

"The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."

—*Dan. 11:32*

HOW TO
KILL
YOUR
GOLIATH

AN INSPIRATIONAL GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE

CHIP BROGDEN





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How to Kill Your Goliath:
An Inspirational Guide to Spiritual Warfare

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If the Battle is Won, Why Do I Feel Like I'm Losing?

You've probably heard the story of David and Goliath, right? It has come to typify any epic struggle where the underdog somehow manages to defeat a much bigger and stronger opponent.

So it's easy to think of David and Goliath as just another Bible story that you've heard 1,000 times before.

But what if it is much more than that?

What if the story of David and Goliath contains the inspiration and wisdom you need to fight and overcome whatever is attacking you right now?

Everyone has a Goliath in their life – that big, all-consuming problem that is facing you, challenging you, daring you, defying you.

It may be a physical problem - a chronic health problem or some complication from sickness, disease or injury.

It may be an emotional issue – a long battle with depression, anger, bitterness, anxiety or addiction.

It may be a financial concern – worries about money, job, or business.

It may be a family or a relationship crisis – someone you love is in trouble, and you're trying to help.

It may be a spiritual battle – your faith is being put to the test, you feel weak in the face of temptation, or you just feel "under attack" on all sides.

I don't have any magic cures or shallow promises.

Life is hard.

The narrow path is difficult.

But I *can* say that what you are facing right now is nothing new, nothing unique, nothing that hasn't already been faced by someone, somewhere, sometime.

The way I see it, when you're facing Goliath, you have two options.

1. Give up.

2. Fight.

Right?

It's real simple when you look at it in those terms.

And the choice is totally up to you.

But what if I told you that Goliath is not as big as you think?

What if your Goliath is more scared of you than you are of him?

What if the whole thing is just an illusion... a way to intimidate you, make you afraid, and wear you down to the point where you'll just give up without a fight – because if you ever *did* decide to fight, you would surely win?

This is exactly how the enemy operates: by making you feel like you're losing when he knows full well that your victory has already been achieved.

How else can you explain the fact that so many of the saints, who already have the victory in Christ, seldom seem to walk in the victory they claim they have?

How do you explain so many Goliaths walking around, beating up on God's people?

If the battle is already won, why does it feel like we're losing?

It's all part of a satanic strategy that will be exposed for you in this little book.

And when you're finished reading it, you'll have a very different view of the world and of the true nature of spiritual warfare.

The enemy has used every trick in his book to make you think you are defeated so you will give up the fight before it is even fought.

He's even inspired a lot of Christians to write books on "spiritual warfare" that actually lead them to do the very *opposite* of what they should be doing.

As you will see, these tactics go all the way back to David and Goliath. Let's look at them now.

5 Rules for Giant Killers

David did everything right, and his success leaves clues for you to follow as you learn how to kill *your* Goliath.

RULE #1

Don't let the enemy dictate the terms of the battle.

"...Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us." And [Goliath] said, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together" (1 Sam. 17:8-10).

Rather than fight the entire army of Israel, Goliath challenged them to send one man to him to fight it out with him in mortal combat.

Why?

Because in a one-to-one fight, Goliath had a clear advantage in size.

Immediately, Saul and all Israel were gripped with fear, trying to figure out which one of them could go fight Goliath.

Which was totally unnecessary.

Because the best strategy in this case was to do the opposite of what Goliath suggested – attack with the whole army, or send several warriors down to wipe out Goliath.

Notice how the enemy goads you into doing the opposite of what you should do.

For 40 days, morning and evening, Goliath taunted Israel to fight according to *his* terms.

They should have paid no attention to Goliath.

Instead, they listened, and they let him get in their head - and that created unnecessary fear and consternation that defeated them before they had even begun to fight.

RULE #2

Don't listen to the weak and fearful.

...And Eliab's anger was aroused against David, and he said, "Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle" (1 Sam. 17:28).

Before David could fight Goliath, he had to fight his older brothers and all the other nay-sayers – even the king told him not to go.

"You're too young."

"You don't know how to fight."

Or...

"Who do you think you are, anyway?"

These are the words of the Fearful, the Unbelieving, those who "mean well" and want to "help."

Really, they are just another distraction you have to ignore.

They figured out it's easier to fight *you* than to fight Goliath.

And while you're fighting people intent on discouraging you and creating doubt, you're not fighting the real enemy, who's still out there.

They gave up the battle long ago.

They don't fight for anything.

They have already surrendered themselves to defeat, and they can't stand the fact that someone like *you* might actually *win*.

Realize that the majority of God's people are content to sit on the sidelines and criticize anyone who steps up and steps out.

And if you listen to them, they'll talk you right out of your breakthrough.

You'll soon join them on the sidelines, sipping on a soda, and Goliath will win.

RULE #3

Don't go into battle with someone else's armor.

So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them." So David took them off (1 Sam. 17:38,39).

Once you overcome the people telling you that you *can't* do it, you have to overcome the people telling you *how* you should do it.

Everyone has an opinion – the problem is, most opinions are worthless.

Everyone loves to give feedback – the problem is, most feedback is useless.

Everyone loves to give advice – the problem is, most advice is wrong.

They are not you!

You are the one facing Goliath, not them.

What worked for them in 1867 or 1923 or 1969 or 1985 isn't necessarily what will work for you, now, today, in this moment, in this place.

The Goliath *they* killed back then is not the same Goliath you face today.

Saul's armor didn't fit David.

David had enough sense to say, "This stuff is weighing me down – I can't even walk."

Good things from yesterday can actually hinder you in today's battle.

Don't try to imitate what Brother So-And-So did or what Sister So-And-So did in the last great revival 50 years ago.

You need to know what God wants you to do, *now*, in this season, to kill *your* Goliath.

So how do you know?

You go to the Lord and do what He says to do.

Yes, sometimes the Lord will speak to you through other Giant Killers.

But you can't rely on other people to fight your battles, or to tell you what you should or should not do.

Trust the Lord to give you the wisdom you need for the battle you're in and for the enemy you're facing.

RULE #4

Prepare for lots of giants.

Then [David] took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine (1 Sam. 17:40).

I think some folks believe they will one day arrive in a land where there are no giants to be killed.

Or, once they kill Goliath, their giant problems will be solved forever.

Not so.

Get used to the idea that you'll be facing giants all your life.

They come in all different shapes and sizes and have many different faces and names.

Every problem, every obstacle, every challenge, every crisis, is an opportunity to face a new Goliath and see the victory of the Lord.

David took five smooth stones and a sling to face his Goliath.

But he only used one stone to kill the enemy.

What were the other four stones for?

For the other giants, of course.

What other giants?

Well... lurking out there in Goliath's hometown were more Philistine giants that needed killing.

The Bible talks about four more giants from Gath: Ishbibenob, Saph, Lahmi (Goliath's brother), and another with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot (2 Sam. 21:15-22; 1 Chron. 20:4-8).

The interesting thing is this...

Once David showed what faith in God can do, others took courage and killed those other giants.

Abishai destroyed Ishbibenob.

Sibbechai slew Saph.

Elhanan wiped out Goliath's brother, Lahmi.

And Jonathan took care of the one with all the extra fingers and toes.

So David never used those four stones.

But he was ready, just in case.

RULE #5

Run toward your Goliath.

And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he despised him; for he was only a youth, ruddy and good-looking. So the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (1 Sam. 17:42-46).

David stood up to Goliath, word for word (they did a little trash-talking back and forth).

And when Goliath started lumbering toward David, the Bible says:

"David hurried and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine" (I Sam. 17:48).

He didn't hang back defensively, passively waiting to see what Goliath was going to do, waiting for him to make the first move.

David's attitude was, "Let's *do this!*"

While everyone else had been running *from* Goliath for 40 days, David ran *to* him.

No sneaking around.

No dancing around his larger opponent, the way boxers dance around each other, trying to avoid getting hit.

No begging for five more minutes of prayer.

He was *ready*.

He was *prayed* up.

He was *praised* up.

He was *pumped* up.

He was in it to win it!

David was perfectly balanced between faith-inspired actions.

Some have a lot of "faith" but never do anything.

Some take a lot of action but have no faith or trust in God for the results.

David had faith *and* he took action.

Anyone can have faith sitting back at camp.

Sometimes "trusting God for victory" is a code word for, "I'm too lazy or fearful to actually *do* anything about my situation – I'm hoping God will do everything for me!"

David trusted God for victory *and* he ran forward to meet Goliath head-on.

David said, "The battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands."

Then, David ran onto the battlefield to get his victory.

How will you kill your Goliath?

Maybe you need more faith.

Maybe you need more action.

But you will definitely need both faith *and* action to kill that giant in your way.

Remember: David wasn't just fighting for himself.

He was standing up *for* Righteousness, *against* Evil.

And he was fighting on behalf of the whole army of Israel, to secure a victory for all of them.

When you take on your Goliath, there is more at stake than you realize.

You might ask yourself: *What would I be willing to do if I knew I could not fail?*

Then, ask yourself: *What's worth doing even if I fail?*

Wearing Out the Saints

Evil doesn't quit. It persists. It is relentless. If Evil gets frustrated, it redoubles its efforts and vows to come back stronger than ever.

Meanwhile, Christians are easily frustrated, angry, discouraged, and tempted to quit.

Many turn back.

Many more simply settle for a self-centered religion that is soothing, satisfying, and harmless - fighting for nothing, standing for nothing, and falling for anything.

Why?

This very situation is itself a strategy of satan, to "wear out the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:25) and cause them to quit the battle before it even begins.

It is, in fact, the only way a defeated enemy can prevail: by convincing his much stronger opponent to give up without a fight, to take early retirement, and to go home for rest and recreation.

The famous military strategist Sun Tzu taught that, "All warfare is based on deception...Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near."

In the case of our spiritual adversary, his warfare is also based on deception: he must make us believe that we are weaker than we are and that he is stronger than he is.

Wearing out the saints... like the drip, drip, drip of the ancient Chinese water torture, or the drip, drip, drip of a leaky faucet that keeps you awake all night, disturbs your peace, and makes you feel terrible the next morning.

Mental and emotional fatigue can create physical weakness and sickness.

Similarly, physical weakness and sickness can cause mental and emotional fatigue.

Little things add up, then the bigger things pile on.

The combination of physical exhaustion and mental fatigue *seem* to create spiritual weakness.

But it's an illusion.

It's not real.

Your spirit is like the Holy of Holies inside the Temple.

Imagine that no matter what is going on outside the Temple, deep within the Secret Place of the Most High, where the very presence of God dwells, all is calm, peaceful, quiet, and filled with Light.

The strength of your spiritual life has nothing to do with the strength of your mental or physical state.

But Evil wants you to believe that if you feel weak, you are weak.

Evil attacks you when you feel weak, and seduces you to think that if you feel weak, you must be weak, and therefore you can't possibly fight.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

I'll prove it to you.

Notice that Jesus fasted 40 days in the wilderness and ate nothing.

He was not tempted at all during the first 40 days.

But *afterward* something happened (not during).

Afterward, He was hungry.

Afterward, He was physically weak.

Afterward, He was mentally and emotionally drained from a lack of food.

Afterward, in the moment of great weakness, the temptations began.

But notice Jesus did not say, "Oh, I'm so weak now, I can't resist temptation."

He successfully resisted temptation and the devil left Him.

His spiritual life was untouched by the comparative weakness of body and soul.

What about the Garden of Gethsemane?

He had warned His disciples specifically on that night to "watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation."

Why were they especially susceptible on that particular night?

They were weak... tired... falling asleep in the garden.

Jesus said, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

His own soul (thoughts, will, and emotions) were "troubled to the point of death."

And that's when the temptation came: "Isn't there some other way, other than death on a Cross?"

The disciples accepted the weakness of the flesh and failed to pray, so they were defeated.

But the Master didn't say, "Oh no, I'm so weak, all the disciples are sleeping, and now I can't resist temptation."

Instead, He wrestled in prayer three times to overcome Evil, and secured the greatest spiritual victory in the history of God's dealings with mankind.

This may seem so elementary to you – that satan attacks you when you are at your weakest.

But have you ever considered *why* that is?

Why doesn't satan attack you when you are at your strongest?

Because in reality, you are stronger than satan.

You just don't realize it.

You assume that if you feel strong, you are strong; but if you feel weak, you are weak.

The truth is: there is no weakness.

Your physical and mental condition have nothing to do with your spiritual strength, because the Lord is your strength!

Your circumstances don't matter.

What everyone around you is or isn't doing doesn't matter.

Jesus proved it.

Light is greater than Darkness.

Good triumphs over Evil.

Sin abounds in the world, no question about it; but "where sin abounds, grace does much more abound."

Much more!

Not a little bit more, but much more!

Does evil seem to be relentless, persistent, tenacious and obstinate?

Grace is "much more" so, and "love never fails."

Does the Evil One seem "great" in the world?

Then "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world."

Does it seem as though everywhere you look the enemies of God are conquering?

Then realize that we are "more than conquerors."

Take a good, long, hard look at Evil in the spiritual and human history of mankind... study it if you like... magnify it as large as you can... see if you can measure the scope and size of it.

Then...

See if you can measure the scope and size of God's Grace that abounds "much more" than all the sin you see, God's Presence within you that is "greater" than the sum total of all the Evil around you, and the "more than a conqueror" He has made you in Christ compared to whatever Goliath seems to be throwing against you right now.

Then you'll realize why satan attacks when you are weak.

Because that's the only chance he has to win.

To attack you in your strength is suicide for him – pointless, fruitless.

So, the strategy of a weaker opponent (satan) against a stronger opponent (you) is to wear you out.

Make you feel tired.

Make you feel small.

Make you feel outnumbered.

Make you feel whiny and grumpy and irritable.

Make you feel like a loser.

Make you feel like, "What's the use, anyway?"

Make you feel like, "What difference does it make?"

It's all an illusion... a deception... a charade... a lie created to distort the truth and get you to accept Evil's version of events.

Because that's the only way Evil can win.

Evil can't beat you in actual battle because the One in you is Greater, so Evil tries to get you to quit the battlefield without a fight.

You know...

You're not really surrendering, you're just retreating so you can rest a bit.

Not really giving up ground, but not advancing forward to take any new ground.

Not really quitting, but not really "going for it" like someone who sees certain victory, who knows the battle is already won.

Kind of like the Hebrews when they first crossed the Red Sea in that massive exodus from Egypt:

"The waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left" (Ps. 106:11).

God demonstrated His preeminence over all their adversaries; not a single enemy remained!

"Then they believed His words; they sang His praise" (Ps. 106:12).

So far so good! But...

"They soon forgot His works; they waited not for His counsel" (Ps. 106:12).

Well, there you go.

Morons.

The enemy didn't defeat them; they defeated their own selves.

The enemy couldn't pursue them, but they started talking about going back to Egypt – giving up and surrendering to enemies that God had already defeated for them.

It makes no sense.

So why do we do the same thing today?

After all that God has done, and is doing, we still have more confidence, faith, and assurance in what the devil can do than what God has already done.

And instead of pressing forward to full victory – demonstrating the preeminence of Christ over all things, securing the land, claiming our inheritance, and walking in the fullness of all that God has given us in Christ – we somehow manage to forget all His works and ignore His counsel.

My hero, Winston Churchill, in an effort to prepare his nation for a second war that they did not want to fight, said:

"Owing to past neglect, in the face of the plainest warnings, we have now entered upon a period of danger greater than has befallen Britain since the U-boat campaign was crushed... The era of procrastination, of half-measures, of soothing and baffling expedients, of delays, is coming to its close. In its place we are entering a period of consequences."

Applying this to our spiritual condition, I wonder, what consequences await us, if, owing to past neglect and in the face of plainest warnings, we lay down our armor, give up the fight, and allow the principalities, powers, rulers of darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places to wear out the saints of the Most High and wrongly claim a victory for themselves that they do not deserve and are not entitled to?

Stand There and Do Something

Irish statesman Edmund Burke once said, "*The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.*"
Burke was primarily thinking about politics, but the principle applies to spiritual warfare as well.

Even while the Enemy tries to "wear out" the saints, Scripture says that "the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (Dan. 11:32).

No procrastination, no half-measures on the part of David, when he ran toward Goliath.

When the Hebrews procrastinated on the shores of the Red Sea, with Pharaoh's army bearing down upon them, Moses did what most spiritual people do: he prayed.

Nothing wrong with prayer.

But look what happened next...

And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward" (Ex. 14:15).

There is a time to pray, and there is a time to go forward.

Pray while you go, if necessary.

But get moving forward.

No more sitting back, waiting and wondering.

Sometimes that "waiting" is really just an excuse to avoid going forward.

Peter had to get down out of the boat and walk on the water to get to Jesus.

"The steps of the righteous are ordered by the Lord" – but of course, you have to be taking some steps if you want to have your steps ordered.

Occasionally, God tells the people to be still and He does all the fighting for them.

That's pretty awesome – but it's the exception to the rule.

In most cases, the people have to move forward and fight for what they want and trust God for the victory.

They have to go in and possess the land.

They have to move forward and wipe out the enemy.

Or, they have to stand up and defend themselves when attacked.

Here's a good example:

When Joab saw that the battle line was against him before and behind, he chose some of Israel's best and put them in battle array against the Syrians. And the rest of the people he put under the command of Abishai his brother, and they set themselves in battle array against the people of Ammon. Then he said, "If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall

help me; but if the people of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will help you. Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD do what is good in His sight" (1 Chron. 19:10-13).

Joab took action.

He saw what the enemy was doing.

He organized a powerful defense.

He encouraged the people to be strong and reminded them of who and what they were fighting for.

Then...

He put the whole thing in the hands of God: "May the Lord do what is good in His sight."

Then...

Joab and the people who were with him drew near for the battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him (I Chron. 19:14).

The enemy was full of a lot of hot air and bluster; as soon as Joab went forward, the enemy fled.

Isn't this the idea behind that great Scriptural promise?

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you (James 4:7).

Joab submitted the outcome to God, then went out to fight, and the Syrians fled.

"To flee" means "to run away in terror."

None of this sitting around, anxiously waiting to see what's going to happen next.

When Nehemiah saw the enemies of God planning to attack Jerusalem to prevent the wall from being rebuilt, he said:

"We made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them" (Neh 4:9).

Watch and pray!

It sounds really spiritual.

But that was only the beginning.

They are *praying* to God while they are *watching* their enemies.

From that time on, half of my servants worked at construction, while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and wore armor; and the leaders were behind all the house of Judah. Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me. Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, "The work is great and extensive, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us" (Neh. 4:16).

Our God will fight for us!

Meanwhile, let's get our armor on and have our weapons ready.

Their enemies took one look at this and called off the attack.

You want to pray?

Great!

Pray while you prepare.

Pray while you're strapping on your armor.

Pray while you're moving forward.

Pray while you're working, building, restoring, or doing whatever it is that God has put in your heart to do.

This is what is meant when Scripture says:

Take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Eph. 6:13).

The way some Christians read this is, "Stand around and do nothing."

Or, "Jesus did it all, so I don't have to do anything."

Of course that's not what it says at all.

To "withstand in the evil day" means "to set one's self against, to withstand, resist, oppose."

This is active resistance, not passive acceptance of every evil thing.

And that is the sense in which we *stand* – we are making a stand for what we believe is right, good, true, and worthy.

But you cannot "withstand " or "stand" until you have "done all."

Some sincere people do little or nothing and expect God will just do everything for them.

They have this spiritual ghetto mentality, as if the Kingdom of God is a welfare state where God does everything for them.

Sometimes, because of His great mercy and because of their great immaturity, He does do things for them.

At least for a season.

But eventually you've got to grow up.

Only when you have done ALL can you truly put the outcome in God's hands and really trust Him to do what is right in His eyes.

That's faith.

And what does it mean to "stand" anyway?

Some automatically assume "stand" means do nothing – just stand there and wait for something to happen.

"Stand" in this context means "to continue safe and sound, to remain unharmed, to be prepared, to be of a steadfast mind, to have the quality of one who does not hesitate and does not waiver."

That's Joab.

That's Nehemiah.

They're making a stand by preparing for battle and moving forward.

Quite different from the super-spiritual passive person who just loiters around on the sidelines somewhere, hoping not to get killed.

If you want the devil to flee from you then you've got to submit yourself to God, get off your Gluteus Maximus and actively resist the enemy of your soul.

Then, your God will fight for you.

Be of good courage!

Be strong!

You see to the battle, and God will see to the victory.

"Why are you standing there, crying out to Me to do something?
Forward, march!"

Fight the Real Enemy

If we don't demonstrate the preeminence of Christ in our daily walk...

If we don't let our light shine in the darkness of this world...

If we don't preserve the Testimony of Jesus and hand it down to the next generation...

Then Evil wins an easy victory.

When spiritual ignorance and Biblical illiteracy prevails, Evil wins.

When the world sees religiosity and hypocrisy instead of the Light, Life, and Love of God, Evil wins.

When the people of God do nothing, say nothing, give nothing, and stand for nothing, Evil wins.

It's time to turn that around.

But first, we have to understand who the real enemy is.

To do that, we turn from the Old Testament view of how to deal with enemies and consider the New Testament view.

The two views *seem* to contradict each other.

I say they "seem" to contradict because any apparent contradiction is always in our interpretation of God's Word, and not the Word itself.

But it did create a stir when Jesus said:

I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also...Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust (Mt. 5:39,44,45).

Did the strategy for spiritual warfare change?

Of course not.

Do we now just accept Evil as inevitable, and do nothing about it?

Absolutely not.

Jesus gives us a critical distinction, a crucial revelation, in our ongoing battle against Evil.

And by listening to what Jesus teaches, and by observing what He does, we can come to a more perfect knowledge of spiritual warfare – a knowledge that folks in the Old Testament times didn't fully comprehend.

What is He saying?

That *people are not your enemy*.

The disciples of Jesus were as slow to catch on then as they are now.

So John wants to call down fire from heaven to consume them...

And Peter wants to pull out his sword to fight them...

You get the idea.

It wasn't until many years later that they finally grasped this central truth about Evil, and Paul summed it up by saying...

We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph. 6:12).

People aren't the problem – most of the time, they are the prey: the prisoner dupes of the devil.

The god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not (2 Cor. 4:4).

Even those who DO believe can become infected with a religious spirit that keeps them from seeing clearly.

Whatever the case, Jesus is telling us to stop fighting people, stop fighting each other, and fight Evil at its root.

Love the people; hate the sin; fight the Evil.

That's what Jesus did.

That's why He didn't call down fire from heaven to consume the people who rejected Him.

That's why He didn't command the angels to destroy those who came to arrest Him.

That's why He prayed for His executioners and said, "Father, forgive them, because they don't know what they're doing."

Yes, many of the people He encountered were Evil.

Evil can possess a person, or a group of people.

Evil hides behind a billion different faces.

And the spiritually immature will take the bait and get caught up in fighting the people – the many faces of Evil – as if they were the real enemy.

While you're fighting, arguing, debating, and resisting flesh and blood, the spiritual enemy goes undetected, undisturbed, unperturbed.

Meanwhile, the saints become worn down and burned out by fighting battles they aren't meant to fight with enemies that aren't really enemies.

Our real enemy is "your adversary, the devil, who walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8).

So the mission of Jesus was not to destroy evil people, but to deliver people by destroying the evil power that kept them in bondage:

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him (Acts 10:38).

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8).

"Hey wait a minute," you may be thinking. "I'm not a super-spiritual person. I can't heal the sick, raise the dead, or cast out devils. I'm just an ordinary person."

Usually this is where someone like me would try to convince you that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you, etc.

But that's O.K., Ordinary Person.

You'll get there if you keep following Him.

In the meantime, Jesus gave some simple instructions for fighting Evil, even if you're aren't able to do miraculous works (yet).

Pray.

Give.

Love.

Serve.

Did you know that smiling at a stranger can have the same effect as raising the dead?

This is called "letting your Light shine" and it's a simple way to push back Evil, one good deed at a time.

You don't have to "come against" this or "rebuke" that.

Let your life and your good works be the clearest, sharpest rebuke to the enemy.

Set captives free with your Life, your Light, and your Love.

And when Goliath rises up to challenge you?

You stand.

You resist.

You fight.

You laugh.

Stop fighting *for* victory and begin fighting *from* victory.

Live. Love. Shine.

Because the battle is won.

Be bold, be strong, and be courageous.

Put on your armor.

Cross that sea.

Climb that mountain.

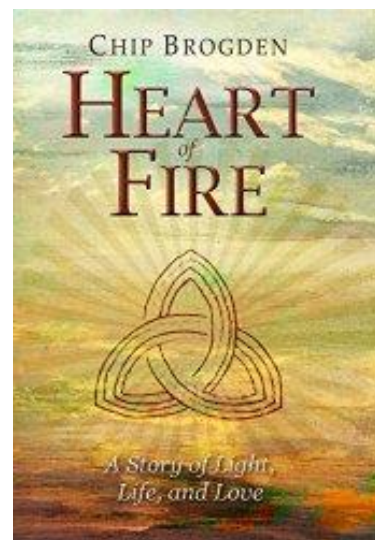
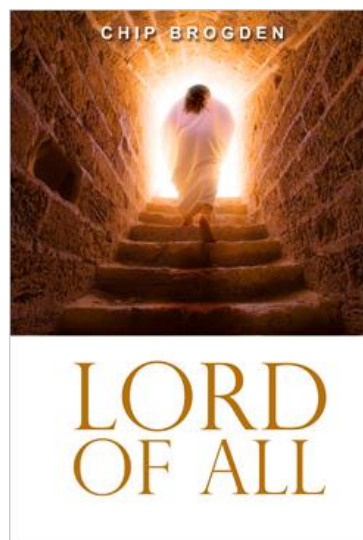
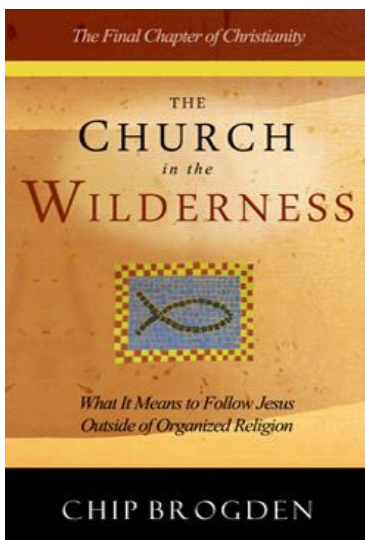
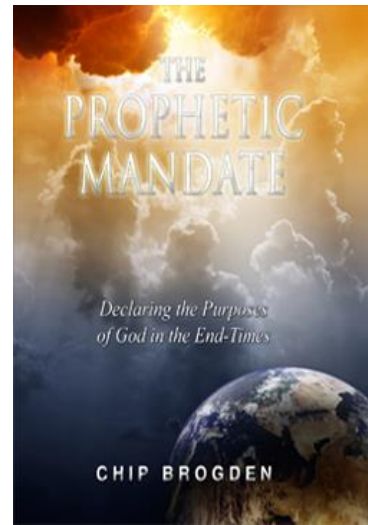
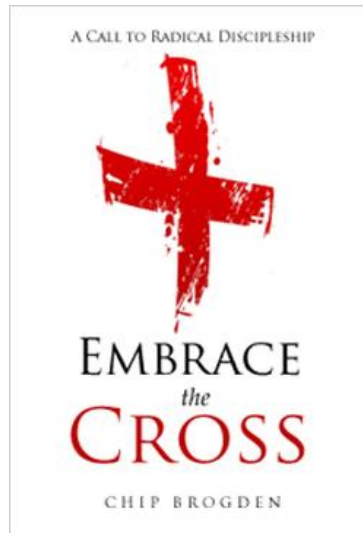
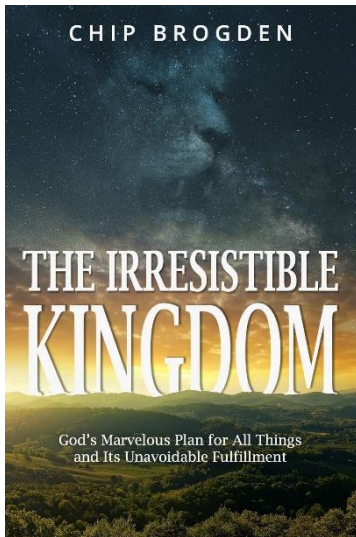
Kill your Goliath.

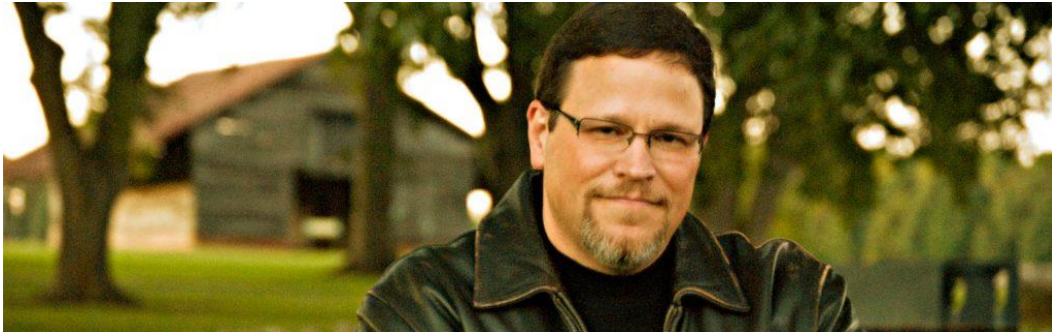
Possess the land.

And keep moving *forward*.

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