dealt with. He'd grown distant in his relationship with God. And then here comes David who's very intimate with God. He's a man after God's own heart. Instead of motivating Saul to get his act together, it just made him more jealous When we become jealous of someone else because of what God is doing in their lives, we can he sure that a wicked jealousy has its clutches around our hearts. God's work in someone else's life should never be a cause for jealousy.

By this point, Saul's jealousy was all consuming. It was an obsession, and it drove Saul to completely irrational behavior. Twice Saul literally thrust his spear at David while he was playing the harp.

In a few verses, Saul lies to David and then betrays him. He had promised David his oldest daughter in marriage. This was part of the reward promised to whoever killed Goliath. Saul reiterated that promise in verse 17 only to turn around and give her to another man. When David wanted to marry one of his younger daughters, Saul tried to get David killed by the Philistines. Saul would never be able to look at David logically and rationally again. Saul went out with search-and-destroy parties to hunt down and kill David. He forced him into exile and even into hiding amongst the Philistines. This is remarkable considering that David had been one of Saul's most loyal and capable men.

However, Saul's jealousy did more than just affect his relationship with David. It negatively impacted his entire reign as king. Saul was never again a successful military leader, nor was he an effective king of the people. When we let jealousy consume our lives, we become totally illogical and we act in irrational ways. We can't see straight. We can't talk straight, and we can't shoot straight. Not only does jealousy not help us succeed in the thing we’re jealous about, but it ruins our effectiveness in other areas as well.

In many ways, Saul was a more insidious giant than Goliath. Goliath was an obvious enemy, but Saul was supposed to be a friend. Now we can't blame Saul for experiencing some of these feelings, but we can hold him accountable for how he handled his emotions. Saul could have controlled his feelings, and had a very prosperous relationship with David that would have benefited Saul. David, and the entire nation of Israel.

1. **Saul’s Four Failures in Dealing with His Jealousy**

Dr. Gene Getz, in his biographical study of David points out four failures on Saul's part in dealing with his jealous feelings.

**1. He Did Not Deal With the Root Problem**

Saul's main problem was pride and hardness of heart. He’d never shown true remorse over his earlier disobedience. He never repented of his sin. He tried to cover it up. He tried to pretend it wasn't a big deal. But he never dealt with the root problem. When there's sin in your life and you don't deal with it. It will fester beneath the surface causing problems in other areas. Here Saul was given another opportunity to repent, but he only hardened his heart once more.

**2. He Did Not Turn to God for Help**

Saul did not turn to God with his feelings. As far as we know, he never asked God to change the attitude of his heart. Instead, he took matters into his own hands and actively fought against God's will.

Contrast this to David, who time and time again poured his heart out to God in the Psalms. David turned all of his emotions over to God, his anger, his suspicion, and his fear. As a result, his life was never consumed with jealousy, and he kept a close relationship with God.

When we experience difficult feeligns we shouldn’t unleash our raw emotions on people, but we can take them to God. It's okay to tell God that we're angry, afraid, that we're jealous, that we feel neglected, or shortchanged. God already knows every thought and feeling you have, so keeping it to yourself doesn't make sense. In our relationship with God, why do we pretend like we've got it all together? Being open and honest with God isn't so He will better know and understand us. It’s so we can know and understand Him. It's all about the closeness of our relationship with Him.

**3. He Did Not Seek Help From Others**

Not only did Saul not seek God's help, but he didn't ask for anyone's help. There is no indication in the text that Saul ever asked help from anyone. He never sought the counsel of a prophet. He could have called on Samuel. He could have confided in his own son Jonathan, who had an extraordinary relationship with David. Sometimes, we need the counsel of others to provide the voice of reason that our own emotions block from our consciences. It is a big person that gets help from others, not a small person.

**4. He Did Not Address His Feelings of Jealousy With David**

Saul could have told David exactly how he felt and sought his personal help. After all, if David could slay Goliath with God's help, he could have helped Saul. David never tried to be Saul's enemy. In fact, he twice spared Saul's life. David always acted with reverence and humility towards Saul. David even mourned Saul's death, though he had spent years trying to kill David. David was not Saul's enemy. But Saul made no effort to be honest with him.

Unfortunately, it was much more difficult for David to defeat this giant than Goliath. Goliath he went and faced directly, and toppled him in one blow. The jealous King Saul tormented him for years. He never really confronted Saul directly. Some say it was because David had a lack of faith. That could be. Sometimes we have times of weakness after great victories.

But David may have had a great respect for Saul since he was the king. David was very loyal, and he may not have felt it was his place to deal with him. There is a clear lesson here, though. Sometimes it's easier to face the obvious giants. The subtle giants can be far more difficult. We think we can handle them on our own, since the danger isn't so apparent. We think it may just go away.

It is difficult to deal with jealousy in our own lives, but it may be more difficult to deal with in others. There's no way we can change their hearts, and, usually, the more we try to do good for them, the more they hate us, because it merely exposes their bad behavior. However, we must guard against using that person's weakness to enhance our own position. We should confront the situation directly, but lovingly. We should be sure to pray regularly for that person. Only God can change their hearts. Only God can give us the wisdom we need to handle the situation. And we cannot forget the counsel of Jesus, to remove the log from our own eye, before we try to remove the speck from our brother's eye.

The obvious giants are easy to spot. It's the not so obvious ones though that can do the most harm. Is there a subtle giant in your life? What about the insidious giant of jealousy? Do you find yourself filled with unjustified anger at a particular person again and again? Are you constantly suspicious that this person is out to get you? Show you up? Do you in? Are you fearful of what this person will say and do? Do they make you afraid that you'll look bad?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you need to be on guard, sin is crouching at your door. If your answer was “yes” to all of these questions then there is an insidious giant in your life, every bit as evil and dangerous as Goliath. It is time to draw the battle line right here this morning. It is time to face that giant. That giant can be slain right here, right now. Jealousy does not have to consume you. If you let it, it will only drive you crazy, and make you inept in all you do. You need to confess the pride in your heart. You need to ask for God's help. You need to turn to a mature brother or sister in Christ. You need to share your feeling with the other person involved, and ask for their forgiveness and prayers.