

52 STORIES OF THE BIBLE

by

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14. David and Goliath

This morning we're going to look at the fourteenth of the 52 major events in the Bible, the story of David and Goliath. One of the best-known stories, a story that has made itself into the vernacular of Christians and non-Christians alike. I often hear non-Christians talk about "hang 'em high as Haman" or they talk about Goliath. I wonder if they have any idea where their language is coming from. So we'll look at David and Goliath in I Samuel this morning.

Let's pray: Father, I understand in my own life and I understand in others that it's one thing to say that the battle belongs to you, it's one thing to sing that we trust in the name of the Lord, but on Monday morning when we're faced with that neighbor or that coworker that we know so clearly you have told us that we are to share, we are to build relationships and that we've been given the authority by the King of the universe to do so, it's still hard. Father we pray that as we look at David and Goliath, we will be looking at ourselves and Mary and Sue and John and Jack and whoever it is in our lives that are presenting the challenge for us, we pray, like David, we will be people after your heart, that we will be people of faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.

I. Introduction

The story of King David starts in the book of I Samuel, Chapter 16. We saw last week how Saul had rejected God and so in turn, God rejected Saul as king over Israel.

A. Samuel Anoints David

Starting in Chapter 16 we see how secretly Samuel goes and anoints David as king. It's an interesting story. God says, "Go to Bethlehem, find Jesse, one of his sons is to be the new king of Israel. So Samuel contacts Jesse and they meet and Jesse starts to parade his sons in front of Samuel. I Samuel 16, starting at verse 6, "When they came (meaning the sons) he (Samuel) looked on Eliab, the oldest, and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed is before him.'" Samuel was looking on the outside and he sees someone who looks like a king and so assumes that Eliab is the next king of Israel. But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature because I have rejected him." Just the Hebrew way of saying, "I have not chosen him." "For the Lord sees not as a man sees, man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." Samuel was looking on the outside. He saw someone that looked regal and he was wrong. So Jesse continues to parade his sons in front of Samuel and each time the Lord says to Samuel, "Nope, not him, not him, not him." And we get down to verse 11 and Samuel says to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And Jesse said, "Well, there remains yet the youngest. He's out keeping sheep." It's kind of like, "Oh, no, he's not the one you are looking for. He's the youngest, he's out there dealing with those stupid sheep." Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him for we will not sit down until he comes here." Even David's father was looking on the outside. He was looking at the youngest of his boys. "Surely this isn't the king." Well, David comes and the Lord tells Samuel, "This is the king." And he anoints David, but he anoints him in private. Samuel's actually a little frightened of Saul.

B. Saul Meets David

In the second half, then, of Chapter 16, we have another story, verse 14, “Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him.” Saul had rejected God, so God rejected Saul as king over Israel, and actually sends an evil spirit to torment him. Evidently during these times of torment the only thing that would soothe Saul was music so he said, “Go find someone who is a good musician.” One of Saul’s associates says, verse 14, “I have seen the son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence. The Lord is with him.” Just an all-around good guy, I guess. And so, without knowing that Samuel had already anointed David as king, Saul has David come into his court and has him be the court musician to play during these troublesome times. Evidently David went back and forth because sometimes he’s tending his father’s sheep and sometimes he’s with Saul. That’s the background to the story of David and Goliath which we then start in verse 17. By the way, I’m going to spend most of the time this morning simply retelling the story and filling in some of the holes.

II. David and Goliath

A. Initial Confrontation

In verse 1-11, we see the initial confrontation between Goliath and Israel’s army. The two armies are drawn up in battle in a place called the Valley of Elah. It’s about 17 miles west, southwest of Jerusalem. The valleys are two to three miles apart so they’re probably on opposite sides of the valley. We read about the confrontation beginning with Goliath in verse 4, “And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath whose height was six cubits and a span.” He was about nine feet tall. “He had a helmet of bronze on his head and he was armed with a coat of mail and the weight of the coat was 5000 shekels of bronze.” About 125 pounds. “And he had bronze armor on his legs and a javelin of bronze swung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver’s beam and his spear’s head weighed six hundred shekels of iron (about 15 pounds, just in the point) and his shield-bearer went before him.” Pretty awesome warrior for anyone, I would suspect. A huge man, a giant. But I just want to mention in passing that the description of the armor and the description of Goliath’s size is more than an historical curiosity. The author is preparing us for the main theological point that he’s going to make in the story. He wants to describe from a human standpoint how awesome is Goliath. Goliath comes and he makes his challenge starting in verse 8, “He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, ‘Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants, but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us.’ And the Philistine said, ‘I defy the ranks of Israel this day. Give me a man that we may fight together.’” He did this twice a day for forty days. It actually was pretty common in ancient warfare to choose a champion from both sides and have them fight instead of having the armies fight. It’s never quite clear in history whether the losing side really cared at the end of the day, but it wasn’t that uncommon of a scene. Except this was a little one-sided. A little hard to take Goliath, seriously. It’s kind of like Mike Tyson challenging me to a fight. You know I looked and looked for pictures of this incident

and they are really quite gory if you go into the works of art. They depict almost a preadolescent David holding this gargantuan, empty, bloody hairy head. So how did the Israelites respond? Look at verse 11, "When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid." The Israelites responded in fear. Now please hear this. Verse 11 is not some historical curiosity. Verse 11 is a theological condemnation for their lack of faith. All the way through the Old Testament God has been making it abundantly clear that he is the God of the Israelites, that he is their warrior, that he will fight their battle. Jericho made that pretty clear that he will give them the Promised Land. And yet the Israelites, instead of holding to the promises of God, instead of believing that God is who he says he is and that he will do what he says he will do, they look at this giant and they respond in fear instead of faith. How far they have come from the time of the Exodus. How far the nation has come from the time of watching God part the Red Sea. How far they've come from knowing the God who gives them their Promised Land by destroying their enemies. Verse 11 is theological primarily and only secondly historical.

B. David's Interaction

So there is the initial confrontation between Goliath and the armies of Israel. In the next set of accounts, we read about David. We read about David's interaction with the army, with his big brother, and eventually with Saul. And again, David comes onto the scene; Jesse wants to know how David's big brothers are doing. He says, "Take some food, see how they are doing." He goes, he leaves the food and the other stuff with the baggage keepers at the back of the army. And then he hears Goliath when he comes out with the challenge. We'll pick up the story in verse 23, "All the men of Israel when they saw the man fled from him and were much afraid." They are responding in fear. But David responds in faith. That's the central contrast of this story. Look at verse 26, halfway through. David says, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" David sees things through the eyes of faith. David sees things as God sees them. And David sees that Goliath is not so much defying the armies of Israel as he is defying the God of the armies of Israel. David knows that God has promised to defeat the enemies of his people. And it doesn't matter how big the enemy is because David has faith and not fear. He responds as God intends him to. David believes God. Chapter 17, just from the straight literary standpoint is an amazing chapter. There are all kinds of plays on words and puns, but especially contrast going on. One writer writes about this passage. He points out the contrasts, the strong contrast between the soldier's words of resignation, verse 25, and David's words of indignation, verse 26. The men of Israel called Goliath "this man." David calls him "this uncircumcised Philistine." They say that Goliath has come out to defy Israel. David says he's come out to defy the armies of the living God. They refer to Goliath's potential victor whoever might kill him as "The man who kills him." David refers to him as "the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel." Now what you won't pick up in the English is that the same basic Hebrew word lies behind the word, "defy" and "disgrace". That Goliath is defying Israel and David's about to remove this disgrace from Israel. In short, the men of Israel see an insuperable, fearsome giant who's reproaching Israel. David sees merely an uncircumcised Philistine who has the audacity to reproach the armies of the living God. It's all in how you look at things. We can either look through the eyes of fear and see a defiant giant, or we can look through the

eyes of faith and see a disgrace that God is about to remove. That's the central contrast in the story of David and Goliath: of faith and fear. (Space at end of tape). If you have a big brother, you're going to highlight this passage.

If you have a proverbial big brother, I should say. Look at it. "Now Eliab, the eldest brother, heard when David spoke to the men. And Eliab's anger was kindled against David and he said, 'Why have you come down?' In other words, 'Why have you come down from Bethlehem?' 'And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness?' It's not a compliment. 'You big wuss!' is what he is saying. 'I know your presumption and the evil of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle.'" And David said, "What did I do now? Was it not but a word?" See, Eliab thinks he knows David's heart. He thinks that David has come down to gawk at them. Earlier we're told in the story that Jesse's eldest three sons became soldiers. David stayed to take care of the sheep. Eliab thinks he knows his little brother and thinks that he's just come to gawk. Well, the fact of the matter is, that like Samuel, Eliab is just looking on the outside. All he sees is his little brother who's not good for anything except keeping sheep. David says, "What did I do this time?"

Well, not only Eliab, but Saul heard about David's boast, David's statement of faith, that David was willing to fight Goliath. So Saul called David in and again the first thing that we see is Saul looking on the outside and all he sees is a young man. And he says, "Well, I appreciate the fact that you're willing to try to fight, but you're just a youth." Samuel, and Jesse, and Eliab and now Saul, were all doing the same thing, they looked at the outside and they see a monster Goliath and they see this little, itty-bitty shepherd boy named David.

It's interesting how David defends himself. He starts off by saying in our vernacular, "You know, I'm not a wimp. Being a shepherd is not all that it's cracked up to be and I have, through the power of God, killed both a bear and a lion in defending my sheep." Look down at verse 36. "Your servant has struck down both lions and bears and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them." "I'm no wimp and Goliath is no different than the lions and the bears." Actually he's a little different because he continues, "For he has defied the armies of the living God." And David said, "The Lord, Yahweh, 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." And Saul said to David, "Go and the Lord be with you." The Hebrew word for paw and hand are the same word, so you can hear the punning going on. "The Lord has defended me from the hand of the lion, from the hand of the bear, and he will deliver me from the hand of this uncircumcised Philistine."

David, while he was a man of valor, while he was a strong fighter, David understood that his greatest strength lay in the Lord. That is the source of David's power because he believes in God and understands that the battle that he's about to fight belongs to the Lord. Saul says, "Well, okay, here, take my armor." And David very diplomatically says, "No, I'm not really used to this stuff. It's okay." But there's really a much more significant, a much more theological reason why David did not want Saul's armor and we're going to see it in a few verses.

C. David Confronts Goliath

So David goes out to fight Goliath. Starting at verse 40, David prepares for battle. "Then he took his staff (it's a shepherd's staff, not a warrior's staff, it's not a javelin, it's not a spear) and he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the brook and put them in his shepherd's pouch. His sling was in his hand and he approached the Philistine. Using slings in war was quite common. It's a leather patch held together with two strings coming out either side about three feet long. And when they actually manufactured the stones they were about two to three inches across. They're not little pebbles that David is picking up, they're pretty good sized chunks of rock. But he gets them, and by the way, if you go today to the Valley of Elah as many tourists do, you will be overjoyed to find smooth stones all the way through the place. And you'll take your trophies home and enjoy them, "Just like David had!" Well, actually once a week the department of tourism in Israel backs up a dump truck and dumps in smooth stones. But it's still kind of cool to have five smooth stones.

So David is prepared for battle. He has a weapon of war, a very effective one once you're good at it. In verse 41, we read about Goliath's challenge. "And the Philistine moved forward and came near to David with his shield bearer in front of him. And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him. It was disgusting to Goliath. "For he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. And the Philistine said to David, 'Am I a dog that you come to me with sticks (in reference to his shepherd's staff)?' And the Philistine cursed David by his gods." Chief Philistine god was Dagon. That will come up in a second. "And the Philistine said to David, 'Come to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field.'" Actually a pretty common curse. We read it in non-biblical literature as well. Now there's one little piece of information that I have not covered and Goliath may have forgotten. It's back in I Samuel Chapter 5 where the Israelites did some silly things and the Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines and it was taken into the temple of Dagon. A common practice. You would conquer your enemy, you would take their god, you would stick it in your god's temple and that was a way of saying that my god is more powerful than your god. So they put the Ark of the Covenant, which they'd captured, into Dagon's temple. They got up the next morning; Dagon was flat in his face in a position of worship before the Ark. They put the Dagon statue back up. They come in the next morning, not only is he over on his face again, but his head's been cut off. Just a little bit of irony going on in this story which obviously is going to come true in just a few minutes.

So Goliath has uttered his challenge and then David utters his challenge and it's the challenge of faith. These are words of faith just like Hannah's song was a cry of faith. So also David's challenge is the challenge of faith. "Then David said to the Philistine, 'You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand and I will strike you down and cut off your head.'" Now I can imagine Goliath saying, "With what?! A stick? Your big scary sling?" David continues, "I will give the dead bodies of the hosts of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth that all the earth may know that there is a God in heaven and that all this assembly may know that the Lord saves, not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hand."

See, David is just sitting here and he is just throwing Goliath's words back in his face. Did you hear that? In almost everything Goliath has said, David has twisted and has thrown right back in his face. And again, in Hebrew, there are certain personal pronouns that are very emphatic and if you'd hear this in Hebrew, you would hear David just taunting Goliath by throwing his words back at him. Up in verse 33 he says, "Am I a dog that you come to me with sticks?" There are your pronouns. David says, "You come to me with a sword and a spear and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord." He's just throwing everything he can back at Goliath and Goliath is really getting ticked. Really getting ticked, I have to guess at this point. But again, notice the literary contrast that's going all the way through this passage. Here is a huge giant with massive armor facing a shepherd boy with a sling and a stick. This is why in the first part of Chapter 17 the author describes Goliath's armor and size in such detail. He wants to establish the contrast. This is why David wouldn't take Saul's armor because he didn't want there to be any question about the fact that the victory belongs to God and not to David and a lucky shot. You have all these contrasts sitting here and they start to fight in verse 48. "When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly." I love that, that's underlined in my Bible. David's at a dead sprint. He can't wait to see God deliver Goliath into his hands. He's at a dead sprint. "He ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his pocket." I don't know if he's running this whole time, I like to envision that he is. "And he took out one of the stones and he swung it and he struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead and Goliath fell on his face to the ground. 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." There's your point. The battle was the Lord's. David didn't need armor. All he needed and all that he had was the Lord. There was no sword in David's hand. "Then David ran," (he's still sprinting), "and stood over the Philistine and took Goliath's sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it." Now there are several ways to put these verses together and it's possible that the stone killed him and David made that very apparent by decapitating him and also it's possible that the stone knocked him unconscious and then David cut off his head to make sure that he stayed down. But either way, either way, what's going on? That will do it. In some of the classic art it's drawn, it is very graphic because it's like a preadolescent boy holding a head that goes from here to here, all hairy. It's an amazing picture of the contrast, but I'm not going to put it on the screen.

As Dagon fell and was beheaded, so also he who cursed with his name fell and was beheaded. You have to see the comparison because in both it is God who won the battle. The Philistines were routed, the Israelites chased them for about ten miles, came back, plundered their camp and then as an interesting postscript, we read about what David's take was, what was his spoil from the victory. Look down at verse 54 please. "And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, 17 miles away. But he put his (meaning Goliath's) armor in his (probably Goliath's) tent." Eliab and the older brothers were soldiers, they would have had tents. David just came down to check out what was happening, so he probably didn't have his own tent. So David's spoil is Goliath's tent, his sword and armor, and then he's carrying this dead guy's head around with him. And Saul's still up there scratching his head trying to figure out who this guy is. You can imagine the kind of concern, "This is the guy who keeps playing music for me when I don't feel very good. He's out there killing Goliath. Whose dad is

this guy anyway?" And they don't know so Abner brings him up. Look at verse 57. Abner gets him and brings him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. David's not letting go of this head and he's dragging it everywhere he goes. I did not write the story, that's what it says. I Samuel 17 is not primarily the story of the victory of a young man. David and Goliath are not the main actors in this story. The main actor is God who fights the battle and gives the victory. I Samuel 17, the story of David and Goliath is really the story of the Lord who defeats his enemies through a young man. It's the story of God working through someone who trusts him completely and totally and unequivocally trusts the God of Israel. That is what the story in I Samuel 17 is really all about.

III. The Lesson of Goliath: Step out in Faith

There are many lessons that we could draw from the story of the Lord's victory through David, but certainly the greatest is simply a challenge that it gives to you and me. It's a challenge that just as David stepped out in faith, so also you and I are called to step out in faith. Understand, David could have stayed in the back. He could have stayed back with the baggage handlers and that's where his older brother thought he belonged, right? He could have stayed out of the battle; he wasn't one of the soldiers. He could have chosen to do the safe thing. He could have chosen to stay within his comfort zone. In fact, he even could have couched it in religious language. He could have looked at Goliath and said, "Ooooh, I should not test the Lord my God. And after all, I'm supposed to honor my father and mother. And you know the sheep thing - they're a problem. They're probably biting each other, I need to get back." He could have done that. And he could have sounded very religious and very safe in the process. But David was not a safe man. He was a man of faith. He was, in fact, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). And what that verse means is that David sees life through the eyes of faith. Although Hebrews 11:6 had not yet been written, David is the living example that without faith it is impossible to please God. David understood that. David understood that God had committed himself to his people. And David believed; he knew that God would be faithful to his word and would be victorious. And David didn't want to sit in the back seat. He didn't want to be in the back row, he wanted to be part of the victory. He didn't want to sit on the sidelines, but he wanted to be in the midst of the battle. Why? Because he was nuts? No. Because he knew by faith that God would keep his word. And he wanted to experience and be part of the battle, knowing all along that the battle belonged to the Lord. David believed God and that's why he was a man after God's own heart.

But David also understood that true faith always drives a person to act - ALWAYS. You see, faith that lies dormant, faith that doesn't extend itself isn't faith, is it? In James 2:26 we read that faith without works is dead. Faith that is lifeless is no faith at all. Faith by its very definition propels us from the sidelines into the midst of battle. And sometimes when we're called to step out in faith we're still within our comfort zone. Sometimes, when the Lord speaks when the Holy Spirit speaks he rarely shouts, He normally whispers, but it's very clear if you're listening, right? And we know what the Lord wants us to do many times. And sometimes those things are within our comfort zone. We may feel a little uneasy or a little queasy. "Talk to that man on the other side of the airplane aisle, Bill." "You mean I have to extend myself?" "Bill, you're never going to see him again, it doesn't matter what he thinks of you." Sometimes it's a little uneasy,

but we're still within our comfort zone. Maybe it's just a lion and a bear as in David's case. It's okay. The Lord can handle this through me. But we're in our comfort zone. But there are certainly other times when God calls us not only to step out in faith, but he calls us to go out, way out, on the end of the limb, doesn't he? And our human, our sinful side, will tend to respond like the armies of Israel. We'll tend to respond in fear, but faith always will see life through God's eyes. And we'll always act because we know that the battle belongs to the Lord. Whether you or I are inside or outside of our comfort zone, faith says to step out in faith, to step up to the plate. If necessary go out on the limb, because the battle belongs to the Lord. And it's when I am weak that he is strong.

I was on a plane once and had three seats all to myself in an exit row. I had work to do. I was sitting by the window. I was just loving life. And there was a man on the other side of the aisle that kept wanting to talk to me. I was thinking, "Will you please shut up?!" I didn't say it to him, but I was looking forward to three hours of peace and quiet. This guy wouldn't stop talking to me. The thought crossed my mind, "Bill, maybe I want you to talk to him." "Oh, all right God. I'll stop programming, turn the computer off." Well, it turns out the man's name was Mike Constance. I don't know his exact title, but he's at a vice president level of Campus Crusade for Christ. And we had a marvelous time talking, especially because I was beginning my website project on Biblical Training and was looking for ways to get seminary level classes out to people. Crusade would be a good way of getting seminary lectures out to people. In the course of the discussion I said, "Tell me, what is the one most amazing thing about Bill Bright?" And Mike said instantly, "The most amazing thing about Bill Bright is that he can believe anything. Anything, he can believe. And many years ago, the Holy Spirit whispered to Bill Bright, 'You have a Goliath.'" I think it was UCLA, or was it USC? I get my story mixed up. I think it was UCLA. And he said, "I want you, Bill Bright, to reach out to all the students at UCLA." And Dr. Bright believed God and Campus Crusade for Christ is now God's weapon of attacking the enemy around the world. But it started because one man believed God and didn't believe that the Goliath was too big, and he stepped out in faith, and God won the battle.

Hudson Taylor is another great example of this. Hudson Taylor founded the Inland China Mission. Conventional wisdom at that time was that you go to the large cities on the perimeter of China, but you don't go into China at all. And God told Hudson Taylor, "Go inland. Start the mission." And I'd like to read to you just two paragraphs about this scene of Hudson Taylor having to leave his mom and the shores at Liverpool when he took off to go to the Inland China Mission. "My beloved, now sainted, mother had come to see me off from Liverpool. Never shall I forget that day. She sat by my side and joined me in the last hymn that we would sing together before the long parting. We knelt down and she prayed the last mother's prayer I was to hear before starting for China. The notice was given that we must separate and we had to say good-bye, never expecting to meet on earth again. For my sake she restrained her feelings as much as possible. We parted and she went on shore, giving me her blessing. I stood alone on deck and she followed the ship as it moved toward the dock gates. As we passed through the gates and the separation really commenced, I shall never forget the cry of anguish wrung from my mother's heart. It went through me like a knife. I never knew so fully until then what "God so loved the world" meant. And I am quite sure that my precious mother learned more of the love of God to the perishing in that hour than in all

her life before. Praise God the number is increasing who are finding out the exceeding joys, the wondrous revelations of his mercy promised to those who follow him and emptying themselves, leave all in obedience to his great commission." When China opened back up, estimates are that the Chinese church is about 70 million strong. And Hudson Taylor was the only missionary that listened to God and went inland. He was the one who started it and went to inland China. A few other people followed. As we step out in faith, sometimes we will be within our comfort zone; sometimes we won't be within our comfort zone. But especially as God calls us outside our comfort zone, when he calls us to truly exercise our faith in him, do you know what's going to happen? We're going to start seeing Goliaths fall. We're going to start seeing what appears to be an insuperable obstacle fall. And our faith is going to grow and we as individuals and we as a church are going to be able to believe greater and greater things. I want to ask David when I get to meet him, "Were you scared before the lion and the bear, because I don't think you were scared before Goliath." And I would not be surprised to hear David say, "Yeah, I was a little nervous the first time. I was a little nervous to see a lion and a bear and knowing that I had to kill them. But I extended myself in faith. I believed in God and by the time I got to Goliath, he was nothing but an uncircumcised Philistine and I couldn't wait to carry around his decapitated head in victory." I suspect that's what I'm going to hear.

What are the Goliaths in your life? What are the apparently insuperable challenges that you are facing? Maybe it's your neighbor. "Am I really supposed to share the Lord with my neighbor?" "YES!" As much as David knew that God would kill the enemies of Israel, so also you can know that you are to share your faith with your neighbors because you and I have been told to. All authority has been given to our Lord and he has told us. We don't need our neighbor's permission. We have been told to make disciples, to evangelize them, to disciple them, to mentor them so that they will do all that Jesus has commanded. There's no question what we are told to do. The only question is: Do we believe God and will that faith make us step up to the plate? And will that faith enable us to step out and watch God drive the rock home. That's the challenge of I Samuel 17. There may be other challenges in your life; I don't know them. But I encourage you to step up to the plate and step out in faith. And the further you go outside your comfort zone, the more you get to see God win his battles.

Let's pray: Father, I don't know if you will call any of us to exercise the kind of faith that Hudson Taylor was called to or Bill Bright. I don't know what you have planned for me, or for Robin, or for the people in my family here in this church, for my neighborhood, wherever I go, I don't know. But I do know one thing, God, that you have called me to be faithful. You have called me to believe that you are who you say you are and that you will do what you say you will do. But yet you have also promised that the battle is yours. I don't have to kill Goliath with my sword, I just have to throw the rock and you take care of it. Father, may we be known throughout our area as people who not only love God, but trust him with all their heart, and all their soul and all their might. In Jesus' name, Amen.