

# Iron Men: “Taking Initiative”

5.31.22

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## **Initiative- 911- NYFD, Flight 93 Men, Soldiers in Battle**

In the face of danger, men go forward instead of pulling back. Bravery is not absence of fear, it's being afraid and going anyway! Are you being brave today? Are you doing the right thing, right now? Or are you waiting? What are you waiting on? Are you being selfless or selfish?

## **The Three Things that Hold Most Men Back** (by: Robert Lewis)

1. Feeling of Passivity (I just don't want to do it.)
2. Feeling of Inadequacy (I don't think I can do it, therefore I won't.)
3. Feeling of Fear (I'm afraid I'll fail.)

Courage seizes the principles of God's word and we press in to those feelings instead of giving in to those feelings. If I press hard enough and long enough in the strength of the Lord (courage in action) then we'll see the principles triumph over the feelings.

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## **David vs Goliath (1 Samuel 17)**

David was a teenager, but he was willing to fight Goliath. He ran toward Goliath! He was willing to take him out because of his love for his country and God. David was prepared. He had prepared beforehand. As men, we must make up our minds before we get to the battle, or we're likely to wilt. We must take the initiative. Watch the two reactions of the men of the army of Israel versus David's reaction to Goliath.

The reaction of the men in the army of Israel to Goliath:

### **1 Samuel 17:24**

<sup>24</sup> All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were much afraid.

The reaction of David to Goliath:

### **1 Samuel 17:32-37**

<sup>32</sup> And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." <sup>33</sup> And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth." <sup>34</sup> But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, <sup>35</sup> I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. <sup>36</sup> Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God." <sup>37</sup> And David said, "The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

### **1 Samuel 17:48-53**

<sup>48</sup> When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. <sup>49</sup> And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground. <sup>50</sup> So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. There was no sword in the hand of David. <sup>51</sup> Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. <sup>52</sup> And the men of Israel and

Judah rose with a shout and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath<sup>[1]</sup> and the gates of Ekron, so that the wounded Philistines fell on the way from Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron. <sup>53</sup> And the people of Israel came back from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp.

The courage of David rallied the entire nation!

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Brothers, fear can shut us down and we won't have the hard conversations with our wives, or be vulnerable with them. Instead of engaging the situation to talk it out, we just say, "Whatever" and hope it all goes away. No. It takes courage to press through and have the conversation. It's a fearful thing to do this. It makes the heart race...the adrenaline is going... But, we must press ahead, like David and do the right thing.

The same is true in our jobs. We want people to like us. To a degree, we are all "people-pleasers," but we have to be willing to have the courage to take the initiative, even risking the relationship, for the kingdom's sake.

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### **Dan Allender says every man must ask two questions:**

#### **#1 What were you written by God to say, "no" to?**

Will you be willing to come to the place in your life to say, "I will stand against Hell and say, 'no' to that thing in my life...that thing or situation which Satan desires to use to steal the 'best' in my life."

#### **#2 What were you written by God to say "Heaven Yes" to?**

Clarify right now what you are meant to say "no" to versus what you were meant to say "yes" to.

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### **Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Willing to Fight Hitler (a modern-day David)**



Will you do what God calls you to do, even if it requires your death? That was Bonhoeffer's dilemma. The difference between action and inaction is robust faith. To give our life to Christ means we are dead to self. It's a freedom. Eventually he was hanged by the Nazi Gestapo in 1945.

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At the essence of masculinity is *initiative*. When others were being passive, David took initiative, Bonhoeffer took initiative. The firefighters in 911 ran up the steps of the towers, not down. We are called to be courageous men and step up. Will we? You are called to be a patriarch. Don't sit on the step of passivity. Are you watching TV and playing games while your wife takes care of the home?

What initiative needs to be taken by in your life today? In your relationships? With your family? With your employer? It's time to take the initiative and STEP UP!