

## Paradise Lost and Restored: Hearing God's Voice (Part 4)

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### I. Introduction

How do you see you? What do you see when you look in the mirror? A winner, a loser? Whether you see a winner or loser, how did you come to this conclusion? Who told you that you're the greatest? Who told you that you won't amount to anything?....and why do you believe it?

### II. Ask God and He'll Show You Who You Are...Ask the World and It will Show You Too

**Who's telling you who you are, God or Satan?** The things that we (and the world) say to ourselves can make us feel like the biggest loser or biggest winner in life. The reason there's a constant stream of self-critical thoughts in your head is because there's a battle over you. God and Satan are fighting over your identity. Satan's goal is to make sure that you never find out who you really are, who God made you. He will make you think that you're the greatest thing since sliced bread or the biggest loser in the world. It doesn't matter to him as long as he keeps you away from God and His plan for your life...notice how Gideon, Goliath and David see themselves:

Gideon, Judges 6-8, if you allow him, Satan will define who you are and before you know it, you'll find yourself in survival mode, living a hand-to-mouth existence. Not because you're not capable of more, but because Satan has deceived you into believing that this is as good as it will ever get for you. How did Gideon see himself? Was he a coward that needed to hide in a winepress or was he actually a mighty warrior?

And what if God showed up and told you who you really are, but you didn't believe Him. Could you ask Him to prove it to you or would He get offended? And what if He guaranteed that nothing would happen to you and then He gave you a job to do, but you were so afraid that you did it under the cover of night, would God be angry with you because you were fearful? And what if God placed you in charge of an army and had already guaranteed that you would win the battle, but the opposing army was so numerous that it caused you doubts, so you insisted that He prove it to you....twice, would God lose His patience with you? And what if God took your army and reduced it to 300 men, would you go fight?

David, 1 Samuel 17, Satan doesn't just whisper discouraging things into your ears, sometimes he whispers tremendous accolades that make you think that you're the best, better than anybody. Goliath thought he was the best. He was 9' 9" tall and probably weighed over 400 lbs. He's the fiercest warrior around; no one can beat him. So how does Goliath see himself? How does the world see him? According to Goliath and the world, he's a winner all the way around, the best at what he does. But who made Goliath, who gave him that great stature, strength, and ability? God did. And who does Goliath think gave him all that? Himself. Goliath is convinced that there's no one greater than him. He's so great that he can mock the God who made him.

How does David see himself? He's a shepherd by trade; he takes care of his father's sheep. But is that all David sees? David is about to have the toughest day of his life. Will he crack and stick with being just a shepherd boy or will he stick with the identity that God gave him?

Who's the first one that Satan uses to convince David that he's just a shepherd boy? His own brother. How does David respond, does he let Satan steal his identity? Who's the next person Satan uses to discourage David of his identity? His boss. How does David respond? Where did David get all this courage? His boss tries one more time to convince David that he's just a shepherd boy by giving him his armor. But how does David respond?

Who's the last person Satan uses to keep David from his identity? His opponent. Does David fold under the pressure of seeing this 9' 9" tall, 400 lb monster? No, in fact, David runs to face him and promises Goliath, "This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you." What?! Where did this shepherd boy get all this fearless courage?

**Applying what we've learned**, whether you've been told you're the best that's ever been or the worst loser on the planet, who's dictating your identity? Is your family telling you who you are? Is your boss telling you who you are? Is your past or current circumstances telling you that you'll never amount to anything, that you'll always struggle? Or perhaps you've been told that you're the best and no one can touch you. Who's convinced you of this? If you want to escape this false identity, this false existence, you have to go back to God and ask Him for the truth. Ask Him to show you the person He made and the life He intended for you.

### III. Conclusion

*And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*