

## BELIEVING IN THE ONE WHO SLAYS GIANTS

Welcome to **Week 5** of “**Against All Odds**”. If you were with us last week we introduced you to Samuel the prophet and we learned about how God communicates with us. If you missed that message I strongly encourage you to go back and listen to that message online. Today, as we continue our journey through the Bible, we are going to look at WHO the real giant slayer is and how it is that we can unleash Him to slay the giants in our own lives. **Does anybody have any GIANTS in your life that you are trying to slay? Giants of FEAR, DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, FINANCES, SICKNESS, ETC.....?** Make no mistake, these giants are real and they are fierce! But I want you to know that you can defeat them today! So if you will take your Bibles and find **1 Samuel 17**. While you are doing that let me set the context for our passage this morning.

When it comes to Samuel, the Bible tells us that he ended up serving as a judge in Israel all the days of his life. As he neared retirement, he made his two sons judges over Israel. But as **1 Samuel 8** informs us, his two sons did not follow in the ways of their father and they took bribes and perverted justice for their own personal gain. As a result of their wicked ways, the elders in Israel began to call for a king to rule over Israel like their neighbors. Especially with the real threat of the Philistines who have been nothing but trouble for Israel since the days of Samson.

So Samuel took the matter before God and here was God’s response to Samuel:

**1 Samuel 8:7** And the Lord told him: “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected Me as their king. **8** As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. **9** Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will claim as his rights.”

**I want you to notice, God will give you the desires of your heart!** What we long for, God will give us. So be careful what you allow to capture your heart! Israel wanted a human king so God gave them King Saul. But God does so with a warning and Samuel delivers to them and to King Saul a warning of what will happen if they choose not to follow God.

**1 Samuel 12:13-15 (NIV) 13** Now here is the king you have chosen, the one you asked for; see, the Lord has set a king over you. **14** If you fear the Lord and serve and obey him and do not rebel against his commands, and if both you and the king who reigns over you follow the Lord your God—good! **15** But if you do not obey the Lord, and if you rebel against his commands, his hand will be against you, as it was against your ancestors.

Spoiler alert! Guess what? King Saul ended up not obeying God. Shocker, right?!? Just 2 years into his reign as king, Saul offers an unlawful sacrifice to God in preparation for a battle with the Philistines. Not long after that God commands him to destroy all of the Amalekites and their possessions, but instead he chooses to spare their king along with the best of their sheep, oxen and other goods. And if that were not enough Saul then proceeds to erect a monument to

himself as if he were some kind of god to be worshiped. After trying to confront King Saul about his sinful behavior, Samuel informs Saul of God's displeasure with him.

**1 Samuel 15: 24-26 (NIV) 24** Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned. I violated the Lord's command and your instructions. I was afraid of the men and so I gave in to them. **25** Now I beg you, forgive my sin and come back with me, so that I may worship the Lord." **26** But Samuel said to him, "I will not go back with you. You have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you as king over Israel!"

In **Chapter 16** God is going to direct Samuel to anoint a little shepherd boy named David to be the next King of Israel. Even though God anoints him as the next king of Israel there are still a few things that need to happen before he is to take the throne. **1) The current king (King Saul) must die - that's pretty obvious since most kingly reigns were for life 2) David must show the people his worth as a brave and commanding leader before the people will be willing to follow him and accept him as their king . 3) At this point David is just a young shepherd boy who plays the harp really well. So while he might be a tik tok sensation, there is still a little maturing that he needs to undergo before he takes on his duties as king.** God being sovereign, where no plan of His fails, orchestrates the circumstances so that David becomes Saul's armor bearer. God places a distressing spirit on Saul that leads to David having the opportunity to play his harp before the king in order to comfort him. After finding favor with Saul, David is going to be made Saul's personal armor bearer or personal assistant even though Saul is unaware that David is going to be the next king of Israel. And that brings us to **1 Samuel 17** where I want us to see who the real hero is in David's battle against Goliath so we can see that when it comes to life's battles, we have ONE who is fighting for us. Let me **PRAY** for us as we jump in.

As Chapter 17 begins the Philistines were preparing for war with Israel. A battle line had been drawn with Israel's army on one side and the Philistine army on the other. In between the two camps stood a man who would come out every day to taunt the Israelite army. He is described in verses 4-11.

**1 Samuel 17:4-11 (NIV) 4** A champion (which means he was a world class fighter and warrior) named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span. (he was 9ft. - 9in. tall) **5** He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; (the armor he wore was 125 lbs.) **6** on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. **7** His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. (which means it was about 15 lbs. - His spear alone weighed almost as much as shot put or 3 bags of sugar) The giant was very large and intimidating and so are the giants in our lives. Notice what giants do.

**8** 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. **9** 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." **10** Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." **11** On hearing the

Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified. Not only are our giants intimidating but they taunt us. They taunt us by comparing their strengths with our weaknesses. In fact, I would say that COMPARISON is a giant many of us face. Giants are notorious for being spiritual bullies that seek to overwhelm us and they can be so terrifying that they usually paralyze us with fear. This was the giant that Israel faced.

Even though David was a personal assistant to King Saul at this time he would often go back and forth from Saul to tend his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

**1 Samuel 17:16-26 (NIV)** **16** For forty days the Philistine (Goliath) came forward every morning and evening and took his stand. **17** Now Jesse said to his son David, "Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp. **18** Take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them. **19** They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines." Jesse is worried about his sons who are serving in the army, and he is sending David on an errand to check in on them. **20** Early in the morning David left the flock in the care of 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. **21** Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. **22** David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and asked his brothers how they were. **23** As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. **24** Whenever the Israelites saw the man, they all fled from him in great fear. **25** Now the Israelites had been saying, "Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his family from taxes in Israel." **26** David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" Word got back to Saul as to what David had said so he called for David to be brought to him.

**1 Samuel 17:31-32 (NIV)** **31** What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him. **32** David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him."

As we look at the remainder of this passage I want us to see four ways David prepared for victory over the giant. First of all,

### **His preparation began way BEFORE the battle**

Life is filled with many giants that want to destroy our lives and take us captive. As a result, we need to prepare to face them now. Where we are now is preparation for the next place God has for us. Life is a series of faith steps that prepare us for our next step. What you do now where you are currently is preparing you for the giant you may face down the road. By the way, do not let your current situation or perceived limitations discourage you or keep you from your preparation.

**1 Samuel 17:33-37 (NIV) 33** Saul replied, “You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth.”

**34** But David said to Saul, “Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, **35** I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. **36** Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, **because he has defied the armies of the living God**. David’s time as a shepherd was preparation for this moment. He was diligent in serving his father’s sheep and that preparation paid off. He faced giants of a different kind while tending his father’s flock but because he was faithful in those moments it gave him the courage he needed in this moment. In fact, we see that courage displayed in verse **37 The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.**” Bold faith requires bold steps of faith where we have placed ourselves in a position to trust God. When we have, we can say with confidence that God WILL do so again when the next giant comes along. Ultimately, David trusted the Lord to see him through. He did what was asked of Him and he trusted the Lord for the rest! **Saul said to David, “Go, and the Lord be with you.” His preparation began way BEFORE the battle.**

Notice the second way David prepared for victory over the giant:

### **He was comfortable in his OWN skin**

There is a common problem many of us have in life where we have a tendency to discredit ourselves because we focus on what we don’t have rather than what we do have. As a result, we spend time and energy trying to improve our weaknesses rather than perfecting what we do well. We try to be someone else or something that we are not. Not DAVID! David knew who he was and he was comfortable with that because he knows that God doesn’t make mistakes.

**38** Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. **39** 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. **40** 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.

David went with what made him unique. He tapped into his strengths and how God uniquely made him. Btw, we are made by how God knits us together in our mother’s womb and by the unique life experiences we have gone through that have shaped who we are. **We need to be comfortable with who we are in Christ and press into our giftedness and strengths and seek to perfect them.** Do not try to be someone else because we all add value to the body of Christ and we all have been uniquely gifted in Christ. Paul makes this point very clear in his letter to the Corinthian church.

**1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (NIV)** **4** There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. **5** There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. **6** There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. **7** Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given *for the common good*.

**1 Corinthians 12:12-18 (NIV)** **12** Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. **13** For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. **14** Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

**15** Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. **16** And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. **17** If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? **18 But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.**

We need to be comfortable in our own skin! Be who God created you to be. God created you to be you, ON PURPOSE! Focus on perfecting your strengths and let God worry about compensating and overcoming your weaknesses.

**David’s preparation began way BEFORE the battle. He was comfortable in his OWN skin.** Notice the third way David prepared for victory over the giant.

### **He recognized that the BATTLE belonged to the LORD**

We have to recognize that when it comes to facing the giants in our lives we are not facing them ALONE! In fact, the battle we face is not even our battle to fight. It is God’s battle! His NAME is on the line. His REPUTATION is at stake. His GLORY is hanging in the balance. David was confident of this. No matter what happened to him God would slay this giant because David’s life belonged to God.

**41** Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. **42** He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him. **43** He said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. **44** “Come here,” he said, “and I’ll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!” **45** 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. David is declaring that our battles are spiritual battles and ultimately they cannot be won by human strength or man made weapons. David’s weapon isn’t his stones and sling. **His weapon is GOD ALMIGHTY HIMSELF** and nothing, and I mean nothing will stand against HIM!!

**46** This day the Lord WILL deliver you into my hands, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild

animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. **47** 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."

When it comes to the giants you face today you have to face them with this reality as your guiding light and hope!

You might not be lining up for a physical battle today, but let's look at how these verses apply to the battles we face every day by simple word replacement...

***"You come against me with depression and fear and anxiety..."***

***"You come against me with addiction and disappointment and inadequacies..."***

***"You come against me with my family history and socioeconomic status and never going to be good enough..."***

***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 deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head.***

***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."***

His preparation began way BEFORE the battle. He was comfortable in his OWN skin. He recognized that the BATTLE belonged to the LORD and finally, **He took hold of the VICTORY by dominating the giant!**

We need to understand something about our victory in Christ: we didn't just squeak by with the win. There was no last second buzzer beater or an overtime goal. Jesus dominated over SATAN for our victory; he ran up the score! Jesus dunked on SATAN jamming the ball down his throat and taking his hand through the rim. It is like the running back trucking over the linebacker stepping on his chest as he struts to the endzone for a touchdown. *Some of us act as if Jesus barely won. Others of us act as if the battle hasn't been decided yet and we are hoping Jesus can pull it out in the fourth quarter.* We need to understand that our giants stand NO chance against our God therefore we need to run up to the giant that has been slain, stand over it with the sword of God's word and cut its head off. Then gather up all the weapons of our enemy and take it back to our tent!

**48** As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. **49** 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. Let's talk physics here real quick... getting hit in the forehead with a stone should have caused the giant to fall backwards, but in his defeat he fell FACE DOWN, as if a final symbol to the giant finally

submitting to God Almighty that he continually defied (every knee shall bow) **50** 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. But that wasn't enough. The giant and the Philistines needed to be humiliated. This is not our kids recreation league. This wasn't a friendly competition that required sportsmanship afterward. This was war, and it needed to be shown that God will not take lightly to the blasphemous words of our enemy!! So what did David do?

**51** David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the sheath. 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. **52** Then the men of Israel and Judah surged forward with a shout and pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gath and to the gates of Ekron. Their dead were strewn along the Shaaraim road to Gath and Ekron. **53** When the Israelites returned from chasing the Philistines, they plundered their camp.

**54** David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem; he put the Philistine's weapons in his own tent.

We need to take hold of the VICTORY and stop living in defeat for our battle has been won!!

**1 Corinthians 15: 55-57 (NIV) 55** "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" **56** The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. **57** But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Invitation:**

We prepare ourselves in private so we're ready in public. Our identity is not what our current circumstance says it is. Our IDENTITY, for those of us who have trusted in Jesus, is Christ. David didn't need to **get ready for the battle** because he **stayed ready!**

What is your giant? We all have one! Are you letting it define you? Are you allowing the battles you face every day become your identity? Rather than allowing the GIANT to identify you, we have to let the GOD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES be our identity!

**Our greatest GIANT is SIN (Jesus defeated it! Have you trusted Jesus for salvation?)**

**If you are a follower of Jesus are you being paralyzed by the GIANTS in your life thus leaving in defeat? Rise up and claim your VICTORY for the battle belongs to JESUS!**

We need to take up our Five Stones for the battle:

The STONE of Prayer

The STONE of God's Word (Where we find His Promises)

The STONE of Worship (Remember the battle of Jericho)

The STONE of Remembrance (we cannot forget what God has done for us in the past)

The STONE of Faith (Trust Him)

Our position in Christ makes us victorious, whatever God does through us is just icing on the cake!!