Take Off the Armor

David, the Living God, and the Woman God Made You to Be — Leader copy · Jail Ministry (women's side) · a 10-minute lesson · Pleasant Springs Church

Read this lesson online: https://ps-church.com/discipleship/jail-ministry/take-off-the-armor

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Before you start — notes for the teacher *(not read aloud)*

Timing. About **10 minutes** at a steady pace. The bracketed times are cumulative. The **designated cut is the cave prayer** at the end of [2:00]. It saves about 25 seconds. **Never cut the spear** (the safety line), **or the close.**

Time of day. The script says "today," never "tonight" or "this morning," so it fits whenever you teach it.

The one sentence the whole lesson proves. *The world's real fight is with the living God, so you can take off your armor, love the way God loves, and go meet the woman He made you to be, until the women around you want to know who He made them to be.* If you lose your place, say that and go to the next heading.

Who is in the room. Women of any age. Many have been hurt badly, and many have also hurt others. For a lot of them, the armor (being tough, being funny, needing no one) is how they stayed alive. **Never mock the armor.** Honor it, then show them they can set it down.

What not to say.

- **Never mention anyone's charges, case, or court date,** not even as an example.
- **Do not say "the world is against you, so none of this is your fault."** The script says both things: some of it was done to you, and some of it we

joined in ourselves.

- **"You don't have to fight" never means staying to be hurt.** Say the spear line word for word.
- **"You don't have to fight" is not about court.** Tell the truth, talk to your lawyer, and follow the rules. If someone is in danger in here, she should tell staff or the chaplain.
- **Never tell anyone to contact a person she hurt, or a person who hurt her.** There may be a no-contact order. Showing love must never break one.
- **Do not suggest anything against jail rules,** such as trading items or passing notes. The examples in the script are safe ones.
- **Do not blame Bathsheba or guess about her.** The script names only what David did. Do not stay on this part, and do not compare it to anyone in the room.
- **Do not say "look inside yourself."** The script says we find this woman by looking at Jesus (Colossians 3:3).
- **Do not say jail time pays for sin.** Only Jesus pays for sin before God.
- **Do not ask who has children, and do not bring up pregnancy or loss.** Psalm 139 is quoted only from verse 16 for this reason.

If someone asks, "Doesn't Paul say to put on armor?" Yes, in Ephesians 6. That armor is God's, and Paul says "we do not wrestle against flesh and blood" (Ephesians 6:12). What David took off was armor made by people. Take off what is fake. Stand in what God gives.

If someone asks, "David threw a stone, so can I hit back?" That was a war God had called him into. It is not a rule for us. When Saul was the one hurting him, David would not lift his hand (1 Samuel 24:12), and he got away.

Words to define the first time you use them (the script does this): *defy* — to dare someone to their face, to mock them; *avenge* — to pay someone back for a wrong; *transgressors* — people who have broken God's law; *radiant* — shining; *uncircumcised* — outside God's promise; *Anointed* — God's chosen King; *unformed substance* — you, before you had a shape; *miry bog* — deep mud that holds you down.

The word work, in plain English. All of this was checked against the first-language texts. It is said here in English only.

- **No one names God first but David.** In 1 Samuel 17, no one says God's name or "the LORD" before verse 26. David is the first. Goliath never names Israel's God at all.
- **Be careful with "defy."** Goliath defies "the ranks of Israel" (17:10). David says those ranks belong to "the living God" (17:26, 36). So the claim is that *David saw whose army it was,* not that Goliath spoke against God by name. In 17:45 the English reads "the God … whom you have defied," but in the first language what was defied is the ranks. Psalm 2:2 is where it is said straight out: "against the LORD." Acts 4:25 names David as the one who said it.
- **"The living God"** stands 13 times in the Hebrew Bible, plus twice in Daniel's Aramaic. In 1 Samuel it comes twice, and David says it both times. **Do not say David was the first:** Joshua said it earlier (Joshua 3:10).
- **A shorter old text.** The old Greek Bible we checked is shorter here. It has no 17:12–31, so it has no verse 26. It does have "the living God" at verse 36.
- **"Kindness" and "mercy" are one word.** The ESV says "kindness" in 2 Samuel 9:1, 3, 7 and "mercy" in Psalm 23:6. The first language has one word in all four places, and the old Greek does too.
- **"Follow" means chase.** Psalm 23:6 uses the same verb as 1 Samuel 24:14 ("After whom do you pursue?") and 26:18. The English hides this. The old

Greek also keeps one verb for all of them, but its Psalm 23:6 has "your mercy" alone, with no "goodness."

- **"Dead dog"** is David's phrase for himself (1 Samuel 24:14) and Mephibosheth's for himself (2 Samuel 9:8).
- **Psalm 34:5 reads differently in the two old texts, and the script says so.** The Hebrew speaks of those who look to Him and shine. The old Greek says, "Come to him and be given light," and it says "your faces." Both fit the point. Do not build more on it than that.
- **"Pit" (Psalm 40:2)** is a word Joseph used for his prison (Genesis 40:15; 41:14). It can also just mean a water pit, so the script says only that Joseph used it.
- **"Prison" (Psalm 142:7)** is a real word for prison (Isaiah 24:22; 42:7). The heading says David was in a cave. The script does not say he was locked in a jail, or which cave it was.
- **"Of David"** is in the headings of Psalms 23, 34, 40, 51, 139 and 142.

Numbering. The old Greek Bible numbers the Psalms differently. Our English numbers come first: Psalm 2 (same); 23 (Greek 22); 34:5 (Greek 33:6); 40:2–3 (Greek 39:3–4); 51:10, 13 (Greek 50:12, 15); 139:16 (Greek 138:16); 142:7 (Greek 141:8). 1 Samuel 24:12, 14 are 24:13, 15 in the Hebrew and Greek.

Scripture. All English, ESV. No Greek or Hebrew on the board or in your mouth.

THE SCRIPT

[0:00] Who is the world really fighting?

For forty days, twice a day, a giant named Goliath came out and shouted at God's people:

> **1 Samuel 17:10** — "I defy the ranks of Israel this day. Give me a man, that we may fight together."

To *defy* is to dare you to your face. Israel ran. They thought this was a fight with a giant.

Here is something you may have missed. For twenty-five verses, no one says God's name. Not Goliath. Not the king. Not the soldiers. Then a young shepherd walks up with food for his brothers, and he says:

> **1 Samuel 17:26** — "For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

Uncircumcised means outside God's promise. Same giant. Same army. But David saw whose army it was. The book of Acts tells us David said this too:

> **Psalm 2:2** — "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed"

The *Anointed* is God's chosen King. And Jesus, that King, said:

> **John 15:18** — "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you."

That is what David knew. The world's real fight is with the living God. You got caught in it. Some of it was done to you. Some of it, if we are honest, we joined in. But it was never yours to win.

[2:00] "The battle is the LORD's"

David told the giant:

> **1 Samuel 17:47** — "For the battle is the LORD's"

Did he mean it? Years later, King Saul hunted David like an animal. One day Saul walked into a cave, alone, and David was hiding in the back. His men told him this was his day. David could have ended it. But he let Saul walk out, and he called after him:

> **1 Samuel 24:12** — "May the LORD judge between me and you, may the LORD avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you."

Avenge means pay back. David was saying that job is God's, not his.

You no longer have to fight the world. You don't have to win every argument. You don't have to pay everyone back. Jesus said:

> **John 16:33** — "But take heart; I have overcome the world."

Now hear me. Not fighting does not mean staying to be hurt. When Saul threw a spear at him:

> **1 Samuel 19:10** — "And David fled and escaped that night."

He never hurt Saul. And he never stood still under the spear. **Loving someone who hurt you never means going back to be hurt.**

(Cut here if short.) David even wrote a prayer "when he was in the cave":

> **Psalm 142:7** — "Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name!"

He knows what shut in feels like.

[4:00] Just as you are

Before the fight, Saul put his own armor on David: helmet, coat, sword. David could hardly walk.

> **1 Samuel 17:39** — "'I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them.' So David put them off."

He took what he already had: a stick, a sling, five stones. God used what was in his hand. God had picked him that way, too. When the prophet came to choose a king, David's own father left him out with the sheep. But God said:

> **1 Samuel 16:7** — "man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

What armor are you wearing? The tough one? The funny one? The one who needs nobody? Maybe it kept you alive. I believe that. But you can't really walk in it, and God doesn't need it. **He can use you just as you are, today, in this room.**

That goes for the worst of it. David took another man's wife and had that man killed. When he was caught, he prayed:

> **Psalm 51:10** — "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."
>
> **Psalm 51:13** — "Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you."

Transgressors are people who have broken God's law. David was one, and God still used him. It cost him dearly, and God did not leave him the way he was. **"Just as you are" is where God starts. It is not where He stops.**

[6:00] Love is what God does

When David became king, a new king would often kill the old king's family. David asked a different question:

> **2 Samuel 9:3** — "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?"

They found Saul's grandson, a man who could not walk. David sent for him and gave him land. The man called himself a "dead dog." David had once called himself the same thing while Saul hunted him.

> **2 Samuel 9:11** — "So Mephibosheth ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons."

Where did David learn that? He wrote:

> **Psalm 23:6** — "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me"

"Mercy" there is the same word as "kindness." And "follow" is too soft. It is the word for *chase*, the word David used when Saul was chasing him. David knew how it felt to be hunted to death. Then he found out that God's mercy hunts you down to give you life. So David went and hunted down Saul's grandson to give him a seat at the table.

Love is not first a feeling. It is what God does. He comes after you.

> **1 John 4:19** — "We love because he first loved us."

In here, that can be small. Sit with the woman no one sits with. Keep the story to yourself. Answer soft. Pray for the one who gets on your last nerve.

[8:00] The woman God made you to be

David wrote this about God:

> **Psalm 139:16** — "Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me"

Unformed substance means you, before you had a shape. God knew who He was making. **There is a woman He had in mind when He made you.** You may not have met her yet. Life may have buried her. But God has not lost her:

> **Colossians 3:3** — "your life is hidden with Christ in God."

So you won't find her in a mirror, or in what a man says about you. You meet her by looking at Jesus.

> **1 John 3:2** — "what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him"

She is more glorious than you can imagine. And it won't be your own light.

> **Psalm 34:5** — "Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed."

Radiant means shining. One old translation says, "Come to him and be given light." The moon makes no light. It just faces the sun.

[9:15] The goal of this life

David again. The word he uses for "pit" is a word Joseph used for prison:

> **Psalm 40:2–3** — "He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD."

A *miry bog* is deep mud that holds you down. *Many will see.* So here is the goal. **Meet her. Share her. Point the light back to Him.** Until the woman beside you wants to find out who God made *her* to be.

Closing prayer

Father, You are the living God. Thank You that this fight was always Yours. Help us take off the armor we made and come to You just as we are. Chase us with Your mercy, and let us show that same kindness to the woman next to us. Show

us who You made us to be. Let her shine with Your light, so that many will see and trust You. In the name of Jesus, **Amen.**

If you only remember three things

1. **The world's real fight is with the living God (1 Samuel 17:26; Psalm 2:2).** So you can take off the armor. The battle is the LORD's. And not fighting never means staying to be hurt (1 Samuel 19:10).
2. **Love is what God does (2 Samuel 9:3; Psalm 23:6).** His mercy chases you. Then you go and show "the kindness of God" to someone else.
3. **Meet her. Share her. Point the light back (Colossians 3:3; Psalm 34:5; Psalm 40:3).** God can use you just as you are, and who He made you to be is more glorious than you can imagine.

Read it online

The lesson is at **https://ps-church.com/discipleship/jail-ministry/take-off-the-armor**. More lessons are at **ps-church.com/discipleship/jail-ministry**.

The full David studies, with the first-language texts, are on the Deep Research shelf: ps-church.com/deep-research/first-samuel-16-1-17-58 (the giant) · ps-church.com/deep-research/first-samuel-18-1-24-22 (the spear and the cave) · ps-church.com/deep-research/second-samuel-9-1-10-19 (the kindness of God) · ps-church.com/deep-research/psalm-51

Discussion starters — if you have time after

1. What armor have you worn to get by? What would it feel like to set it down?

2. David never hurt Saul, and he also ran from the spear. How can both of those be love?
3. Who has shown you "the kindness of God," when they did not have to?
4. What is one small kind thing you could do in here this week?
5. When have you seen someone shine in a way that made you want what she had?

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