



BOTTOM LINE:

God will give us victory when we trust Him.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that we don't need to fear because God fights for us.

INTRO:

One of the big differences between a game like Candy Crush and a game that tells a story like the Legend of Zelda series is that Zelda has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Games like that tell a story, and like all stories, there's a final battle, a chance to win it all. It may take a few tries. Or dozens of tries. Or even hundreds of tries. But there's a way to defeat the big bad enemy and end the game with a victory.

Candy Crush doesn't end that way. As a matter of fact, puzzle games like Candy Crush never end. They present you with one puzzle after another, puzzles that get more and more challenging as they go. Every player starts off eager and excited as they blaze through the first few levels, but when the puzzles get harder, people drop out. Candy Crush doesn't end with a final puzzle. It ends when a player gets bored, or frustrated, or stuck. They stop playing, they forget about that last, frustrating level, and they eventually delete the game.

Candy Crush is a lot more like life than Zelda. There are no happy endings. There are victories, but each victory becomes a new beginning. Like Candy Crush, the challenges of life get harder and harder. At age 3, your biggest challenge was sorting shapes and learning to use the potty. In elementary school it's math and spelling and making good friends. Middle school will get harder. So will high school and college. And then there's adulthood where life really gets challenging.

There will be easy victories for sure, but there will be hard ones as well. Some challenges will test our faith, our resolve, and our courage. There will be closed doors and other obstacles meant to guide us on the right path, but there are other challenges God wants us to face so we can grow as people of faith. When those challenges arise, we need to give our fears to God and trust Him to give us victory.

Today's Bible passage is about a young man who had a rather unusual challenge. While today's teenagers face tough teachers, tougher coaches, and the occasional difficult classmate, young David was face to face with a giant soldier who wanted to kill him. The giant had sent the entire army of Israel into hiding, but David found the courage to face him, and God gave this brave young man a remarkable victory.

READ 1 SAMUEL 17:25-49

²⁵ Now the Israelites had been saying, "Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his family from taxes in Israel." ²⁶ David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" ²⁷ They repeated to him what they had been saying and told him, "This is what will be done for the man who kills him."

²⁸ When Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, "Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle." ²⁹ "Now what have I done?" said David. "Can't I even speak?" ³⁰ He then turned away to someone else and brought up the same matter, and the men answered him as before. ³¹ What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him. ³² David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." ³³ Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth."

³⁴ But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, ³⁵ I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. ³⁷ The LORD who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you."

³⁸ Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. ³⁹ David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. ⁴⁰ Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.

⁴¹ Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. ⁴² He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him. ⁴³ He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with

sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴ “Come here,” he said, “and I’ll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!”

⁴⁵ David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. ⁴⁷ All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD’s, and he will give all of you into our hands.”

⁴⁸ As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. ⁴⁹ Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.

MAIN POINT:

King Saul and the men of Israel were terrified of Goliath. No doubt they had seen him in battle, taking down one man after another with his giant sword and shield. No man dared to face him one on one, fearing they would simply get crushed.

I’m sure David was nervous when he saw the giant, but when he heard Goliath mock the Lord, he had to step up. David knew God would not stand for this giant mocking Him. God gave David the courage to face Goliath, and He gave David an incredible victory. David shows us we can claim victory when we trust in the Lord.

DRIVE IT HOME:

David’s victory over Goliath feels like a Legend of Zelda moment. He defeated the big bad enemy, and the battle was over! But David was not a video game character. He was a real young man who went back to his job as a shepherd for a while before becoming a soldier of King Saul himself. David would face many battles in his life. He faces real battles as a commander in Saul’s army. He faced even greater danger when Saul became his enemy and tried to kill him. David would spend years running from Saul, living in caves and hiding out. There were probably days when he longed for the simpler battles to fight – like that time he defeated an unstoppable giant.

David won many battles. He lost a few, too. God was the difference between those wins and losses. When David kept his eyes on God, he was unbeatable. It was only when he turned his eyes away that he made mistakes that cost him dearly.

Despite his ups and downs, David is remembered as a man after God’s own heart. He wrote countless songs of praise to God, many of them written down in the book of Psalms. He loved God dearly, and he was never ashamed to express his great love for the Lord. David knew that God had given him every victory, and David knew he had to keep his eyes on God.

It's not easy to keep our eyes on God, especially living in a time when so many people have chosen not to believe. David shows us that God is always faithful to those who do remember Him. God knows we will have many great challenges in our lives. We'll face giants. We'll face things bigger than giants. If we give our fears to God and ask for His help, God will give us the victory we seek.

God can give us the wisdom to make wise choices. He can give us the courage to make those wise choices and stand up for what's right. He can crush out fears. When we keep our eyes on God and rely on Him for our strength, we can stand firm, knowing God will give us the victory.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Give us victory over our fears.

In Jesus' name,

Amen



IN THE CAR:

Give us victory over our fears.

HANGING OUT:

Ask your kids what they would do if they came home and saw an angry giant outside the house. Ask your kids if they believe God is stronger than any problem they may face.

AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- How did David find the courage to defeat Goliath?
- Can God give us the courage to crush our fears?
- Is there something you are afraid of that we can pray for, asking God to give you courage and victory?

AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

“There is no fear in love. Instead, perfect love drives away fear.” 1 John 4:18a (NIRV)

PARENT TIME:

God is stronger than any giant, bigger than any challenge. We can face whatever comes our way knowing God is powerful enough to crush our fears. Pray that God will fill you and your children with the courage to stand up for Jesus, claiming the victory God has promised us.



OBJECT LESSON

ITEMS NEEDED:

An iPad with a game like Super Farm Heroes of Candy Crush

Have you ever become so stuck on a level in a game that you wanted to give up? There are a few options for a kid when this happens. You can give up. You can do a Google search and try to find the answers. Or... you can hand the device to an older sibling or a parent and say, "Help me!" Kids have leaned on Mom and Dad and big brother and big sister ever since the days of Atari and Nintendo to help them through a tricky level, and often times, those older family members have given us a much desired victory.

God wants us to know we do not have to fear defeat. When we keep our eyes on God and hand Him the controls, He will give us victory. There is no battle too difficult, no challenge too big, no challenger too strong for God. God defeated a giant with a small shepherd boy who had great faith. God can use us to win great victories too.

Our challenges may be great, and our challengers may be scary, but we do not need to fear. Our God is mighty and great. He can defeat the giants!