

Harris Creek Baptist Church
Rich Bartel
Series: BC
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David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17

Good morning Harris Creek! Awesome! Anybody ever been to the BSR? (One lone whoop from the crowd) Okay, alright. Well, I am going to educate you guys really quick. If you have never been, apparently, we have a World Class Water Cable Park right here in our backyard of Waco. Who knew? So, I got some pictures for you. There's three different parts of the park. (Picture of Slides) So this is the super slides – if you will. It's basically four variations of slides depending on what level of concussion you want. Okay? Next. (Picture of a wave pool) That is the surf resort, think of a wave pool on steroids. They got six-foot waves. Surfers say that you can catch more waves in two days there than you can in the ocean in two months. Pretty wild. And then next. (Picture of cable park) You've got the cable park. That is for wakeboarding. So, there is this really cool pulley system that works all the way around that lake there - with a tow rope. You take off from that platform right there, with the tent. And it pulls you about 20 mph all the way around the lake as many times as you want to go. It's wild. Okay?

So, Tuesday, we went as a staff to the BSR and it was an incredible time! We did the slides, and we did the lazy river. And then in the afternoon, about eight us, we worked our way over to the cable park for wakeboarding. Now mind you – I have never water skied before. I have never wake boarded before. But I do take a lot of pride in my athleticism. So, as you may know, I was a former professional athlete. I played pro-baseball and pro-football and so sports is kind of my thing. And so, I thought, “Dude, what a great place to learn. Surely I can do this.” So, we went and got our boards, and we went and got in line on the platform. I went dead last, because I am going to sit there, and I am going to learn from everybody. And so, JP goes first and man he is off and running. So, I am like, “Ok, well, he is way bigger than I am and so if he can balance, I can balance.” And then Kelly goes and I am like, “Okay, well, I am bigger and stronger than her so if she can hold on, I can hold on.” And then Trent, and then Joe, and then Derek, and then Drew. And this little 11-year-old girl named Lacey went, she is like a prodigy. She is doing flips and tricks!

And I am like, “Okay man, I got this. I got this. I got this. I got this.” So, I assume the position. Put my feet on the board, grab the tow rope. I am waiting for the cable to come. And then 3...2...1... BOOM – nail it, a face plant. Okay, but...that's okay because if at first you do not succeed, try-try again. Ok. So, I get back on the board on the platform, I assume the position, tow rope is right here for the cable to come. 3...2...1... Face plant. And that's okay, because if you dust yourself off you try again. So, I go again. I go 3...2...1... same result. And then, like the constructive criticism took a turn. Everyone starts to become this subject matter expert, giving

you contradictory information. It is like, “Hey man, Rich if you would just like put your weight forward all the time, but then just keep it back some.” And I said, “Well ok, that does not make sense.” And “Hey, if you just hang on right here really to the bitter end, then you want your hands to go out – but bring them back in.” And I am like, “Okay may, I got no clue.” So, I just fail, fail, fail. And then it really took a hard right turn. It just moved to like all inspirational – which is the ultimate sign that people have quit on you. Right? They say, “Hey...Hey man, just believe! You are the Kevin of your own destiny.” Or whatever... Ok. So truly, for the next two hours – about 25-30 times – all I did was put all my trust in my own ability and truly and I failed time and time and time again.

And I think that this is the mark and the blemish of American Christianity. We put way too much faith and trust in ourselves. And what we will learn today, is that when you do that - you place way too much faith and trust in yourself – it is going to lead you to one of two roads. It is going to lead you to arrogance, or it is going to lead you to fear. And neither one of them are good. So, we are continuing this series called BC, where we are looking at the most famous stories of the Old Testament. BC – standing for before Christ was present on earth. But the reality is that there is no such thing as before Christ because we know that John 1 tells us that Jesus has been present from the beginning of the beginning. Ok. And so, what these Old Testament stories teach us, is how to live in Christ now.

If you have your Bibles, we are going to be in 1 Samuel chapter 17. It is a story that we are all way too familiar with. It’s the story of David and Goliath. It is a historical account. It happened about 1024 B.C., about 1,000 years before Christ. David is the son of Jesse; he has eight brothers. Most children’s stories try to get us in this mind frame that David is a little boy. He is not a little boy. Ok? He is not quite old enough to be in Saul’s army, but he is a young man – about 18 or 19 years old. And this story, it takes off right here on the battlefield – in the Valley of Elah. I have a picture (picture on screen). So that is what it is right there. That valley is about a half of a mile wide. It is a military buffer zone, really. Between the people of the highlands and mountains, who are the Israelites and the people in the coastal plains, who are the Philistines. This is where they did battle. And you should know that the Philistines were a pagan people. They hated God. And the Israelites, obviously, they loved God. So, you can imagine both armies positioned on either side of those hills. Getting ready to do battle.

We are going to pick up in 1 Samuel verse 4 which says this, it says that, **“the Philistines sent out a champion named Goliath”**. A champion, it is an interesting word, you should know this word. It is Hebrew for two words really, it says “the man” “who goes between”. So, we will get more of that in just a second. It says that he was 9 feet 9 inches tall – ok. So just two inches shorter than JP. Historians say that this guy was between 400-500 pounds. And just for a little bit of perspective, the average man at that time was only about 5 feet tall. And so, you have 125 pound of bronze – from head to toe it says. And bronze was like modern weaponry that had never been seen by man before. So, the Philistines have a huge military advantage here to the Israelites. This man had a reputation; he had experience; and he had a shield bearer. Can we just all agree that is the worst job in the world. So, some commentaries – anyone read Malcolm Gladwell David and Goliath? Some commentaries try to position Goliath as the underdog here, like he is a Michelin man. (Rich impersonates the Michelin man) “Come to me that I may feed your flesh...” That is not who he was. The Hebrew texts, it preserves the details here, so that you

walk away with one perspective and one perspective only of Goliath. He was a big, bad, warrior of a man and he knew it.

So, 1 Samuel 17:8 says this, **“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.” Then the Philistine said, “This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other.”** OK. Anybody seen Alai? The champ is here! This is what he is saying, this is the ultimate, “Hey, your momma!” This guy walks out. It is one thing, anybody ever been in a fight? It is one thing if you walk out to a fight, right...and you actually know what you are up against. The Scripture says this about David, it says that, **“he walked out, and he saw an uncircumcised Philistine,”** – so everyone else is looking up there he was looking down there – but why that is important is this...David knew before the fight ever started that he was under the covenant of God and that he had no chance. So, he knew what he was up against, but Goliath on the other hand. We think of David as courageous; Goliath was just as courageous. He walks out – he has no scouting report on the Israelite army. They could have brought out 10 lions for all he knew. They could have brought out somebody bigger and badder. But this is a guy who did not just have a lapse in judgement one day – two feet hit the ground and he say, “I am going to be audacious”. He does this for 40 days. He walks out – he just beating his chest – and he says, “I am the champion. I am the man who goes between. I represent this entire army. And whoever wins this battle, it is a winner take all deal. Who do you got?” Clearly his misplaced faith had led him to a place of arrogance.

1. Misplaced faith leads us to arrogance.

You go back to the opening story about me wakeboarding and it is a funny story. But you know why it resonates? It resonates because we have all been conditioned – to some degree or another – to put too much faith in ourselves. Right? You grew up with it, “Believe in yourself.” Right? You heard it time and time and time again. And I get it. Or we are going to dig a little bit deeper here. By God’s grace, like me, sometimes you fail. And do you know why that is a good thing, that you put too much faith in yourself and fail? Because it brings you to a place of humility, it is sobering. It recalibrates you and it lets you know that you are not God. But the flip side of that coin – you trust in yourself; you experience a little bit of success by God’s grace. And what you do is your heart drifts from that, you forget who brought it to you. You start to drink your own juice and believe your own hype.

So, about 5 or 6 years ago – I used to do these national Camp Quarterback training sessions all around the country. I would sit with parents, and we would do a Q/A panel. And by and far the most often question that I got asked was, “Hey Rich, how did you know that you would become a professional athlete one day?” And here is the thing, in the insanity of my arrogance this is what I would say, “I always knew. I always knew.” And what I mean by that is my determination, my ability, my talent, my genetics, my willpower, my work ethic, my persistence. Right? And here is what is dangerous about that – before too long you heart just drifts in that direction when you run that race for so long. You put so much faith in yourself. You ascribe it to yourself; you drink your own juice for so long. And it just perpetuates you to this nasty place.

My pride took me down a path to a deep-seated entitlement that candidly I am still trying to root out – by God. And it is gross.

And so here is my question to you: What is the source of your arrogance? What is the source of your arrogance? Another way to ask that would be this, where have you misplaced your faith? I think we think of pride... Goliath for instance, “I defied the armies of Israel.” Are you sure Goliath? Are you sure? Because Proverbs 16:18 says that, **“pride goes before the fall”**. And James 4:6 says that, **“God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble”**. We think of pride like this, we think of Goliath. We think of big obnoxious, overtly loud, arrogant people. And the truth is those people are few and far between. We know some, but the majority of us in this room have some level, some degree of arrogance and we just carry it a little bit differently. And I think what it looks like is this stubbornness, this reluctance, this posture of not willing to submit and do the things of God. And when we do that, the Scripture says that God opposes the proud.

Think about that. I think we think that God just moves us to the side. That is not what He does. Imagine playing in a game and He give you a different uniform. He stays on this side, and you now go to that hill, and he says, “Ok – you got it? Let us go then. I got you.” And He is your worst nightmare. He becomes your opposition at that point. And that is a dangerous place to be, and the Bible goes on to tell us time and time again that the people who are prideful become enemies of God.

1 Samuel 17:20 says this, **“Early in the morning David left the flock in the care of a shepherd, he 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. Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and asked his brothers how they were. 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. Whenever the Israelites saw the man, they all fled from him in great fear.”**

Now at the beginning I told you that if you put too much faith in yourself it can lead you to a place of arrogance. Well, the other side of that is that if you put too much faith in yourself it can lead you to a place of fear. Okay. So, the equation is really simple. If you look at the situation and you look at what you have – if you have more than what the situation requires it can lead you to a place of arrogance, i.e., Goliath. But if you look at the situation and you have less than what you think it takes, then it can lead you to a place of fear, i.e., the Israelites. And so, by all worldly and logical standards the Israelites are looking up at a 9-foot, 9-inch giant. They are essentially looking at the mirror at themselves and they are just saying, “Uh-oh.” And that leads me to point number two.

2. Misplaced faith can lead you to fear.

So, this past week we had a college student who passed away, tragically in a car accident. And the parents drove up on it. I am a father of five, and a story like that hits a little too close to home. As it would any parent. And it is really hard to imagine that happening. That is one of

those Rolodex “What-If” scenarios that keep you up at night. And we all have some degree of that. Whether it is “I am going to be single the rest of my life. I am going to make this much money forever. What if my kid dies? What if I die? What if I do not have enough of what it takes to get through that situation?” But what if God is enough? What if God is enough? What if God is so powerful that He speaks the world into existence; He ordains your life; He numbers your days; and He walks you from death back into life. And He brings you to eternity with Him where one day you are standing with Him, side by side, and you look back and those little worries, those little challenges, the little obstacles. You realize those things that were a giant to you, they are not a giant to Him. That is the God that we serve!

You know it is easy to think that the Israelites, as you look at them, were cowards. But I think a lot of us do this. And I think this plays itself out in the church and let me tell you how. I think we look at people of great faith and we know them. It could be older or young – it does not matter, right. I mean great faith takes no age limit – it should not. But a lot of us have been in church for a long time and we have this growing knowledge of the Word. We become wise in the faith. And we see these people who have been regenerated in Christ, they have a story. They are going to ReGen; they have been renewed. Or they have just come to faith and profess with their mouth and believe in their heart that Jesus died and rose again. And they really want to do community that way – Acts 2, fellowship of believer – they read it and they take it literally. They say, “Great! I want that! I can do that.” And what do us mature people do? We come alongside them and put our hand on their shoulder and say, “Hey David, pipe down a bit. You are a little too bold. That giant, that is unsafe. You do not want to do that. Man, you have been anointed King! I think if I were you, I would mitigate the risk and just play the long game David.”

And do you know why we do that? We just quench the faith in people. We do that because it puts us in a position where we have to make a decision and we do not want to compromise. Do you know why we do not want to compromise? Because we are fearful. We are fearful that if this guy actually goes and loves his wife, in the same way he holds me accountable to that and now I have to raise myself up to that standard. Church we have to change that – that is not who God has called us to be. And so, I am going to ask you two questions now: What is it you are afraid of? What do you fear? And the second question is: Why? Why do you fear that?

I think we read this story of David and we think, “Hey man, this is a guy who seized the day.” He has always been dreaming about it. He was waiting for it. And this was his opportunity and now he can finally step into it. It is his time. A lot of us think that way, but here is the truth. Scripture tells us that David was a shepherd. He was tending to sheep and one day he was tending to his sheep and there is a lion that comes and threatens, and David probably took whatever he had. He was a man of great faith and God steps in and delivers him from the lion. Then David is tending to his sheep, he has his head where is butt is. Just tending to his responsibilities, being faithful. Not wondering when he is going to be king, just doing what God asked. And a bear comes – I am sure he took whatever he had. And God delivers him from the bear.

So here is the point, David did what David had always done. “Hey guys, there is a giant. Anybody have any stones around here?” What David did was he just exercised the faith that he used every single day. What he did was normative; it was habitual; it was a discipline. It was a

habit. You do not wait to exercise your faith until you see an obstacle. You exercise the faith that you use everyday when you see the obstacle. There is a big difference between the two.

1 Samuel 17:40, **“Then he took his staff in his hand, he chose five smooth stones...”** I am going to camp out here for a second. **“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.”** Okay – five smooth stones, let us just hang out right there for a second. I do not know why he chose five. I really do not. And it really does not matter. You can be on one end of the spectrum and say, “Well hey man, if faith in God always prevails then why did he even pick up stones? He should have just gone and duked it out with him.” Or you can read into it and say, “Man...well, it says somewhere in Scripture in a really vague way that there was brothers or sons from Gath and there were four of them. So maybe Goliath had four brothers or sons that were going to come. And if he took out Goliath, he had one for every one of them.” I mean that would be awesome! I have no idea. But I know this, David took five stones. That is what he knew how to use. I am guessing that that is what he used before to some degree or another. And he trusted that God was going to show up. And I think some of us, we read that, and we say, “Five smooth stones”. Man, if that were you would your perspective shift a little bit. Would you be like, (in a droopy, unsure voice) “Man, all I have is five smooth stones.” Or would you be like, (in a confident, excited voice) “Man I have five smooth stones!”

I think a lot of us we look at our gifts, our abilities, our talents, our resources, and we say, “Man this is all I got.” And God is saying, “Man, I gave that to you! Use it! Let me show up.” Verse 41 – **“Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him...”** What a terrible job, I mean right? Can you imagine, (In a wimpy voice.) “My job is to take one for you man. I got you” **“...kept coming closer to David. He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health 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 and the wild animals!”**

Now listen to this next part. This is great! I want you to hear the confidence that David speaks with. **“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 deliver you into my hands, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head.”** Good night kids, right... **“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. 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.”**

Now that confidence is important and here is why. This is a man who clearly had placed his faith, not in himself but in God. And when you do that, this is what happens – God is going to help you thread the needle between arrogance and fear. There is a meekness here, but there is a confidence. You can imagine David saying this with his chest out and his head up and you do not think he is arrogant. Because he has his faith in the right place. He is not crediting himself. He is not boasting in his bronze, in his size, or in anything other than the fact that he stands with God.

And I want you to know this as believers – this is important! We do not get a lot of affirmation about this. Do not think about your enneagram. Do not think about how you are just a jerk – that is the way God made me, so I get to be a jerk. That is not it. That is not it. But if you, do it right, and you put your faith in the right place then God is going to give you a meekness. He is going to give you a confidence to sit there and say, “Hey man, we are not going to raise our kids that way. This is the way we are going to raise them.” And people will think that you are arrogant and that is okay. It does not matter. All you can do is what God is asking you to do.

Verse 48, **“As the Philistine moved closer to attack him...”** Favorite line in the whole Bible, right here. **“David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him.”** Will you take your five stones and move quickly towards the battle line? **“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 face down on the ground.”** So, David placed his faith, clearly, in the right place – in the Lord.

3. Faith placed in God always prevails.

It is undefeated; it always prevails. A lot of questions in this sermon, so here are two more questions. What do you think made David different than the Israelites? And what made David different than their commander in chief, King Saul? I mean they are all fighting for the same army, but David had something clearly that the rest of them did not have. They were God’s people. David was too. So, what did he have that they did not have?

1 Samuel 16 – we did not read this. I am going to give you a window in. It is an incredible story of a boy and a king. And the boy is this shepherd boy, named David. And the king is King Saul. Saul is everything that you would think of as a king. He looks like a king; he sounds like a king; he acts like a king. But he does not have the power of a king. And he does not have the power of a king because he lacks faith and devotion to God. And so, what Scripture says is that God made King Saul impotent. He moves toward the Prophet Samuel and says, “Hey Samuel, I need you to go anoint Jesse’s son king.” So, Samuel goes to Jesse – he goes out into the field. And Samuel sifts through them all – it is not you; it is not you; it is not you; it is not you; it is not you; it is not you – it is you! And he anoints that young boy king.

And what David did next is just an incredible act of humility and courage. Do you know what he does? He goes back to being a servant. Can you imagine that? Could you say the same thing? If God gave you that kind of favor and position right now and said, “You are king.” Would you go back to being a servant or would you say, “Hey man, great. Let us get this show on the road!” So, the number one thing that David had that the Israelite and King Saul did not have is that he had a promise. He had a promise. And the second thing that David had is that he had a wellspring of faith. Do you know what I mean by that? Scripture says this, it says to delight in our testimony for they are our counselors. Ok. So, what that means is this. You look in the rearview mirror of your life. You do not wade through all of the regret and the shame – that is not who God is. You look at the faithfulness of God in your life. The way that He has just intersected you in every single way – through relationship and circumstance and how He rescued you. And you hold on tight to that! And you do not ever forget it. That is what David had! He remembered the lion and the bear. He remembered the promise.

David knew this. He looks at a 9-foot, 9-inch giant and he says, “Ok – I know God has delivered me before and I have a promise. So that means if this thing right here is the obstacle that stands between me and God’s promise, then my God is so powerful that He can take that giant right there and He can just flick him out of the way.” Do you believe that God can do that about your obstacles? About your challenges? Do you have a wellspring of faith? Do you know God’s promises? Or.... are you forgetful?

David is called a man after God’s own heart. Ever wonder what that means? A man after God’s own heart? Acts 13:22 say this, **“he does everything that I ask him to do”**. David is a man after God’s own heart. He does everything that I ask him to do. Could you imagine if God said that about you? He just lays his life down for his wife the way that I ask him to. He just pursues his ministry the way that I ask him to. They disciple their kids the way that I ask them to. They steward their finances the way that I ask them to. They do community the way that I ask them to. They confess sin the way that I ask them to.

And in 2 Chronicles 16:9 it says this, **“For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.”** So, this is what God does, right? God looks down – He says today I am going to fight some Goliaths, whose heart is mine? Whose heart do I have?

And so, in summary, we see that misplaced faith can lead us to arrogance; it can lead you to fear; but that faith in God always prevails. In closing I will say this. We love Cinderella stories. Right? Hollywood or a great book. This is one of those. And I will tell you why we love Cinderella stories. We love them because we kidnap them – that is why. This is what I mean by that. We kidnap them. And what we do is we are so “me” centric and egocentric that we put ourselves in the middle of the story and what we do is we try to identify and embody all the things of the hero and the heroine. And it comes from this deep-seated insecurity and this need for approval and acceptance and victory and success. And so, we rob it.

And here is what I want you to know. That this story is not about you. You are not David in this story. You are not David in this story. Just to be theologically, hermeneutically, correct – just understand that. There is not a scenario in the world where God puts a Goliath in your path and He says, “Hey man, I need you to find your inner David.” David did not even find his inner David. So, what you have is you have a shepherd boy servant who goes on to be king and is a savior. Sounds eerily similar to somebody else I know. He precedes Jesus by 1,000 years, and David is a Jesus-type. He forecasts and embodies everything of the greatest Cinderella story ever written. A man who came as a servant to die on the cross for you sins, a king who overthrew an empire. Who stood before Satan, the true champion, the man who went between and represented everybody who would ever believe in Him. And He just slayed him. And He defeated sin and death for eternity. And why that is important is this...you do not have to have any arrogance; you do not have to have any fear. You get to walk right onto the battlefield with victory right in your hand.

I pray that you would do that.

Father God, I thank you for your Word. Lord that it stands on its own. Lord, I thank you that you are that good. That you love us so much that you came in the form of a child, Lord. And you laid your life down. And your Word says that we are to deny ourselves and follow you. And I pray, Father God, that we would do that. Lord, there are people in here who just desire a deep-seated relationship with you. Father, they really want to do it. They really want to experience the faith of David. And Father, I pray that you would – that you would just give it to them. It says that you give to anybody who asks Father. And so, I just pray, Father, that as a fellowship of believers, Lord, that we would put our trust in You. That we would understand that you prevail. That we have a wellspring of faith; that you have done great things. And if you never did another thing for us, Lord, you have already done enough. It is in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen.