Facing Your Giants: David & Goliath  SLIDE #1
1 Samuel 17:3-49 (Read v3-7 and 45-49)

SLIDE #4  Story of the Turtle trying to cross over the road at the bridge over Dawsonville Highway. Saw him bravely attempting to cross as I came to church. He was facing a giant situation. First time I've ever prayed for a turtle! Do you remember the times when you've struggled with something, and you feel overwhelmed or you've been fighting a battle and its left you feeling like you've been run over by a truck? Sometimes we feel like we're always spending our time trying to defeat a giant. SLIDE #5 In some cases, we're up against one of life's challenges. In other cases, we're fighting sin that's got a hold of us, and as much as we want to defeat that giant in our lives, it rears its ugly head again and again.

We've all been to the place where we've had to deal with giants; giants like worry, doubt, fear, anxiety, depression, grief or insecurity. Whatever it has been, we've wandered through those dry valleys looking for answers, and sometimes we come up empty. We feel a lot like David standing in the intimidating shadow of Goliath.

Our story this morning is a familiar story whether you were brought up in Sunday School or not. Most people know about David and Goliath. David as we discovered last week is a young boy when he enters the scene and is anointed by the prophet Samuel to be the next King. In between last
week's story and this week's story a couple of things occur. First of all, following David's anointing as the next King, he is recruited because of his ability to play the harp and he's put to work in the King's Court to comfort the King whenever he's afflicted with what we're told was an evil spirit. Now understand that King Saul had no idea that David was to be his successor.

What's interesting is that David is still tending to his father's sheep. Now I don't know about you, but I would have thought that since he had been anointed as the next King he would have deserved some sort of special treatment. At the very least one of his brothers should have taken over his shepherding responsibilities and David should have been assigned a more respective place in the family while he awaited his new calling.

But David goes back and forth between the king's court and his sheep until the day that his Father asks him to go to the battlefield to check up on his brothers and take them some food. You know the story. When David arrives on the battlefield one of the Philistines, who's name was Goliath, was taunting the people of Israel challenging them to a one-on-one battle with their strongest man, a tactic that was commonly used in the Eastern World. Whoever won, his army won. And whoever lost, his whole army lost.

This Goliath was no ordinary fellow. SLIDE #6 The text tells us that Goliath was six cubits and a span. We don't understand that description so let me put it in our lingo. This guy was over nine feet tall! The NBA's dream come true!
Chapter 17, verses 4-7 give us a very physical description of Goliath. He was huge! Not only did he stand about 9 1/2 feet tall, but wore bronze armor that weighed 5000 shekels (125 pounds). He wore bronze greaves, which are like leggings to protect his legs, and had a javelin and a spear with an iron point that alone weighed about 600 shekels (15 pounds). All together his armor alone weighed close to 200 pounds, maybe more. The guy was MASSIVE! And he approached the battle line and wanted to play "Let's Make A Deal." He said to the Israelites, "Choose a MAN to come and fight me, and if I defeat your man in battle, you will become our servants. But if you find someone who can beat me, then we will become your servants."

And after he said all of that, he stood there and had the audacity to say, "I DEFY THE RANKS OF ISRAEL."
Translation? If you're too chicken to send someone to fight me, then your God can't be much better. Do you know how Saul and his soldiers reacted to that? Verse 11 says, "they were terrified." For 40 days, twice a day, Goliath would put on this show, and we see the reaction of Saul and his men again in verses 23-24...they ran away in fear. There was something about the way Saul was approaching this giant that was different from the way David would approach him.

When you look at this, there seems to be a sharp contrast in how to battle a giant. Notice how Saul and his men approached the situation. They kept putting it off, and the more they delayed, the more intimidated they got. And the more intimidated they got, the harder the problem became for them to handle. It's the same thing when we battle our giants. We wake up every morning and walk to the battle line. We look across the valley and see the intimidating
problem standing there. And it happens day after day, and the more we delay in battling the giant, the more intimidating the problem becomes, and the harder it is to handle later. But do you notice what David did? He shows up, surveyed the situation, saw a road-block, and did some immediate housecleaning. And the next morning, the Israelites would not have that giant to worry about any longer.

You know the rest of the story. David volunteered and not only did he fight the giant, but much to everyone's surprise he killed Goliath.

There are some tremendous insights that can be gleaned from David's encounter with Goliath but before we at those I want to stop for a moment and define a giant.

From childhood bullies to physical ailments, from financial pressures to job security, from heartbreak to loneliness, family issues, each of us at some point will face a person or thing that will look like a mountain and will cause us to feel small in the face of it.

Let me give you my definition of a giant because it's more than physical size. It's more than height and weight. Here's a great definition: (according to Keith Manry) SLIDE #7

"A giant is "a person or thing of great size that stands in the way of us fulfilling God's purposes."

For those of us who are followers of Jesus Christ one thing has been true for me (and I'm sure for you) over and over and over again: there always seems to be a giant in my way
- someone or something that is trying to prevent me from fulfilling God's purposes in my life. Whether I have a dream or goal and there's someone who tells me it can't be done or I'm trying to be like Jesus and there's a temptation that's always getting in my way, there are giants looming around every corner standing in the way of me becoming the person God desires or doing the things God wants me to do.

Each of us have giants. We don't all share the same giants... the same obstacles... but, the same principles that David used to overcome Goliath apply to our giants no matter who or what they are. Let's learn some great principles from this Bible story today:

1. **Principle number one is this: SLIDE # 8 Giants do not make or break us; they simply show us who we already are.**

   David did not become a hero the day he killed Goliath. The hero was simply exposed.

   Kentucky police officer John Nissen went beyond the call of duty during a recent 911 response. On July 24, Nissen, 39, and his partner-in-training received a dispatch call regarding a distressed female motorist, Barbie Henderson, who had pulled over on the side of a northbound Hillview, Kentucky, highway.

   "All we knew from the dispatch call was that there was a woman who was crying and needed help in her car. She opened the door for us when we approached, and I could
see she was visibly upset," he tells PEOPLE. "She let us know that her sister had passed away."

Henderson explained to Wave3 News that she was "upset, screaming and hollering," when she got the news of her sister's passing while she was driving, and it was her first reaction to call 911.

Nissen, a veteran cop of over 17 years, said he then asked the woman if he could sit with her. "Out of safety, I asked if I could talk with her and see if I could get her cooled down a bit," he said. "I turned the air vents towards her – it was over 90 degrees that day – held her hand, and she cried on my shoulder. I had her take sips of water."

Nissen spent over an hour with Henderson in the car, calming her down and making arrangements for a nearby family member to pick her up.

"I wanted her treated the way I would want my family to be treated if they needed help," he said.

When Henderson's sister, Shonda Barlow Garner, arrived at the scene, she was so amazed by the officer's kindness that she took a photo of the two SLIDE #9 and sent it to the Hillview Kentucky Police Facebook Page where she posted some kind remarks which began with this phrase: "Sometimes the very people you least expect to care are the ones who will. Officer Nissen was more than an officer yesterday. He was a person with a heart to understand this was a lady who just lost her sister and heard the news over the phone. From there on he took care of my sister ... What an awesome guy!!!!" she wrote." (People.com 7/29/15)
The fact of the matter is Officer Nissen did not become a hero that day. The events on that hot July day simply showed the world who he already was.

That's the thing about giants. We don't have an opportunity to become something that we weren't already when we face a giant. Giants simply show us who we already are.

2. The second principle in overcoming giants relates to the first: Victories are first won in the training room not on the field.  

Former Michigan State Football coach Duffy Daugherty tells a great story about a winning field goal kicked by a young man name Dave Kaiser against UCLA many years ago. The game was in Los Angeles and the field goal gave Michigan a 17-14 victory.

As Dave Kaiser came back to the bench to meet the roaring enthusiasm of his teammates, Coach Daugherty said: "Nice going, Dave, but I noticed you didn't watch the ball after you kicked it. How come?"

Kaiser replied, "You're right coach, I didn't watch the ball. I was watching the referee to see how he would call it. You see, I forgot my contact lenses. They are back at the hotel. I couldn't even see the goal posts!"

Daugherty was shocked and at first very angry that Kaiser had not told him about his contact lenses. But after he thought it over he changed his mind entirely. Why
shouldn't Kaiser kick without his contact lenses? Kaiser was a disciplined kicker and had practiced for long hours. He knew well the angle and the distance to the goal even though he couldn't see it. The whole process of kicking the ball was programmed into his body and mind by the ongoing discipline of daily practice. In that moment, when the ball went through the goal posts, discipline paid off.

It's foolish to believe that you can prepare to fight a giant at the last moment without having prepared ahead of time. Look at what the Apostle Paul says in I Corinthians 9:25: "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize."

In the same way as athletes prepare for competition well in advance of the event, so too we ought to be preparing ourselves spiritually before we face giants otherwise we won't be ready to fight the battle when we find ourselves on the front line.

3. Principle number 3 is this: Practice faith in the lesser battles of life. SLIDE #11
Where do you think David's unwavering confidence in God came from? The answer is simple. He got it from the same source we get it from today. He had seen God work to overcome lesser enemies in his life. Listen to what David said in verse 37 of our story today, "The Lord, who saved
me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine." David's faith had sustained him and strengthened him in the lesser battles of life preparing him for the day he would meet Goliath.

Nobody just goes out without any experience and challenges a giant. Faith doesn't work that way. But as challenges come up in the everyday affairs of life and we trust God to help us overcome them... and we see God come through... our faith grows.

The faith to fight giants is developed by everyday faithfulness to the challenges that come before us. People flunk out in facing giants in their lives because they do not fight the lesser battles of their lives.

When we fail to defeat giants, we don't realize that our defeat was predetermined by our faithlessness in little things. Jeremiah spoke to the people of his day who were failing for this same reason. He told them this: "If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?" - Jeremiah 12:5

Until we become faithful in the little things in life we'll never be ready for the big battles when they come.

4. Principle #4 is this: **Everyone who's never killed a giant will say it can't be done.**  **SLIDE #12**
When David began asking about this giant the first
opposition he met wasn't the enemy, but his own brother Eliab. Now don't forget who Eliab really is. He was the first son to stand before Samuel in our story last week, you know the one God rejected as King. He was probably standing there as the horn of oil had been emptied over his little brother's head...something which had to have been hard for the older brother to handle.

Eliab turns to his little brother and says "Why did you really come?" Then he asks another question designed to humiliate David: "Hey, David, where'd you leave the sheep." Then he gets down right ugly, "I know the wickedness of your heart. You're just here for the excitement."

I didn't have an older brother but I'm sure those would have been "fightin' words" in most families. But not David, he basically says, "All I did was ask a question" and turns to what's really important... the giant.

Here's what's key: David knew "when to fight and when to run". He chose his battles wisely. There was something much bigger and much more important to deal with other than allowing his jealous brother, who by the way, as far as we know, had never killed a giant, to get in the way.

It never fails: if you have a dream or vision of something that you believe God is calling you to...there will be somebody who's never done it telling you it can't be done.

If you're not a giant slayer, make sure you don't stand in the way of those who wish to be.
5. Principle #5: Never adopt the enemy's methods.

What happened when David approached King Saul? The King dressed him in his own armor. Why? To prepare him for battle. We've already heard about Goliath's armor. Wouldn't it make sense for David to dress appropriately for battle? But by refusing to fight the battle with the enemy's methods, he had a great chance to be a witness of God's amazing power.

As we approach battles in our own lives, it's crucial that we understand this same principle and that we comprehend what the Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:12 when he said "for our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." Paul goes on to say that the only way to win the battle is by putting on the armor of God which includes truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God.

When you put on God's armor and use it in the same way David used that sling, you'll begin to see giants fall!

6. The last principle is this: Remember the size of our God.

The reason that the Israelites had been so afraid was because they were comparing Goliath's size to their own size. From that perspective, they were outclassed. But David was comparing Goliath's size with God's size. What a different perspective!
The only way to defeat giants in our life is to look at the size and power of God. Remember the words of I John 4:4 "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world!" and of Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength."

It's easy to say those things but not believe them. And it's that lack of belief, that lack of faith that defeats us. A giant killer has got to be a man or woman of giant faith.

Bruce Larson, in his book "Believe and Belong" tells of how he helped people who were struggling to defeat the giants in their lives. He writes, "For many years, I worked in New York City, and counseled at my office any number of people who were wrestling with situations. Often I would suggest they walk with me from my office down to the RCA building on Fifth Avenue. In the entrance of that building is a gigantic statue of Atlas, a perfectly proportioned man who, with all his muscles straining, is holding the world upon his shoulders. There he is, the most powerfully built man in the world, and he can barely stand up under his burden. ‘Now that's one way you can live,’ I would point out, 'trying to carry the world on your shoulders.'

But now, come across the street with me.’ On the other side of Fifth Avenue is St. Patrick's Cathedral, and there behind the altar is a statue of Jesus as a boy, perhaps eight or nine years old, and with no effort, he is holding the world in one hand."

The truth is, we have a choice, and we are faced with a
question: Who are we relying on to defeat our giants? Who are we counting on to carry our burdens? The secret to overcoming giants is understanding what David understood, The battle belongs to the Lord! Just before David used his slingshot against Goliath he said this: SLIDE #15 "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." (1 Sam.17:47)

I found this quotation: SLIDE #16 "All David had was faith and a rock...and he defeated a giant; All you need is faith in THE ROCK to defeat yours."

You see, as a child of God, those giants become dwarfs when compared to the surpassing power that is at work within each and everyone of us. When we live by the principles that we've just discovered and surrender the battle to God, the giants that have been towering over us will come tumbling down.

Outline & info Adapted from Keith Manry/Kevin Weeks
Overcoming Giants: David & Goliath by Keith Manry

1 Samuel 17:
3 The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them.
4 A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span.[a] 5 He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels[b]; 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.[c] His shield bearer went ahead of him.
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.
12 Now David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse, who was from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons, and in Saul’s time he was very old. 13 Jesse’s three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war: The firstborn was Eliab; the second, Abinadab; and the third, Shamshah. 14 David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul, 15 but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father’s sheep at Bethlehem.
16 For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand.
17 Now Jesse said to his son David, “Take this ephah[d] 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[e] from them. 19 They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines.”

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?”

27 They repeated to him what they had been saying and told him, “This is what will be done for the man who kills him.”

28 When Eliab, David’s oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, “Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle.”

29 “Now what have I done?” said David. “Can’t I even speak?” 30 He then turned away to someone else and brought up the same matter, and the men answered him as before. 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.”

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. 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.”

Saul said to David, “Go, and the Lord be with you.”

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.

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. 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."

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. 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.

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[f] 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.

55 As Saul watched David going out to meet the Philistine, he said to Abner, commander of the army, “Abner, whose son is that young man?”

Abner replied, “As surely as you live, Your Majesty, I don’t know.”

56 The king said, “Find out whose son this young man is.”

57 As soon as David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with David still holding the Philistine’s head.

58 “Whose son are you, young man?” Saul asked him.

David said, “I am the son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem.”

Footnotes:

a 1 Samuel 17:4 That is, about 9 feet 9 inches or about 3 meters
b 1 Samuel 17:5 That is, about 125 pounds or about 58 kilograms
c 1 Samuel 17:7 That is, about 15 pounds or about 6.9 kilograms
d 1 Samuel 17:17 That is, probably about 36 pounds or about 16 kilograms
e 1 Samuel 17:18 Or some token; or some pledge of spoils
f 1 Samuel 17:52 Some Septuagint manuscripts; Hebrew of a valley

end of footnotes end of crossrefs

New International Version (NIV)