

A Daring Victory

n/a

Ready:

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior."

-Isaiah 43:2-3 (ESV)

Set

Yesterday my fifth grade son lay at the top of the stairs, refusing to come down for breakfast before school. As the self-designated family barber, I was under fire from this 11 year-old for having cut his hair too short over the weekend. Now, he cried out, his ears stood out and looked stupid. Naturally, everyone was going to notice and make fun of him.

On a normal school day, that taunting might be tolerable, but this wasn't a normal school day. This was D.A.R.E. graduation day. D.A.R.E. graduation has been a rite of passage for all four of my children, symbolizing their ability to understand harmful substances and situations and to learn how to avoid them. But what was unique this year was that my son had written an essay that was chosen by the Junior Women's League to be read by him at the graduation ceremony in front of the entire fifth grade and their parents.

In his young mind, this haircut was the worst thing that could ever have happened to him! All of my motherly consoling and reassurance did nothing to move him from the top of the stairway. He did not want to hear how I thought his haircut was handsome nor that his ears were just as God made them so they must be perfect. I, after all, was not a fifth grader, and they would not think the way I do. Plus, did I not know that my son hates to read in front of a crowd? No matter how much he practices, I was informed, he always messes up, which makes the kids tease him even more. This was going to be the worst day of his life; therefore, he was not budging.

I suddenly realized the time had come to take off my mother's hat and put on my coaching hat. I had encouraged my players to slay bigger dragons than this on the court, had I not? Couldn't I find a way to move my young son? Better yet, couldn't God? I silently prayed for the right words, calling to mind John 14:26: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you." I bent over, looked my son in the eye, and said, "God chose YOU to say the things you did in your essay, knowing that the judges would select it as the winner. That means God is calling YOU to read that essay today. Now, I know you are fearful of this task, but remember that God has called many great men in history to complete difficult missions. Remember Abraham? Do you think he was 'freaking out' when God asked him to sacrifice his

only son, the son he waited all his life to have? And what about David? He was a boy, ridiculed for his youth and size. Yet, when God called him, he put the giant to the ground and held up his head in victory. Now, what about Jonah? What did he do when God called him? He ran the other way and ended up in the belly of the whale, right? So, son, let's think. Where do you want to be in a few hours? In the belly of the whale, or holding up the enemy's head in victory?"

Whew! I thanked the Lord for giving me what I thought were pretty good examples from His Word to encourage and motivate my son. I looked at him expectantly, as he pulled himself up off the floor. He stood up, took one step downward, turned to me, and with the innocence of a child said, "Mom, we live, like, hundreds of miles from the ocean." I smiled. Today, my son would know victory!

Go

1. In your own life, what task is God calling you to complete that has you fearful?
2. Have you ever been paralyzed by self-conscious thoughts and the belief that others were judging you by your appearance? How can you use God's Word to feel secure in your identity?
3. Is there someone in your life who needs encouragement? Which heroes of our faith can you hold up as examples regarding how to listen to God's call and claim victory?

Workout

Genesis 22:10-12
1 Samuel 17:34-51
Jonah 1:10-17



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