# “You’ve Got One Job!”

Stop. Look. And listen.

Every leader needs to hear these soul-searching words from pastor-author Eugene Petersen in his book, Working the Angles.

> *It is with God with whom we have to do. People go for long stretches of time without being aware of that, thinking it is money, or sex, or work, or children, or parents, or a political cause, or an athletic competition, or learning with which they must deal. Any one or a combination of these subjects can absorb them and for a time give them the meaning and purpose that human beings seem to require. But then there is a slow stretch of boredom. Or a disaster. Or a sudden collapse of meaning. They want meaning. They want more.*

And then Petersen closes the deal…

> *They want God. When a person searches for meaning and direction, asking questions and testing out statements, we must not be diverted into anything other or lesser.*

Mic drop. Right?

When you rehearse the job description of a leader, bullet point #1 reads like this: **In the middle of life and all its contingencies, keep the conversation centered on God.**

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Life lived on cruise-control quickly reverts to the horizontal—the things that we see, the obstacles in our path, the challenges that we face.

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That’s exactly what David did. For a moment, journey back with me to that familiar Old Testament account. The battle lines are drawn. Army against army. The Israelites vs. the Philistines. The Philistines’ perennial superstar, Goliath, huge of size and armed to the teeth, figures to wreak havoc and make life intolerable for Israel. The stakes high; the outlook bleak. The pundits were poised to post the breaking news of Philistine victory. Game—set—match.

But in the middle of inestimable odds, David, still saturated by the stench of the shepherd's field, steps undaunted into the fray. Annoyed to the core, he wants to know who is this person…"that he should taunt the armies of the living God?"

Don't you love it?

David, the leader, armed with a sling, a few stones, and a question single-handedly shifts the focus from the horizontal to the vertical, from the seen to the unseen, from the challenger to the Creator.

Let's be honest. In the middle of crisis or confusion or chaos, it's easy to lose our way. We second-guess. We panic. We want to turn tail. Or we make short-term, short-sighted decisions. And at times, truth be told, all the above.

And it is in these moments that perhaps the greatest gift leaders give to those who look to them for guidance is to size up the battle, not by looking around but by looking up.

- What is really going on here, in the spiritual realm, in these against-all-odds circumstances?
- What unfathomable way of God am I being asked not to figure out, but simply to embrace?
- What scaffolding have I erected in my life that He wants to dismantle?
- What uncharted territory of trust is He asking me to enter into?

The bottom line is this: when those in our circle of influence are searching for meaning and direction, **it is our privilege, and more importantly, our responsibility to faithfully draw their attention to the sometimes hard-to-see, yet ever-present hand of God.**

And in that sacred moment, our call is to center the conversation not on what we think they may want, but on what we know they desperately need.

That's what we have to offer. Nothing more. And certainly nothing less.

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