

Making Space for God

Opening Prayer

O God, quicken to life every power within me, that I may lay hold on eternal things. Open my eyes that I may see; give me acute spiritual perception; enable me to taste Thee and know that Thou art good. Make heaven more real to me than any earthly thing has ever been. Amen.

From the Pursuit of God by A. W. Tozar



*David and Goliath
Block Print by Steven Stuckey 2014*

Reflection- Looking Back

Take some times to settle yourself. Review your calendar and think back over where you have been this past month. Focus on answering this one question: **How has the Lord been present to you?** In the events of your life; in your joys and fears; in what has occupied your mind and heart; in what you dream about or long for; in what you are thankful for. Journal these thoughts and offer them to the Lord.

Scripture Study—1 Samuel 17—David and Goliath

The story of David and Goliath is one of the most iconic ones in all of Scripture and maybe all of history. The little guy with big faith in Yahweh defeated the much stronger pagan enemy. Michelangelo sculpted him as a 17 foot giant of faith. Management books use the story as an example for entrepreneurs. This story marks the beginning of David's rise to fame and influence. Read 1 Samuel 17 though a couple of times and savor a tale well told.

Reading for Reflection

Faith is a redirecting of our sight, a getting out of the focus of our own vision and getting God into focus. Sin has twisted our vision inward and made it self-regarding. Unbelief has put self where God should be, and is perilously close to the sin of Lucifer who said, "I will set my throne above the throne of God." Faith looks out instead of in and the whole life falls into line.

From The Pursuit of God, by A.W. Tozar

"Fear nothing and never be afraid; and don't fret. If only your penitence fail not, God will forgive all. There is no sin, and there can be no sin on all the earth, which the Lord will not forgive to the truly repentant! Man cannot commit a sin so great as to exhaust the infinite love of God. Can there be a sin which could exceed the love of God? Think only of repentance, continual repentance, but dismiss fear altogether. Believe that God loves you as you cannot conceive; that He loves you with your sin, in your sin. It has been said of old that over one repentant sinner there is more joy in heaven than over ten righteous men. Go, and fear not. Be not bitter against men. Be not angry if you are wronged.

From The Brothers Karamazov by Fyodor Dostoyevsky

For love in action is a harsh and dreadful thing compared with love in dreams. Love in dreams is greedy for immediate action, rapidly performed and in the sight of all. Men will even give their lives if only the ordeal does not last long but is soon over, with all looking on and applauding as though on the stage. But active love is labor and fortitude, and for some people too, perhaps, a complete science.

From The Brothers Karamazov by Fyodor Dostoyevsky

This was a painfully common dynamic in the introvert-extrovert couples I interviewed: the introverts desperately craving downtime and understanding from their partners, the extroverts longing for company, and resentful that others seemed to benefit from their partners' "best" selves. It can be hard for extroverts to understand how badly introverts need to recharge at the end of a busy day. We all empathize with a sleep-deprived mate who comes home from work too tired to talk, but it's harder to grasp that social overstimulation can be just as exhausting.

From Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking by Susan Cain

Whatever you do with your life—whatever you end up achieving or not achieving—the great gift you have in you to give to the world is the gift of who you alone are; your way of seeing things, and saying things, and feeling about things, that is like nobody else's. If so much as a single one of you were missing, there would be an empty place at the great feast of life that nobody else in all creation could fill.

By Frederick Buechner

The people who hanged Christ never, to do them justice, accused him of being a bore – on the contrary; they thought him too dynamic to be safe...He was tender to the unfortunate, patient with honest inquirers, and humble before Heaven; but He insulted respectable clergymen by calling them hypocrites; He referred to King Herod as 'that fox'; He went to parties in disreputable company and was looked upon as a 'gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners'; He assaulted indignant tradesmen and threw them and their belongings out of the Temple; He drove a coach-and-horses through a number of sacrosanct and hoary regulations; He cured diseases by any means that came handy, with a shocking casualness in the matter of other people's pigs and property; He showed no proper deference for wealth and social position; when confronted with neat dialectical traps, He displayed a paradoxical humor that affronted serious-minded people, and He retorted by asking disagreeably searching questions that could not be answered by rule of thumb.

Dorothy Sayers

The Benediction

Lord, you know what is best for me. Give me what you will and when you will and as much as you will. Do with me what you think best and as it please you and brings you the most honor. Place me where you will and use me according to your wisdom. I am in your hand as your servant ready to do all that you command. I want to live not for myself, but for you. I want to serve you fittingly and perfectly.

Thomas a Kempis

Reflection Questions for 1 Samuel 17

1. Describe Goliath and the battle scene. What do you learn about 10 century warfare tactics?
2. David is sent by his father to check on the welfare of his brothers. What do you learn about the dynamics of the family? What other brother story does this tale remind you of? Compare.
3. David engages the Israeli soldiers with questions. What might he be trying to do?
4. How does David reframe the conversation regarding Goliath from a faith perspective? What does the reframing tell you of Saul's leadership?
5. Saul is initially resistant to David fighting Goliath. Why?
6. How does David persuade Saul that he is qualified?
7. Saul and Goliath imagine specific rules of engagement. What does David do with those expectations?
8. Describe David's faith/ confidence in the Lord. Is there a downside?
9. Describe David's first military victory with that of Saul's?
10. What do David's actions do for the army and how does he make use of the drama?