

Is There Not a Cause?

“And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?”

I Samuel 17:29

Introduction:

1. All of I Samuel 17 pertains to David and Goliath, but 17:20-37 gives the context of David's question.
2. This chapter is not in the Bible by accident, to fill up space, or to provide stories for children's books.
3. When David arrived at the battle, he could not believe Israel stood still in the face of Goliath's taunts!
4. Also, after hearing about King Saul's great offer of rewards, he was confounded by their fearfulness.
5. Eliab, his oldest brother, ridiculed his status and accused him of dereliction, pride, and naughtiness.
6. David asked what he had done to deserve such abuse, and he declared that Goliath warranted anger!
7. David loved Israel's God and all that pertained to him and would not put up with this Philistine dog.
8. How much do you love the Lord Jesus Christ, and how much does your love of Him drive your life?
9. We have been called to a conflict and form of worship far superior to Goliath and the Old Testament.
10. Because of perilous times of the last days, you will have few examples of zeal for God's true cause.
11. Observe, *you will often have to go it alone*, because even the church of God will stand still, like here.
12. Observe, *you will have opposition by those you consider brethren and friends*, like Eliab to David.
13. Observe, *you will be told you are not sufficient for the task of being great for God*, like Saul to David.
14. Observe, *you will be told how to do it by those not having done it and without faith*, as Saul to David.
15. We have a new year upon us; we should pursue God's goals for our lives with greater zeal than ever.
16. What is your Goliath? You have more than one. You must run to them in zeal and cut their heads off.
17. Observe, *after David stood up as a man for God, the rest followed*, and Israel won a great victory.
18. Observe, *David proved himself to God and men, including Saul and Israel*, and his fame grew greatly.
19. We live in perilous times of the last days, when the passion of Christians is for pleasure rather than God, and when religion is a form rather than fervent pursuit of His approval and glory (II Tim 3:1-5).
20. The threat to souls, families, and churches is not Islam or Mormonism, but compromise and lethargy!
21. The average and typical Christian today is lazy, selfish, and devoid of most any spiritual conviction.
22. There are only a few sold-out Christians left – the remnant of Jesus Christ – are you truly part of it?
23. If the Bible is half true, what level of effort do God and His commands deserve? Nothing but the best!
24. If the Bible is half true, what is your goal for serving God? Greatness? Mere mediocrity? Or failure?
25. You must ask yourself, (a) Am I putting forth the effort the Lord expects? (b) If I lose my soul or a child to the world, will I be at fault? (c) How easy do I take the spiritual threats in my life? (d) How low will I go toward the world? (e) How high will I aim for Christ? (f) How close do I want to get to sin? (g) How far away should I be? (h) What do I expect of my children in light of scripture? (i) What do I do for the church more than anyone else? (j) How great is my passion for souls to be converted?
26. How many of our girls will be like Sarah, Hannah, Abigail, Mary, Anna, Lois, Eunice, Priscilla, etc.?
27. How many boys will be like Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, David, Daniel, John, Paul, etc.?
28. Only a few “get it,” because abounding iniquity causes the love of most to wax cold (Matt 24:12).
29. The issue is not “what” we should be doing, but “how” we should be doing what we already know.

There Is a Cause

- A. Most men live without a cause: their lives are empty of purpose and provide only worm food: getting up for work, providing for your family, and hoping to retire is no more than beasts.
- B. The rest of men live for causes that are at best nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit – like saving stray cats, politics, world peace, universal literacy, wealth, health, education, etc.!
- C. If Japanese kamikaze pilots would die for an effeminate emperor and island of rock in a lost cause, then there is overwhelming cause for baptized believers to live for the King of kings!

- D. If Muslim terrorists would blow themselves up for the moon god of the Arabians and an infantile book composed by an illiterate nomad, surely we can live for the Lord of lords!
- E. If priests and nuns can take vows of celibacy and poverty for the devilish lies of Roman Catholicism, how much more should we be zealous for the true gospel of Jesus Christ!
- F. But the greatest cause, the one that should grip us, is that of Jesus Christ (Is 9:6-7; Hag 2:7).
- G. It is good to be zealously affected in a good cause, and the greatest is Christ (Gal 4:17-19).
- H. Paul, the greatest apostle, was zealous for Christ (Gal 6:14; Phil 1:20-21; 3:7-14; I Co 15:10).
- I. Paul communicated that zeal for the cause of the kingdom to Timothy his son (Phil 2:19-22).
- J. What of this epitaph? *He delighted in God above all others; he was a tree of life to all others.*
- K. You must ask, "Am I in the battle, or am I waiting for someone else to step up and do it?"
- L. There is the cause of God Himself ... see the extensive sermon outline for *Knowing God*.
- M. Ancient Landmarks ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/church/remove-not-the-ancient-landmark/sermon.php>.
- N. Then the Perilous Times ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/exposition/perilous-times/sermon.php>.
- O. Then Measuring Your Life ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/make-your-life-count.pdf>.

The Cause Has a Cloud of Witnesses

- A. Paul charged Jewish saints facing persecution to remember the Hall of Faith (Heb 12:1-3).
- B. *Abraham* was known by God as a real man that would command his household (Gen 18:19).
- C. *Moses* showed great zeal against religious compromise two ways (Exodus 32:19-20,25-29).
- D. *Phinehas* did not weep and pray about sin in the camp; he did something (Num 25:6-13).
- E. *Caleb*, mocking his age of 85, begged for the mountain home of the Anakims (Josh 14:6-15).
- F. *Joshua* was zealous to serve the Lord with his family regardless of others (Joshua 24:14-19).
- G. *Jephthah* and his daughter showed sacrificial zeal for the worship of God (Judges 11:29-40).
- H. *Samson*, by the Spirit's influence, killed a thousand Philistines with a bone (Judges 15:9-17).
- I. *Samuel* showed his great zeal for the Lord in the presence of two kings (I Samuel 15:32-33).
- J. *Saul*, by the Spirit's influence, hewed a yoke of oxen to get Israel's attention (I Sam 11:1-7).
- K. *Jonathan*, bored to sit around and wait, challenged a garrison of Philistines (I Sam 14:1-15).
- L. *David* showed zeal against blaspheming Goliath (I Sa 17:26-29), for the ark of the covenant (II Sam 6:12-19), against the irreverent Michal (II Sam 6:20-23), for the Lord's house (II Sam 7:1-2; I Kgs 8:17-18), for the worship of God (II Sam 24:18-25), in building the temple (I Chron 22:5), and against those who rejected God's words (Psalm 119:136,139,158).
- M. *Jehu* and *Jehonadab* poured vengeance on Ahab's sons, Jezebel, and Baal (II Kgs 10:15-31).
- N. *Elihu*, listening to four old men confuse the truth or blame God, was angry for truth (Job 32).
- O. *Jeremiah*, by the Spirit's power, could not be silent even at cost to himself (Jeremiah 20:9).
- P. *Three Hebrews* would not bow to Nebuchadnezzar's god or his fiery furnace (Dan 3:13-18).
- Q. *Anna* gave her long life to fasting and prayer (Luke 2:36-38). She knew the cause justified it.
- R. *Jesus Christ* at the tender age of 12 was already fully committed to the cause (Luke 2:41-50).
- S. *Jesus Christ* could not bear to see His Father's house become a den of thieves (Jn 2:12-17).
- T. *A widow woman*, without anything in this world, showed her zeal for the cause (Lu 21:1-4).
- U. *Paul* labored more abundantly than all the other apostles (I Cor 15:10; II Cor 11:5; 12:11).
- V. The *household of Stephanas* addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints (I Cor 16:15).
- W. He communicated that zeal to *Timothy* with a godly mother and grandmother (Phil 2:19-22).
- X. The *martyrs* provide thousands and millions of examples of great zeal for the cause of Christ.
- Y. As an example, consider the case of *Alice Driver* (1528-1558) in this Internet link. Click [here](#).

The Cause Is Glorious

- A. Our cause is the living and true Jehovah God, His glorious Son Jesus Christ, the truth of the universe, redemption, adoption, immortality, eternal heaven, final and ultimate victory, etc.!
- B. Jesus was so gripped by the cause of God and truth that it ate Him up (Jn 2:13-17; Ps 69:9).
- C. Paul wrote extensively about the cause and its constraining effect on him (II Cor 5:9-17).
 - 1. If someone died for you, how would it affect you toward him? What if the person were important? What if he gave you an enormous promotion? What if it is Jesus Christ?
 - 2. There is no greater cause than serving the Lord Jesus Christ – the perfect Godman.
 - 3. Consider the resume of Paul (II Cor 11:22-28)! How did he do it? Is there not a cause?!
- D. Paul wrote boldly about the effect God's mercies should have in your life (Romans 12:1-2).
- E. John wrote boldly about the effect that our adoption should have in our lives (I John 3:1-3).

The Cause Is Divisible

- A. There is more than one aspect to the cause, which should be identified without confusion.
- B. First, there is the cause in the sense of its intrinsic value – its validity, reason, or motive.
- C. Second, there is the cause in the sense of appropriate action – its design, effort, or result.
- D. Third, there is the cause in the sense of consequential effect – its benefit, gain, or reward.
- E. For example, David's cause was (1) God's honor, (2) killing Goliath, (3) victory and honor.
- F. For example, honor parents: (1) parents deserve it; (2) God blesses it; (3) parents are happy.

The Cause Is Divisive

- A. Simeon told Mary that God had appointed Jesus to expose men's evil hearts (Luke 2:34-35).
- B. The Lord Jesus Christ caused many a division in the nation of Israel (John 7:43; 9:16; 10:19).
- C. The Lord Jesus Christ is either precious or a stone of stumbling and offence (I Peter 2:6-8).
- D. Jesus Christ did not come to bring peace: He came to bring a testing sword (Matt 10:34-39).
- E. The perilous times of the last days use a form of godliness; those contending for true religion make themselves a prey to other Christians (II Tim 3:1 – 4:5; Isaiah 59:14-15; 66:5; Jn 16:2).

The Cause Is Individual

- A. Just as with David in the face of Israel and Eliab, you will be exceptional and different from the crowd, and those you think friends will ridicule and accuse you of pride (I Sa 17:28-30).
- B. The God of the cause sought a man, not a crowd, who would stand before Him (Ezek 22:30).
- C. Remember the five great men – Noah, Job, Moses, Samuel, and Daniel (Jer 15:1; Eze 14:14).
- D. Wide is the gate, broad is the way, and many are the travelers on the way to destruction; the strait gate, narrow way, and seldom traveled way of loneliness leads to life (Matt 7:13-14).
- E. Both John and Jesus were ridiculed by their generation, which envied them (Matt 11:16-19).
- F. How many can literally and accurately be compared to Paul (I Cor 15:10; II Co 11:5; 12:11)?

The Cause Is Exclusive

- A. To zealously pursue any cause means that you must sacrifice other goals or interests for it, as Paul's examples of athletic competition indicate so clearly (I Cor 9:24-27; Heb 12:1-4).
- B. The Lord Christ was very open about the cost of discipleship in His cause (Luke 14:25-33).
- C. The rich young ruler could not part with his wealth to follow Jesus Christ (Mark 10:20-27).
- D. The possibility of living peacefully, especially in this generation, is fully false (II Tim 3:12).
- E. If you live for the cause of Jesus Christ, the world will count you very strange (I Peter 4:1-5).
- F. Your love of God must be all-consuming and first in all parts of life (Deut 6:5; Luke 10:27).

- G. You cannot be double minded with two hearts involving God (Matt 6:24; James 1:8; 4:8).
- H. There is competition for your attention, affection, zeal, efforts, time, money, energy, etc.
- I. Consider common causes of men e.g. politics, yard, exercise, investments, family, education, career, marriage, cleanliness, health, economics, house, income, hobbies, and many others.
- J. Paul charged Timothy against entanglement in any distractions to his Captain (II Tim 2:4).
- K. To truly uphold the cause of Jesus Christ, you cannot be lukewarm (Rev 3:15-16; 2:4-5).

The Cause Is Constant

- A. The cause does not vary, just as God and Jesus Christ and His gospel and church do not vary.
- B. As long as you are in this world, you will have your flesh, the world, and Satan to oppose.
- C. Faithful men for the cause have *perseverance* and *consistency* above hot and furious bursts.
- D. The examples of Jehu and Solomon are terrible, who began with great zeal and ended in sin.
- E. You must count up the cost and finish for the cause – no unfinished towers (Luke 14:25-33)!
- F. True disciples continue in the word of Jesus Christ (John 8:31; Acts 13:43; 14:22; Col 1:23).
- G. Solomon's dereliction of the cause brought a loss of ten tribes upon his son (I Kgs 11:1-13).
- H. Jehu's zeal was avenged on his family tree for lack of integrity in judging others (Hosea 1:4).

The Cause Is Costly

- A. In order to follow Jesus Christ and fight for His cause, there will be costs to pay (Luke 9:23).
- B. Paul exhorted Timothy to hardness, a ministerial trait, indicating this price (II Timothy 2:3).
- C. Consider how Festus accused Paul of being crazy and mad during his testimony (Acts 26:24).
- D. Especially in these perilous times, carnal Christians will surely persecute you (II Tim 3:12).
- E. Joshua charged Israel that they could not serve the Lord without total dedication (Jos 24:19).

The Cause Is Pervasive

- A. Christianity is not a form of godliness for Sunday morning – it is a comprehensive lifestyle that affects everything you think, say, and do; it reaches every aspect of living in the world.
- B. It is perilous times of the last days that has Christians loving pleasures more than God, having only a form of godliness (ritual only), and rejecting sound doctrine (II Tim 3:1 – 4:4).
- C. If you believe on Jesus Christ, everything you do should be for Him (I Cor 10:31; Col 3:17).
- D. Every word of Scripture and every command of God is part of the cause of God and truth, part of the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus Christ, and part of the true gospel of grace.
 - 1. The true disciples of Jesus Christ are those who keep His commandments in all things.
 - 2. To exceed the Pharisees, His enemies, we must love the least commands (Matt 5:19-20).
 - 3. All scripture is inspired by God, and every part of it should be preached (Acts 20:20,27).
 - 4. Any and every Christian duty takes on a life and purpose of its own when seen this way.
- E. The cause of God and truth has claims and needs for every part of your life to be dedicated.
 - 1. It includes all pertaining to God, Jesus Christ, the Bible, the church, saints, holiness, etc.
 - 2. God's glorious cause impacts everything (I Cor 4:7; 10:31; Colossians 3:17; I Thes 5:18).
 - 3. *Loving* brethren and serving others is not just a nice concept, but the life of a Christian.
 - 4. *Working* in order to have money to give for the cause becomes a motivation (Eph 4:28).
 - 5. *Hospitality* is not a burden or an expense but a blessed privilege for Christ (I Peter 4:9).
 - 6. *Forgiving others* to maintain unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace is a powerful deed.
 - 7. Great delight in *singing*, contrary to most worship, is part of the cause (Ps 47:6; Ep 5:19).
 - 8. *Giving* fit for the cause is firstfruits, liberal, and cheerful (Pr 3:9-10; Is 32:8; II Cor 9:7).
 - 9. Zeal for the cause means *favoring only the very best men* (Ps 15:4; 101:3-8; 119:63,79).

10. *Devour the Bible* to meet God, feed yourself, and help others (Ps 119:9,11; Pr 22:17-21).
11. If *the church* is the body and fullness of Christ, what would you not do for it (Eph 1:23), with great zeal and without being asked, but looking for places to volunteer to serve.
12. If God seeks worship in spirit and truth, the cause *must be spread* (Jn 1:35-51; 4:27-42).
13. For God's cause you hate His enemies, and *Hollywood* is a bad one (Ps 101:3; Jas 4:4).
14. Remember the *five inputs* – Bible, prayer, friends, music, entertainment – for the cause!
15. *Church attendance* is part of the cause (Psalm 27:4; 84:10; 122:1-9; Hebrews 10:23-25)!
16. *Training children* is not just a good idea: it is the perpetuation of truth through children!
17. *Train your children*, and for what? The next Samuel, Timothy, or Priscilla is the goal!
18. *Prayer* is the most powerful thing you can do the cause; watch and pray for all (I Pe 4:7)!
19. *Fathers*, remember how Abraham and Joshua fulfilled the cause (Gen 18:19; Josh 24:15).
20. *Cremation* may not seem to fit here, but for the cause of God and truth it certainly does.
21. *Marriage* is God's, a tower for godliness, a battering ram against sin. Who will be best?
22. *A work ethic* is part of the cause (Rom 12:11; I Thes 4:11-12; Pr 6:6-11; 22:29; Ec 9:10).
23. *Food and drink* must be ruled (Luke 21:34; I Pet 4:3-5; Prov 21:17; 25:16; Eccl 10:17).
24. *Honor rulers* for Him (I Pet 2:13-17; I Sam 24:6; Rom 13:1-7; II Pet 2:11; Pr 24:21-22).
25. He has legislated *sex* (Lev 18:1-30; Heb 13:4; Ex 22:19; I Cor 6:12-20; 7:1-5; Mat 5:28).
26. He ordained *modesty* (Ge 3:21; Pr 7:10; Is 3:16-24; I Tim 2:9-10; I Pet 3:3-4; Mat 5:28).
27. Overrule your *speech* (Ps 12:3-4; 139:4; 109:30; Pr 18:21; Lu 6:46; Col 4:6; Jas 3:9-10).
28. *Music* can be Goliath (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:18-21; James 5:13; I Cor 10:31).
29. Defeat *Internet sin* (Ps 101:3; Pr 6:6-11; Eph 4:27; Phil 4:8; Jas 4:4; I Cor 15:33).
30. The cause includes *money* (Pr 6:1-5; 30:25; Acts 4:32-37; 5:1-11; I Tim 6:6-10,17-19).
31. *Moods* can be Goliath (Prov 16:32; 25:28; Phil 4:4; Psalm 42:5-8; I Thessalonians 5:16).
32. He is Lord of absolutely everything (I Corinthians 4:7; 10:31; Col 3:17; I Thess 5:18).

The Cause Has Consequences

- A. If you lose your life for Him and His cause, you will find it; but if you try to save your life for yourself or some other cause, you will lose your life in this world (Matt 10:39; 16:25).
- B. There is no respect for those who mind earthly things and neglect the cause (Phil 3:18-19).
- C. There are great benefits, blessings, and rewards for those who are committed to the cause.
 1. Compare honoring parents – the parents deserve it; God blesses it; the parents are happy.
 2. Zeal can provoke others by giving them an example of a fervent spirit and shaming them for the apathetic and lukewarm spirit (II Corinthians 9:2; II Kings 10:15-16).
 3. Zeal brings God's blessing and defers His judgment, since He hates lethargy and slothfulness (Num 25:6-13; Psalm 37:4; Matt 6:33; Revelation 2:1-5; 3:14-19).

Conclusion:

1. Peter denied Jesus Christ and His cause, and he wept bitterly over it (Luke 22:62). Are you like this?
2. Peter boldly proclaimed Jesus Christ and His cause later (Acts 2:33-36; 4:1-12,18-20). Be like this!
3. Is your life motivated, structured, and executed toward God's kingdom and righteousness (Mat 6:33)?
4. There is a cause – a glorious cause – but to be like David you must step forward in faith and zeal!
5. What is your Goliath? You have more than one. You need to run to it in zeal and cut its head off.
6. The most crucial points of this study are zeal, courage, commitment, perseverance, and consistency.

For further study:

1. Greatness by a Great Cause ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/greatness-by-a-great-cause.pdf>.
2. The sermon outline, "[The Love of Christ Constraineth Us](#)," expositors II Cor 5:12-17 and Christ's love for us.
3. Make Your Life Count ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/make-your-life-count.pdf>.

4. Managing Your Life ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/managing-your-life.pdf>.
5. Jesus Is Lord of All ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/christ/he-is-lord-of-all/sermon.php>.
6. The men's outline, "[A Mighty Man's Life](#)," prioritizes the duties in a man's life to live for Jesus Christ.
7. The sermon outline, "[Spiritual Adultery](#)," shows the heinous wickedness of not living entirely for Jesus Christ.
8. Zeal for the Lord ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/zeal-for-the-lord.pdf>.
9. Jehu ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/jehu.pdf>.
10. Ending Life Well ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/ending-life-well.pdf>.
11. What Is a Great Church? ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/what-is-a-great-church.pdf>.
12. Exceeding Magnifical ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/church/exceeding-magnifical/sermon.php>.
13. The sermon outline, "David and Goliath," reviews their conflict and this sermon's text in much greater detail.
14. The sermon outline, "The Offence of Jesus Christ," reviews the divisive nature of Jesus Christ's religion.