

## INTRODUCTION

This is the second of about five messages I'm going to preach about the life of David. Last week we talked about the kind of person God uses and we found in 1 Samuel 16:7, this extremely important principle from scripture: Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. If you can remember that, you have a head start in being the kind of person God can use. God chose David when he was just a teenager to be the next king. He anointed him through the prophet, Samuel, and then David became the heir to the throne even though Saul was going to be king for many, many more years. Now we come to the second message about David and I'm going to be talking tonight about David and Goliath. Because this is a story all of us have heard from the earliest days in Sunday School, I want to look at some passages of scripture in 1 Samuel 17 and talk about the actual story. Then I'm going to make an application to our lives.

In 1 Samuel 17:3. You'll notice the Philistines were on one hill and the Israelites were on the other hill. Look at verse 4 and see what happened. You can just imagine this setting in your mind.

1 Samuel 17:3-7. "A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall. He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels, on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod and its iron point weighed 600 shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him."

If you measure Goliath's height according to the cubits in the Hebrew, he was probably about nine and a half feet tall. That's big enough to make Shaquille O'Neal (at 7' 1") look like a midget. We don't have any people that big today. His armor weight between 125 and 150 pounds and the spearhead weighed between 15-20 pounds. This fellow was dressed up like a modern day Rambo! He had a bronze javelin on his back and was covered up in all kinds of armor. In fact, probably about the only piece of skin you would see on him would have been just about above his nose for his eyes to look out.

1 Samuel 17:8-9, 11. "Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, 'Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us.' ...On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified."

It was not too uncommon in ancient battles for one man to fight against one man to determine the entire outcome of the battle. I did a little research this week into the Hebrew for those two words "dismayed" and "terrified." Those words are too mild to describe the fear the Israelites felt. It was a fear that could best be translated, "it caused their limbs to shake and it caused their bowels to turn to water." They were really frightened like you wouldn't believe. They didn't want to have anything to do with this giant! Every morning for forty days in a row Goliath came out and said, "Send down someone to fight against me" and for forty days they turned and ran.

Well little David was back in Bethlehem tending the sheep. His three oldest brothers were part of the Israelite army so his father, Jesse, says, "Son I want you to take some Quarter Pounders with cheese to the battlefield because your brothers are hungry. Take some food to them." As David was walking out there, he sees what is going on and hears the taunt and the invitation of this giant.

In verse 26, David asked this question: "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy" not the armies of Saul but "the armies of the living God?" I can imagine when David said this everybody said, "Sssh! Don't call him an uncircumcised fool! He may hear you!" David couldn't believe it! Did you know that David really wasn't loved by his brothers very much? In fact, if you can imagine being one of the older brothers when Samuel comes down to pick the next king and he overlooks the seven older brothers and picks the runt of the litter, look what Eliab in verse 28 thought about his younger brother, David. "When Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, 'Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert?' [the Bible says he had left them with a shepherd] 'I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle.'" Sometimes people's estimation of you is not exactly the same estimation that the Lord has. What did the Bible say about David? "He was a man after God's own heart." What did his own brother say about him? "You are conceited and you have a wicked heart." Sometimes that's the tag some of God's people get out of jealousy.

As you know, David said, "I'll go out and fight that guy! I'm not afraid!" He goes to Saul and says, "Saul, when I was a shepherd, a lion came and I killed the lion. When I was a shepherd, a bear came and I killed the bear. If I could kill a lion if I could kill a bear I can kill this uncircumcised giant!" Saul says, "Okay, we'll give you a shot at him."

1 Samuel 17:38-40. "Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them. 'I cannot go in these,' he said to Saul, 'because I am not used to them.' So, he took them off. Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine."

You have to remember that Saul was about a 52 long and David was about a 38 regular: Saul's armor was way too big. The Bible says Saul stood head and shoulders above all the rest of the Israelite men. A lot of people have talked about why David took five stones. The Jewish rabbis say he took five because Goliath had four brothers. He thought he might have to deal with all of them. But he was ready. It could have just been that David was such a wise, prudent boy that he always over-prepared, which is always a good thing to do.

1 Samuel 17:41-47. "Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. He looked David over and saw that he was only a boy, ruddy and handsome, and he despised him. He said to David. 'Am I a dog that you come at me with sticks?' And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 'Come here,' he said, 'and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!' David said to the Philistine, 'You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come

against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands.”

By the way, this may sound a lot like some professional wrestlers today talking before a match but it is not bragging if it is fact. It is not bragging if it comes straight from God and God had given these words to David. He was not just making an idle, empty threat. It was the truth.

1 Samuel 17:48-51. “As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground. So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the scabbard. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran.”

## **I. GOLIATH = ANY GIANT OBSTACLE IN YOUR PATHWAY OF BLESSING**

There was probably only about a two- or three-square inch area of exposed skin on Goliath, and that stone must have sounded like a golf ball hitting a watermelon. Now, this is a story that's not new to anybody in this room. You've heard it from the earliest days in Sunday School. So what does it mean to you? First of all you have to understand that these were true historical events. This is not some fairy tale or myth. It actually happened. There was a giant fighting against a teenager. You also have to understand these things that happen in the Old Testament the New Testament says are examples to teach us spiritual truth. I want to apply what we have just read and talk about how to kill the pesky giants in your life. First of all, the giant Goliath represents any giant obstacle in our pathway of blessing. In other words God wants to move you forward so you can claim the possessions that are yours in Christ.

The Philistines were a godless, pagan, warlike people standing on occupied territory—territory God said belonged to the Jews. These Philistines said, “Not only are we not going to let you take this land God has given you, we're going to take away some of the progress you have made!” God wants every believer in Jesus Christ to move into the spiritual Canaan, a life of spiritual milk and honey, blessings of the victorious Christian life. But there are some giants that stand in your way. Your giants may not be named Goliath. Your giant may be named “depression.” Your giant may be named “lust.” Your giant may be named “pornography.” Your giant may be named “bitterness.” Your giant may be named “temper.” Your giant may be named “greed.” Your giant may be named “a sickness or a death in your family that you have not gotten over.” There are all different names to who your giant may be. These giants rise up in front of you and say, “You're not going to grow anymore. You're not going to make any more progress in the Christian life until you deal with me, buddy!” Most of us are like Saul and the armies of Israel. We just don't want to get into the fight. We would rather just stay there with the army of Israel and have a

good time. If you're going to grow, if you are going to claim all the blessings God has for you, you have to learn how to deal with these giants.

## 1. Find the battlefront

How do you do that? Let me give you three directions we find in the life of David. Number one the first thing you have to do is find the battlefront. You have to be there where the battle is going on. There is never any victory unless you are in a battle. The only way you can be in a battle is to show up at the battlefront. Here's what you do to experience victory: You must show up for action! That's what David did. He was back there in Bethlehem keeping the sheep and he said, "I'm going to go to the battlefront!" He went for a different reason, to take some food to his brothers, but he went to where the action was. Here's the problem in the Christian life. So many Christians never get to the battlefront. They are spiritually AWOL—absent without love. The funny thing is for forty days the Israelite army lined up and shouted their battle cry. I don't know what their battle cry was "God save us!" or "We're the army of Israel!" I don't know what it was but it says in verse 20, "Early in the morning David left the flock with a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions shouting the war cry." For forty days they lined up shouted the battle cry and for forty days Goliath said, "Come out! One of you come on out to me!" and the Bible says they got so terrified they turned and ran. There are a lot of Christians who line up and shout the battle cry, but then they turn and retreat, never going into battle.

I heard about a high school up in Oklahoma. They consolidated the school district and did away with the football program. But this little high school loved to have pep rallies! They kept having pep rallies when they didn't even have a football team. They would gather in the gym on a Friday morning and would cheer for their team and they didn't have a team! There was no game to play that night. There was no challenge there was no competition they just had a pep rally. I'm afraid that's what too many worship services are, people lining up for battle and shouting but then turning and running back home. It's like a pep rally where there is no gain. We get here and we sing the songs and we shout the battle cry, but then we say, "See you next week." We never grow we never reach the battlefront. You have to show up for the battle. That's the first thing you have to do.

## 2. Identify the enemy

Number two you have to identify the enemy. When David showed up and heard Goliath making this threat, he knew the enemy was there before him and he said, "We have to do something about this!" Before you ever succeed in battle you have to identify who your giant is. Your giant may be your temper. It may be lust; it may be a financial problem; it may be some personal problem you have. Before you can ever conquer your giant, you have to *identify* your giant. David said, "There's the giant. There's the target. I have something to shoot at!" You will never have victory over these giants that stand up in front of you until you know who they are and what they are. You'll never have victory over some of your problems until you admit you have that problem standing up in front of you. Those of you who know anything about Alcoholic Anonymous' "Twelve Step Program" and other programs know the very first thing you have to do is admit you have a problem. At these AA meetings somebody stands up and says, "Hi. My

name is Joe and I am an alcoholic.” They have to identify that they have a problem. Before you will ever kill your giant you have to say, “That’s his name. That’s who he is.”

Sometimes I just keep preaching when maybe I ought to stop for just a moment and ask you to fill out a nametag for your giant right now. “Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_.” What is that giant looming before you that you need to deal with? If you think you don’t have one, could it be because you are nowhere near the front lines of battle? I really think the devil has some Christians so backslidden and so cold and complacent and indifferent that he’s not going to bug them, because they are not doing any damage to his kingdom. I guarantee you if you become a prayer warrior in the Intercessory Prayer Ministry and start sharing your faith; start serving the Lord; start teaching a Sunday School class; or start serving Jesus—before you know it you are on the battlefield and there will be plenty of giants out there. So identify your giant and find the battlefield.

### **3. Fight in God’s strength**

Number three if you are going to kill these giants, you have to fight in God’s strength, not in your strength or in human strength. Did you notice when David came to the battlefield and recognized that the enemy was Goliath his brother, Eliab, misidentified the enemy? His brother started attacking David. That is always a symptom of spiritual cowardice, when there is fighting among the ranks. The enemy we are fighting against is not in this church. This enemy we are fighting against is the world of flesh and the devil and a sign of spiritual cowardice and spiritual immaturity like David’s older brother, you start attacking people within your own army. How terrible it is when there is fighting among your own troops. So David has to fight the right enemy and the fighting was not there in the Israelite army, it was against the enemy.

#### **a. Your armor**

First of all you have to remember that Saul’s armor won’t fit! Saul’s armor never fits. Here a giant of a man himself and when Goliath, the Philistine giant, came out and said, “Send a warrior to fight against me,” who did everybody look at? They looked at their giant, Saul—but Saul was too afraid to do it. So after 40 days when David said, “I’ll go!” they said, “We have to do *something!*” So they put Saul’s armor on David and like I said it was too big for him. You can just imagine how it swallowed him up. David said, “This won’t work for me!” What’s the lesson there? In our spiritual battles you cannot use anybody else’s armor! You can’t use anybody else’s experience. You must have your own armor. You must use your own experience in preparing for battle. That’s why the Apostle Paul, says in Ephesians 6:11, “Put on the full armor of God.” Don’t put on somebody else’s armor. Make sure you have the helmet of salvation and the breastplate of righteousness. Cover your loins and hips with the truth, have your battle sandals on your feet shod with “the Good News” in preparation for sharing the Good News. Take the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit. You put on your own armor, because nobody else’s armor will work for you.

#### **b. God’s ammunition**

Here’s the second thing if you are going to fight the battle, God’s ammunition never fails. Let me

talk about David for just a moment. He took that stone and he put it in that sling and I can just imagine that teenager running toward Goliath, spinning that sling around then at just the right moment, he let go of one end of that sling and the stone flew out of there. I happen to believe that God honored David's efforts and he honored David's faith. David had enough faith to go into battle. David had enough faith to say, "I come to you in the name of the Lord God of Israel!" David had enough faith to do all it took to pick up the stone and put it into the sling and swing it around and to let it go! But I think when David let go of the stone I think God took over. I think suddenly that stone went into hyperspace and Pow! That means when we do all we can humanly do, all that God asks us to do, there's a point at which we let go and God takes over. First you must do all God asks you to do. You have to be willing to go into battle. You have to be willing to pick up those stones. You have to be willing to put the stone in the sling. You have to be willing to swing it around and to let it go! At that point God's power kicks in.

Let me give you a practical example. Sometimes Christians are afraid to share their faith about Jesus to others. Let me just ask you to try it this week. Find any person anywhere that as far as you know doesn't have much of a spiritual relationship with God and just start talking to them about Jesus. Do you know what you will find? You'll find yourself saying things you can't believe you are saying. It's happened to me before. Somebody asks me questions about God and I'm talking to them about Jesus and all of a sudden I'm thinking, "I can't believe that I'm saying what I said because I don't know that I'm that smart." If you will just initiate the conversation do you know what you are doing? You're picking up the stone, you're putting it in the sling, you're swinging it around and you're letting it go and then God takes over. Just start talking to them about Jesus and you see if God doesn't take over. That's the way he works. Fight in God's strength!

### **c. Finish off the enemy**

Number three you must finish off the enemy. Don't leave the job undone. Not only did David throw the stone and we're not sure if that killed Goliath. I doubt it did. Somebody even figured one time how thick his skull would have been if he was nine feet tall and they said it would have taken a rock going a certain velocity to actually kill him. Probably what happened is it just stunned him, knocked him out. David could have turned around and done the "touchdown spike" with his sling but instead he finished his enemy off. He ran to him, pulled Goliath's sword out and the Bible says, "He killed him and then he cut off his head!" Cutting his head off would have killed him too. I don't know, he must have jabbed the sword in Goliath's heart or something and then he cut off his head.

## **II. FINISH WHAT YOU START**

The Bible says David took the head of Goliath into the camp of the Israelites and once again the Jewish rabbis tell us that for years after they took the head of Goliath into battle so their enemies would know they were the ones who had killed Goliath. There is a powerful principle: Finish what you start! Complete the task God gives you.

### **1. Small victories lead to the greatest victory**

Let me tell you what that means to us. Number one as you finish off your you have to understand that the big victory is the result of many small victories. David killing Goliath was not his greatest victory. It wasn't even his greatest fight. It was just one of many victories he had to win but he had to finish that battle before he was ready for another. The big victory is only won when you win these little victories one after the other. So some of you may think that you can't sing, "Victory In Jesus," unless you win some huge spiritual battle unless you go and win Saddam Hussein to Christ or something like that. A small daily victory for you may be going 24 hours without losing your temper; it may be going 24 hours without having one lustful thought; it may be going 24 hours without spreading any gossip. Before you can have a big victory you have to have these little victories. That's the way you finish what you start by being faithful to win the small victories.

## **2. It is never attained until the very end**

Here's the second thing. The big victory is never attained until the end. The most important truth of the Old Testament is "Notice those people who finished strong!" Like Steve Farrar's book, *Finishing Strong* says, "Don't ever be so overconfident and so presumptuous that you ever think that you have it all figured out and you have it all won and you have won all the victories that there are to win because the moment you say that you are in trouble." We're going to see that in David's life a little later but we need to learn not only from David's victories we need to learn from David's failures and defeats as well.

## **CONCLUSION**

When are you going to come to the place where you can say, "All right! The fight is over!" Look at the Apostle Paul the words he wrote there in prison to Timothy. These are the last recorded words of the Apostle Paul. He says, "For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith!" It's not up to us to say that until God says it's time for us to say that but God had told Paul it was time for him to say that. Regardless of how old you get; regardless of how experienced you become; no matter how many victories you have won in the past don't stop fighting, because we are in a fight until the very end. I hope you and I can say like the Apostle Paul when we come to the time when God calls us or Jesus returns, "I've kept the faith. I've reached the finish line and I have fought the good fight." If you can do that when you meet Jesus, he will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

## OUTLINE

### I. GOLIATH = ANY GIANT OBSTACLE IN YOUR PATHWAY OF BLESSING

1. Find the battlefront
2. Identify the enemy
3. Fight in God's strength
  - a. Your armor
  - b. God's ammunition
  - c. Finish off the enemy

### II. FINISH WHAT YOU START

1. Small victories lead to the greatest victory
2. It is never attained until the very end



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For the Joy...  
Pastor David Dykes