

1 Samuel - Commentaries by James Lampden Harris

The Christian Shepherd: 2004, "David Put Them off"

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"David put them off him" (1 Sam. 17:39).

Faith strips itself of all carnal weapons, for faith stands entirely in the power of God. Now our learning this is often the hardest part of our lesson slowly learned and often forgotten.

But if we knew more of the secret dealing of God, we would more speedily rid ourselves of all fleshly weapons. The soul which, like David, has been much exercised in secret before God knows the worthlessness of everything but God's own strength. Having thus learned this blessed lesson, it readily casts off those things which the flesh so esteems as aids, and it feels itself free by their loss. How far more blessed this way of learning the flesh and denying it than any other.

But for want of such direct living before God, we have to learn this in painful discipline and after many failures. It is the hardest part of our discipline to be stripped of those things which by habit and education we have all thought necessary. We have to learn to stand aloof from modes of action in which, after the manner of Saul, the name of the Lord and human authority or human wisdom are combined. Such combinations, often called judicious and useful, are delusive and dangerous.

How we see the Apostle rejoicing to count all those things esteemed by men loss for the sake of Christ! Why was not this a hard thing to him? How could he thus thoroughly renounce and put from him these things? He had learned to "rejoice in Christ Jesus" to be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."

What we want is much more of such simplicity, remembering that we have the truth of God to address men's consciences. We have weapons "mighty through God," if we have only simple faith to trust to them alone, rejecting the armor of human energy, wisdom and authority.

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