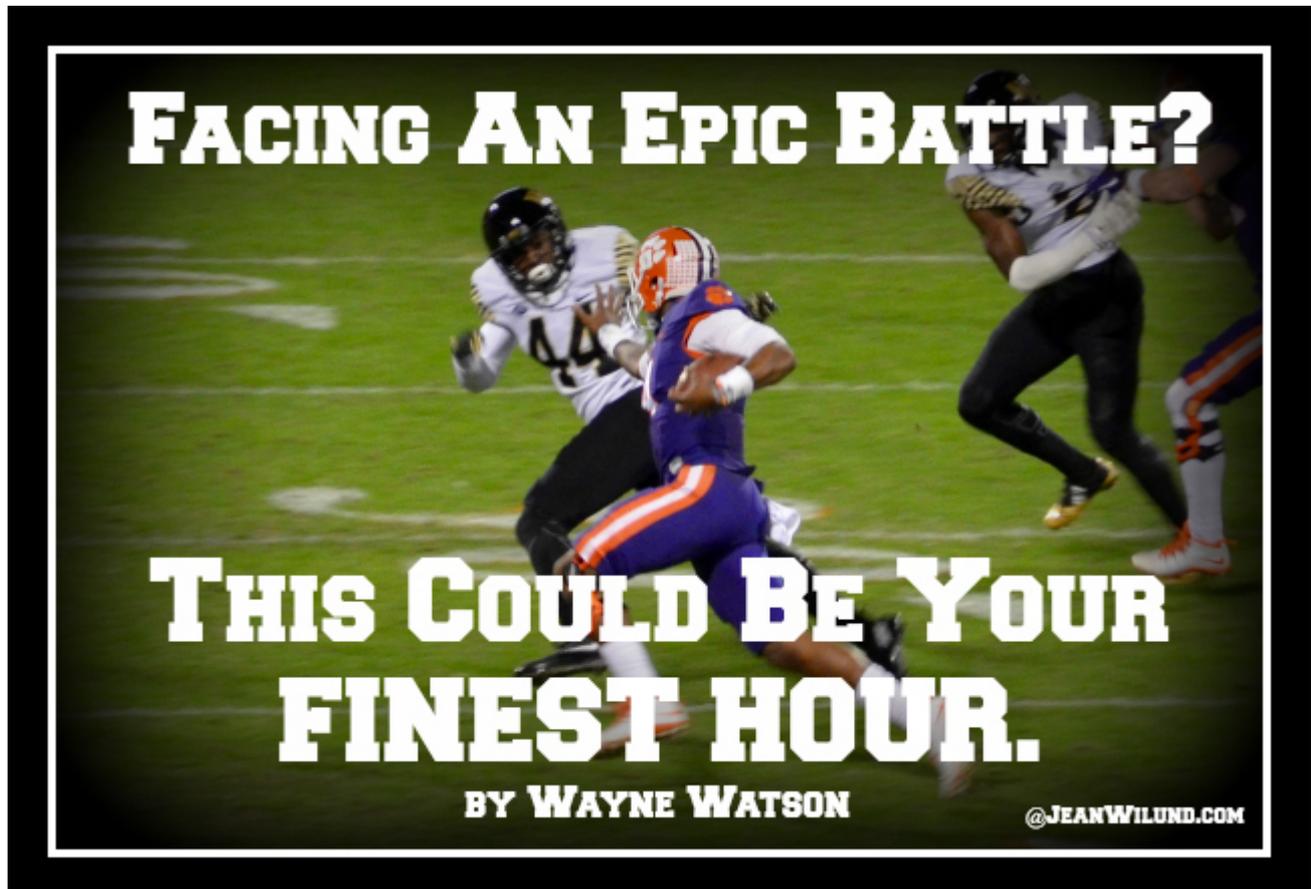


Facing an Epic Battle? This Could Be Your FINEST HOUR (Monday Music)



There's going to be an epic battle tonight.

First there was **David and Goliath** near the Valley of Elah.

Then **Aragorn and the Orcs** in the Battle of Morannon.

Tonight, it's **Clemson and Alabama** in the NCAA National Championship Game.

I mean no disrespect to Alabama by comparing them to Goliath and orcs. I only mean that Clemson is picked by most to lose.

Sure, on paper, it looks daunting.

Who am I kidding? It IS daunting.

But it's no less daunting for Alabama to defeat *undefeated* Clemson.

They're both facing an epic battle.

So. Much. Pressure.

Except, not according to Clemson's coach Dabo Swinney.

"Football is not pressure. This is a game. That's the message I try to instill in our players all the time . . .

. . . understand through this game you have a chance to bring some joy to people who really have pressure in their life, who really have problems . . .

. . . when you have the cross as the foundation of your life, football ain't going to bring no pressure. I promise you that . . .

That's why it's fun. This is a game. It's fun."

(Excerpt from: WATCH: Dabo Swinney says there is pressure in this world, but none on his team.)

Real Pressure

The apostle Paul knew *real* pressure.

He was imprisoned, beat, shipwrecked, and faced death repeatedly.

But the unshakeable foundation of the cross didn't fail him.

Paul continued to rejoice. The guy just couldn't be kept down.

In the midst of his epic battles, Paul experienced his finest hour:

*“We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the **troubles we experienced** in the province of Asia.*

*We were under **great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself.***

*Indeed, we felt we had received the **sentence of death.***

But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. . .

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*We have done so, **relying not ON worldly wisdom but on God’s grace.**”*

(2 Corinthians 1:8-9, 12 NIV)

Faith Releases Power

Faith releases God’s power to work in our lives – to bring peace and power in the midst of pressure.

I don’t mean it releases power like a magic wand. Faith is simply agreeing with God that He’s able and willing to accomplish all He’s planned.

Our faith is proven when we face our battle.

Do we march onto the battle field despite the odds against us, confident that God is about to move?

Or do we grumble and complain about what’s going wrong?

Do we walk forward expecting God to work?

Or do we curl up, paralyzed and defeated by our circumstances?

Faith is a game-changer.

Sara's Finest Hour

Every day Sara Frankl faced a real battle and her finest hour.

Sara developed ankylosing spondylitis, leukopenia, and Cushing's syndrome.

This basically means that for the last several years of her life she faced severe chronic pain all day every day.

And she faced it all with joy.

Pain couldn't shake her from her sure foundation – Jesus Christ.

Sara wrote:

I've come to understand that the only thing I can control is whether or not I open my heart.

Open it to embrace my circumstances.

Open it to be who He needs me to be in the here and now rather than assume happiness can come from the "If only..." and "When I get..."

This could be our FINEST HOUR

Football's not pressure.

A National Championship game isn't even pressure.

It's a fierce, fun game, and I'm phenomenally grateful, win or lose, that my beloved Tigers are playing in it, but it's not pressure.

I confess I forget that. A lot. God is still working on me.

No matter who wins the epic battle on the field tonight, the greatest battle both teams can win – *that we all can win* – is the battle of faith.

Depending on what we choose, today could be our FINEST HOUR.

Watch this music video of **Wayne Watson's** powerful song ***Finest Hour*** set to *The Lord of the Rings* hero Aragorn battling creepy orcs. It's the perfect fit for those of us facing our own epic battles.

Listen to Wayne Watson's lyrics. Let them sink in. Then walk in them:

[Pressure is powerless in the face of God. This could be your FINEST HOUR #MondayMusic #GodsPower Click To Tweet](#)