



VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH

SUGAR GROVE CAMPUS

Shattered Confidence

When life goes to pieces | Part 6

Tim Badal | November 1, 2015 | 1 Samuel 17



Turn to 1 Samuel 17. We're in a series entitled "Shattered: When life goes to pieces." We've spent the last two months journeying through the book of 1 Samuel and examining the lives of broken people. It hasn't been the easiest or most fun series that we've done because we're looking at messed up seasons in people's lives when they were struggling, dealing with dysfunction, going through trials and tribulations—maybe because of no fault of their own or maybe because of disobedience when an individual continually sinned against God and His ways.

We focused on this last part predominantly in the last few weeks when we looked at Saul, who was the first king of Israel. King Saul was a disobedient guy. While he seemingly had all the human qualities for success, he was a failure when it came to obeying the Word and ways of the Lord. We see that God in His grace gave him many opportunities to right the ship. He placed Saul in difficult circumstances and thought, "At some point Saul will cling to Me if I put him in these circumstances. At some point he will run to Me." Blinded by his sin and pride, Saul forfeited God's blessing and leading in his life, having failed over and over again. Today we will learn that yet again Saul fails, and to make it worse, he learns that someone else will take his place, and that man will faithfully follow the will and ways of God.

In 1 Samuel 17 we learn that God once again wanted to teach His people that they don't have to live shattered lives. In our passage Saul encountered a giant. We are going to look at "Shattered Confidence" through this very famous passage of Scripture. I was going to show you a great video of the story of David and Goliath, but as with anything that comes out of Hollywood, we would miss parts of the story. I want to be careful that we see the entire story because many of us are familiar with this story but it's always been through someone else telling it to us. I want us to hear the story out of God's own mouth. Let's hear what God has to say about that fateful day when the armies of Israel fought against the armies of the Philistines.

Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. And they were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, and encamped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. ²And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered, and encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in line of battle against the Philistines. ³And the Philistines stood on the mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. ⁴And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. ⁵He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. ⁶And he had bronze armor on his legs, and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. ⁷The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. And his shield-bearer went before him. ⁸He 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. ⁹If 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." ¹⁰And the Philistine said, "I defy the ranks of Israel this day. Give me a man, that we may fight together." ¹¹When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

¹²Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse, who had eight sons. In the days of Saul the man was already old and advanced in years. ¹³The three oldest sons of Jesse had followed Saul to the battle. And the names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. ¹⁴David was the youngest. The three eldest followed Saul, ¹⁵but David went back and forth from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem. ¹⁶For forty days the Philistine came forward and took his stand, morning and evening.

¹⁷And Jesse said to David his son, "Take for your brothers an ephah of this parched grain, and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp to your brothers. ¹⁸Also take these ten cheeses to the commander of their thousand. See if your brothers are well, and bring some token from them."

¹⁹Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. ²⁰And David rose early in the morning and left the sheep with a keeper and took the provisions and went, as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the encampment as the host was going out to the battle line, shouting the war cry. ²¹And Israel and the Philistines drew up for battle, army against army. ²²And David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage and ran to the ranks and went and greeted his brothers. ²³As he talked with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him.

²⁴All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were much afraid. ²⁵And the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel. And the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel." ²⁶And David said to the men who stood by him, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" ²⁷And the people answered him in the same way, "So shall it be done to the man who kills him."

²⁸Now Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. And Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, "Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your presumption and the evil of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle." ²⁹And David said, "What have I done now? Was it not but a word?" ³⁰And he turned away from him toward another, and spoke in the same way, and the people answered him again as before.

³¹When the words that David spoke were heard, they repeated them before Saul, and he sent for him. ³²And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." ³³And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth." ³⁴But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, ³⁵I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. ³⁶Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God." ³⁷And David said, "The LORD 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!"

³⁸Then Saul clothed David with his armor. He put a helmet of bronze on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail, ³⁹and David strapped his sword over his armor. And he tried in vain to go, for he had not tested them. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them." So David put them off. ⁴⁰Then 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.

⁴¹And the Philistine moved forward and came near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. ⁴²And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. ⁴³And the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴The 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." ⁴⁵Then 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. ⁴⁶This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host 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 Israel, ⁴⁷and 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."

⁴⁸When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground.

⁵⁰So 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. ⁵¹Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. ⁵²And the men of Israel and Judah rose with a shout and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath and the gates of Ekron, so that the wounded Philistines fell on the way from Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron. ⁵³And the people of Israel came back from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp. ⁵⁴And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

⁵⁵As soon as Saul saw David go out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this youth?" And Abner said, "As your soul lives, O king, I do not know." ⁵⁶And the king said, "Inquire whose son the boy is." ⁵⁷And as soon as David returned from the striking down of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. ⁵⁸And Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" And David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

After reading this text a secular historian said, "This has to be one of the greatest stories ever told." This story has been used to describe all kinds of situations—from the battlefield, to the political arena, to sporting events. It's a narrative that far too many of us no doubt have heard in either real life or some sort of metaphor. It's the famous story of a young boy who stood up against all odds and defeated the giant. You get goose bumps just thinking about it.

This battle has been forever immortalized by the phrase, "It's a David versus Goliath battle." We marvel at the symbolism that gives us hope amidst such odds. Yet as we look at this incredible story, we do so through the lens used throughout this series, which is this idea of shattered lives. This series has not been about victory and joy but about loss and brokenness. Dysfunction and despair have carried the day.

The nation of Israel was at war with the Philistines who were ready to destroy the nation of Israel. They were ready to take them on and make them their slaves. They decided to pursue a conventional form of warfare for that time. It may seem odd to us but it was a normal part of warfare in their day. It was called “the war of one.” Goliath said, “I’ve got an idea. We’ll bring our best guy out; you bring your best guy out. We’ll have a fight and whoever wins that one fight will be the victor.” Why would you do this? It allowed less bloodshed to take place. They had their best and strongest come to the middle of the battlefield and whoever won that battle would determine which army was the victor.

The Philistines seemingly struck gold with this strategy because they knew that the one who would fight for them was unbeatable. The Israelites began to lose confidence that they would ever have a victory over their sworn enemies.

I want to look at “Shattered Confidence” under three headings:

1. The categories of confidence in this world.
2. The challenges to our confidence.
3. The characteristics of godly confidence.

1. The Categories of Confidence

In our text we are introduced to some characters—some are brand new to our series, other have been seen many times—but each of them shows us a picture of who we might be.

Gloating Goliath

In 1 Samuel 17 we see the first mention of Goliath. It has a lot to say about him. Look at verses four through ten. His title was champion. You don’t get the name champion without having victories in your past. He was six cubits and a span tall. A cubit is the distance between your elbow and the end of your fingertips. He was six of those and then some. He had all kinds of armor—a helmet of bronze on his head, a coat of armor, shin guards, a javelin and a spear. This guy had lots of weaponry and was ready to go to battle.

I wonder what the scene was like when this man stepped into the valley and showed himself. I wonder what the Israelites were thinking. “Do you see that thing? What is that? There’s something moving. It’s coming down the slope. Man, that thing is big.” And the closer he got, they might have said, “That guy isn’t big, he’s huge! Whatever it is, it’s covered with all kinds of glittering bronze.” He looked like a tank except there weren’t tanks back in the day. By the time that giant got to the middle of the battlefield, the men of Israel began to shutter. “That’s the biggest man I’ve ever seen in my life!”

First Samuel describes him in detail. He stood six cubits and a span. In today’s measurements that means he was nine feet and nine inches tall. His name was Goliath. He was clad with armor. His body armor weighed approximately 125 pounds. That’s a lot of armor! He had a javelin and a spear that were described like thick shafts of wood or small logs. Historians say that based on the numbers given by the narrator, the head of the spear alone weighed more than 17 pounds. Ahead of him marched a singular man who carried a shield large enough to protect Goliath’s entire body. The man who protected him had to carry a piece of armor that was nine feet tall and 24–26 inches wide.

Having already gotten their attention, Goliath didn’t even need to say anything, but he struck fear in the hearts of the people of God. Verse eight says, “*He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel.*” I’m going to assume that when Goliath spoke he didn’t say, “Hey you guys, why don’t you come down and fight me if you think you can.” I imagine that his voice echoed in the valley as he said, “*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.*” His words echoed in the eardrums of the Israelites and brought fear.

Goliath is the quintessential picture of a person whose stature, success or whatever temporal thing you can come up with, gave him the confidence to believe that he was unstoppable. Goliath was filled with sinful pride that fueled his ambition. His confidence was completely focused on himself. His faith was based in his huge frame, his strength and ability to fight. Goliath appeared before the Israelites with total confidence and he dared any man to prove him wrong.

Some of you may not stand ten feet tall in your physical body, or carry around 125 pounds of armor, but in your heart when you’re at work, on the field, at play or some other aspect of life, you walk around with the idea that you are the best and nothing can stop you. Goliath is a picture of those of us who have confidence in ourselves and dare anyone to challenge our greatness.

Scared Saul

On the other side of the valley we see this scared man who was the king of Israel. He was no slouch either. He was a handsome man that was unlike any man in the nation of Israel. He was a head taller than his countrymen. This great king was shivering in his boots at the echo of Goliath's voice. Verse 11 says, *"When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine..."* They weren't taken to arms. They weren't filled with anger and a focus to kill the man who was speaking such things. It didn't get their competitive juices flowing. It says, *"When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine they were dismayed and greatly afraid."*

King Saul would have been the right guy to take Goliath out. He was the king who was supposed to be the protector and defender of his people. In fact, earlier in the text when Samuel was told by the chief priests and leaders that they wanted a king, they specifically said in 1 Samuel 8:20 that they wanted a man who would fight their battles. But for forty days and forty nights Goliath stood and Saul cowered. Saul was crippled by fear. He had no solutions. He was unable to act. Had David not stepped into that battlefield, I believe Saul would still be standing in the same place today.

For some of us the example of Saul hits close to home. We have things in our lives that the very mention of them causes us to cower in fear just like Saul. These things are constant reminders that we have no confidence in ourselves or in our God. The person or issue that stands before us is greater than anything we can bring against them. So we are paralyzed by fear day and night. We're crippled in our ability to live any kind of normal life.

When Saul heard these words he was not sitting and enjoying those forty days and nights. Normal life had come to an end and Saul only heard and saw one thing: Goliath. That's all he could think about. Whatever that giant is in your life, like Saul you are brought to your knees and have zero confidence that victory is within your grasp. It scared Saul.

Dependent David

At the beginning of our text David wasn't even at the battle. He was back home tending his father's sheep. He was eventually brought to the battle through a simple request from his father. In verse 18 Jesse asked David to take his brothers and their bosses some food. He was trying to butter up his kids' bosses. He asked David to check in on them and bring back a report that they were okay. And that's what David did. While he was there the battle seemed to come to him.

David was a good-looking man but not necessarily a man who stood out physically. He was probably overlooked. In chapter sixteen when Samuel chose him, God has to remind them that He doesn't look at the outside of a man but at his heart (1 Samuel 16:7). David had zero military experience and no real knowledge of dealing with giants. From a human perspective he didn't stand a chance. But throughout the text we see that every time David opened his mouth he didn't speak about his own gifts or abilities, nor did he speak of Goliath and all of his characteristics. He always spoke about what God was doing and what God would do in the presence of His enemies.

That's what you and I should focus on. When the giants are before us, whatever they may be, we shouldn't cower in fear or have confidence in ourselves, but we should articulate to our giants and to others that we serve a God Who is greater than any giant in the land. We need to have a robust and secure confidence in the Lord Who owns the battle, no matter who or what may be standing in our way.

2. The Challenges to our Confidence

So if dependence on God produces confidence, why do so many of us struggle with self-confidence or no confidence at all? Once we understand who is involved in the different categories of confidence we can look at its challenges. What challenges our confidence? If we're honest, being dependent on God isn't an easy thing. This is an easy message to preach. "Go kill the giants in your life!" But then I think about when those giants are standing before me and I remember that it's easier said than done.

Many of our lives aren't easy right now. At some time or another, most of us have been paralyzed by fear. As we look at Saul and David's perspectives, what did they see before them? As we battle the giants in our own lives, we will either run away in fear or stand in confidence before them. Remember that just as David stood before a giant, the Bible says that for the Christian every day is a battle. Most of us will face a series of battles and giants in our lives before our lives are over.

What is a giant? If we were to simply take the text and say, "The truth in this Scripture is used to help me when a nine-foot, nine-inch giant stands before me," there's a good chance you'll never apply this text. When is the last time you stood before a seven-foot man, let alone a nine-foot one? If I remember correctly, the tallest man living right now is a little over eight feet tall. If you're

going to strictly apply this text, then there is no application for you. If you simply say that it's a picture of Christ Who is our great Champion, that's some help. But remember we're looking at this from a shattered perspective. That's been our focus this entire series. So we're looking at this famous passage of Scripture through a very different lens.

So what's a giant? A giant is any situation or person in our path which blocks the way God wants us to go. A giant could be a person who opposes you or a combination of circumstances that, when taken together, keep you from doing what God wants you to do.

Adversaries

If it was up to their own abilities, David and Saul had an opponent whom they could not defeat. That was true of every man and soldier in the nation of Israel. Verse 24 says, *"All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were much afraid."* It's safe to assume that you won't have a giant threatening you. But just like Saul and David, we have people in our lives who seek our demise and want to make our lives miserable. There are those who seek to discredit our faith in the Scriptures and God.

What adversary are you facing? For most of us the greatest giants that we face are the ones from the inside: doubt, unbelief, fear, anxiety, greed, sloth, gluttony, envy, despair, discouragement, self-condemnation, fear of failure, a critical spirit, lust, and we can keep going. Usually those inner giants defeat us more quickly than any giant on the outside. It's in the mind many times where the battle of David versus Goliath is fought in our lives.

In that sense some of you are facing a giant at this moment. It may be an impossible situation at work, a huge problem within your home, a financial difficulty, a broken relationship, a task before you that you know you can't handle or a dream that seems unreachable. As we look at these giants we need to remember that giants, by definition, are enormous, threatening and intimidating. They scare the daylights out of us. The closer they get to our lives, the bigger they become, until we can't see anything else. We have adversaries.

Anxieties

These adversaries work with our anxieties. One of the ways giants win the day is by doing exactly what Goliath did. He preyed on the people's emotions. Twice each day he would show himself and each time he would speak in a way that filled them with fear. Each time the challenge went unmet. Goliath stood up, threatened the people and then returned to his camp. Even before the battle started it was already done. For forty straight days, twice a day, morning and evening, he threatened and challenged the men of Israel. Each day there was taunting and the same result: no one would challenge him. The people were losing the battle before it had even started.

I wonder if each and every night the generals got together and formulated plans, talking about strategies and tactics. "Maybe this is what we'll do. Maybe we'll do that." Maybe Saul and his generals were trying to come up with a solution, setting up some sort of model battlefield to figure out how they could have victory. Maybe they ended each meeting with a quick word of prayer. "Lord, help us to defeat the Philistine." They would go out with a new sense of faith and confidence only to see and hear Goliath the next day and run away again. This practice went on for forty days. No one knew what to do.

Some of you are facing a giant and you think, "I can conjure up just enough confidence," until the giant shows himself again and you find yourself running away in fear, just like every other day. It will only take one giant to stop you if you look at that giant from a human perspective. You see the giant before you and he suddenly fills the view of your entire life. At ground level you need to recognize that giants will unglue you to the point that you can't go on.

The problem is not how big the giant is but how small the giant makes you feel. The giant makes you feel so small that you think you don't have a chance. Giants defeat you, not because they're big but because you believe you're small, or even worse, you believe the giant is bigger than your God. It's in that moment that nothing else matters. You're struck dumb with fear and paralyzed with doubt. There's no question that some of you are filled with anxiety.

I was struck this week by a statistic that created anxiety in me. It was the fact that a third of American women and a tenth of American men are on some sort of anxiety medication today. This tells me far too many people are seeing giants in their midst and are unable to be released from the reign of terror they have over them. Let me remind you of a few truths about giants.

- Many giants are all bark and no bite. They can do all that they want to act tough but in the end they don't put up a fight. It's now past Halloween and moving toward Christmas, which makes me think of the story of Ralphie from "A Christmas Story." Ralphie is the quintessential kid growing up in Midwest America. He has all the normal pitfalls and struggles of a kid his age. One of his struggles is with a bully. He goes to school and every day when he comes home the bully

terrorizes Ralphie. He beats him up and has him running for his life. But when Ralphie discovers a level of confidence within himself, he stands up to the bully and fights him. He learns that the bully was all talk and no bite.

- Even the most powerful giants in our lives have weaknesses. First Peter tells us our greatest enemy is the devil. He doesn't describe the devil as puny, but as a roaring lion roaming around, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). Those are some pretty big words. That should shake us in our boots. But that same great enemy, the devil—even greater than your anxiety, your financial struggles or family issues that you're facing—when he comes to destroy you, and you stand against him and resist him, the book of James says he must flee from you (James 4:7). The word flee means he runs for his life. If the devil, our greatest enemy, has to run for his life when we stand in the strength of Jesus Christ, so will whatever anxiety you are facing.
- Giants always want to fight on their terms. In the text Goliath was the one saying, "You come to me. Bring one of your men to me. Let us fight!" Goliath set the terms by which the fight would take place. There are anxieties and people who will determine when and where the battle will take place. The battle was not Goliath's, nor David's, nor the people of Israel's. The battle and its terms were God's because the battle belonged to the Lord.

Some of us need to change the way we look at the giants and see that they may be all bark and no bite. Maybe our giants have some weaknesses. Maybe we need to fight the battle on the Lord's terms instead of our own or even the giants' terms.

Alternatives

David volunteered. He said, "I'm going to go do it. Someone has to kill this uncircumcised Philistine. He can't keep running his mouth. He can't keep defying God. Are you kidding me? Let someone get out there and put this guy to shame. Let's be done with him already!" The king heard about it and said, "Bring me the yahoo who thinks he can kill Goliath! I want to talk with him. I've had a pretty rough forty days and forty nights and some humor will help me. Bring me the crazy man."

So David went before Saul and said, "I've had battles like this before. I know exactly how to defeat him because I've got a God Who will stand before me, steady my hand and give me strength to defeat the giant." After that discussion took place Saul said, "*The Lord be with you!*" Saul was probably chuckling with his general as David was leaving, thinking, "Well, we'll have one less crazy man in Israel."

Then as if to say that good kings don't send a guy out without any defense, in verses 38–40 Saul says, "Put on some of my armor." There are a couple of truths that we can notice in Saul giving David his armor. If David had fought with Saul's armor a couple of things would have happened. David would have been protected for a season. The armor would have helped. Had he gone and fought Goliath, Goliath would have taken his spear and javelin and started waving them at David, and Saul's armor would have protected him. It would have lessened the blows of Goliath. But the armor would have done nothing for him from an offensive standpoint. While the armor would have prolonged the battle, it wouldn't have given David an opportunity for victory.

That begs the question when you're fighting the giants in your life, are you seeking alternatives that prolong the battle but give you no opportunity for victory? Because of the giants in our lives, some of us turn to other things. We do so because we don't want to confront the giant face-to-face. We know if we do we're done. So we turn to the armor of this world that will prolong our lives before the giant and give us an opportunity to be defensive but not offensive. They allow us to take the beatings of the giant, all the while never thinking we can actually win the battle.

Some of us use alcohol or illegal drugs. Some of us are using prescription medication. Why? Because we can't get through the day so we take medication to lessen the blow that the giants of anxiety, depression and all the calamity of life bring. We think these will let us live another day. But that medication, that drug, that pleasure, or whatever we're doing to prolong the battle, will never allow us to win the war.

David recognized that and said, "I'm not going out there to take a beating. I'm going out there to kill that uncircumcised Philistine! He's a dead man. I don't need armor. I don't need something that will allow him to beat up on me. I need a weapon that's going to kill this giant once and for all. Get this stuff off of me! While it may help me for a season it won't help me in the long run."

So David moved from fear to faith, and with God's people watching he challenged their doubt with his dependence on God. "I've got God on my side. Whatever weapon I use in offense, God is going to use to destroy this giant."

3. The Characteristics of Godly Confidence

How did David stand in the way of the giant? No matter the anxiety or fear you may be feeling, I want you to notice the first thing David did. The narrator used the first eleven verses to talk about Goliath. I think he did so for a reason. I think he wanted us to recognize that the only thing that Saul and the people of Israel could think about was the giant before them.

When David talked he used words that diminished the giant rather than elevated him. He spoke in such a bold way that he pointed to the fact that Goliath was just a man. He was just an uncircumcised Philistine. "He's got the same parts I do. We're no different." "You guys are making this guy out to be a superstar and he's just like us. He's yapping just like us. Who has yapped in the Israelite camp that we haven't seen put in his place? This is just a bigger man who needs to be put in his place." David stood before Goliath with great confidence because he chose not to look at the giant but at his God. He was the only one who saw the giant as very small. Was it because David was big? No. He saw Goliath as small because God is big.

Let's do David's math, which goes like this: what is a nine-foot giant before the God of the universe? Some of you have a giant before you right now. Maybe it's your boss and he is looming large on Sunday because Monday is coming. This giant in your life controls everything. He controls whether you have a job, whether you'll get a pay increase and what clients you'll get. He controls everything. I want you to ask yourself this question: does your boss make sure the sun rises? Does your boss hold the celestial stars and the heavenly galaxies together? Did your boss create the world by the power of his word? Did your boss create man out of the dust of the earth? With all due respect, your boss is just an ordinary guy like you and me in comparison to the living God.

We need to stop doing math based on our figures and start using God's figures. Which one is greater: your trials, your giants or God Himself? Peter understood this. In his epistle to the church he said, "When trials and tribulations come, remember this: from our perspective they will kill us but from God's perspective they are light and momentary trials."

"Peter, quit being a Pollyanna. You don't know what you're talking about." Tradition tells us about two years after he wrote these words in 1 Peter he watched his wife be taken by the Romans and hung on a cross, to which he said, "Stay true, my love, to Christ!" He was then taken and pleaded that they would not crucify him in the same manner they crucified his Savior, so Peter was hung upside down on a cross, all the while praying to his God, "These are but light and momentary trials amidst Your glory."

When we look at our trials and troubles from a godly perspective they will get very small. You will begin to recognize that what you're worried about isn't all that big compared to God. It may be huge to you but to God it is small.

God didn't waste any time worrying about Goliath during those forty days and forty nights. If we're followers of God, and we're His children, why would we worry? Philippians 4:6 says, "*Do not be anxious about anything.*" It doesn't say, "Be anxious for things that are nine feet and nine inches tall, but everything else you don't have to worry about." God says, "If you believe in Me you don't have to be anxious about anything." We don't have to worry because God is with us.

Be empowered by the Spirit

First Samuel 16:13 says that when David was anointed king of Israel the Spirit of God rushed upon him. He had confidence because of the One Who indwelt him. Remember that the Spirit's filling was temporary in Old Testament times. We know that because of 1 Samuel 16:14. The Spirit of God rushed upon David and the next verse says that the Spirit of God left Saul.

We don't live in the times of Saul and David. We don't live in the times when the Holy Spirit came and went in people's lives. The same Spirit that temporarily indwelt David is the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, and we are promised that He lives and resides permanently within us. The same Spirit Who gave him the confidence to stand before a nine-foot giant is the same Spirit that fills you today. Like David, will you allow Him to empower you?

State our faith amidst our trial

For the majority of the passage until David stepped up, the giant was the one doing all the talking. Verses 45–46 say:

⁴⁵Then 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. ⁴⁶This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head."

Amidst this trial, David didn't say, "I'm David, the guy who has killed bears and lions. I'm David, who is really good with a slingshot and I'm going to kill you." He said, "I serve a God and this God wants you dead."

Some of us need to ask the question, when the Goliaths stand before us, what are we saying? Are we cowering in fear like Saul or are we saying, "The Word of God says some things about you, Giant"? I believe David was thinking, "Listen, Goliath. I want to make something clear to you today: you're as good as dead. You're standing there with all your confidence but this is what I want you to know: the God Who is on my side made you. The God Who is on my side brought you to this place. The God Who is on my side gave you your size, gave you the air you breathe, so that you could defy God and His people. The God Who is on my side owns this battle and you're a dead man walking."

How many of you are struggling with anxiety, but that anxiety would end if you stood before it and talked like that? When you are facing giants you need to declare that the giant is there because God has allowed it. God didn't think, "Where did Goliath go? That guy is fast! Where is he?" God knew exactly where Goliath was. David recognized that the puny giant from Gath was no match for God. Just as David did in the moments of warfare, make the Word of God your battle cry.

Be willing to stand alone

This is where things can get rough. God wasn't calling an army, but a man. David was surrounded by two types of people; and you will be too when you take big steps of faith. You'll stand around the cowards, like all the soldiers of Israel who were scared to death and running for their lives. You'll also stand among the critics. David's eldest brother Eliab rebuked him for standing for his faith. Amidst all of that David went it alone.

Sometimes God sees fit to send you through the valley of the shadow of death on your own. You must go and fight without any human help at your side. But David understood the truth that he wrote in Psalm 23. In the valley of the shadow of death God is with you. His rod and staff will comfort you. You may dine in the company of your enemies. You are never alone when you're fighting your giant. God is always with you. He will never leave you nor forsake you (Deuteronomy 31:6). When you remember the truth that the One Who is with you is greater than the one who is before us (1 John 4:4), we will always find victory and never defeat.

Be sure of the promises of God

David stood before the giant with confidence because of two important elements:

- In 1 Samuel 16 God anointed David to be king. When he stood before Goliath, was he king? No. David said, "God promised me a throne. I'm not on a throne yet so I know this giant isn't going to kill me." But let's just say he faltered a little bit in his faith and thought, "Maybe it was symbolic. Maybe it was a metaphorical throne." David understood that whether he was king on earth or dead in heaven, it's all good. If God leads you to be victorious here on earth or he allows the giant in your life to defeat you, understand there is victory in heaven. He knew his anointing meant something. As a child of God, God has anointed you with promises that you will be victorious in the end.
- God had protected David in battles before with the lion and the bear. He had seen God work in his life. David had confidence in the God Who had come through for him time and time again. When giants come before you, remember the things God has done in your life. When I struggle with worry and anxiety, I have to remind myself about the last thing I worried about. Usually I can't remember what it was. That should be a reminder that God took care of it then so why in the world should I worry about it now?

This is why small groups are so important for us as a church. Once a week we get together and remind one another that God has done great things in our midst. We come to small groups or into church, broken down and filled with anxiety. "I don't know what's going to happen. I don't know what this giant is going to do in my life. It looks like it's going to be bad." Then someone in the small group says, "I was struggling with something and God came through." We encourage one another. We put courage into one another so that we can battle our giants.

What giant are you facing? What giant is before you that has your number and you know you are no match for? Run to God! Put your faith in Him! Find your hope in Him! Draw your strength from Him and He will sustain you (Psalm 55:22). He will take care of your giants in His timing and in His way. He'll show you the victory, but you must be dependent on Him. Let's do it His way. David did it with courage and confidence. Saul did it his way and he cowered in fear. Goliath did it his way and we know what happened to him. Choose God's way and the confidence will come.