

Christ the True and Better David

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[0 : 00] 1 Samuel 17-11-54 will be our text for this morning.

! And 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.

And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was 5,000 shekels of bronze.

And he had bronze armor on his legs, and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed 600 shekels of iron.

And his shield-bearer went out before him. He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine?

[1 : 28] And are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants.

But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the ranks of Israel this day.

Give me a man that we may fight together. When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? One of my favorite sporting events is the NCAA basketball tournament in March.

68 teams from around the country compete for the national championship. All 68 teams, whether they are a college basketball powerhouse or a team from some obscure conference that few have ever heard of before, have a chance to cut down the nets when it's all said and done.

[2 : 45] And I think the most entertaining round of the tournament is round one, where you have a lot of those higher-seated powerhouse teams playing those lower-seated teams who don't seem like they stand much of a chance to win.

And one of the reasons why the tournament is called March Madness is because every year, it seems, one of those small schools is able to do the unthinkable. They're able to fight and scratch out a victory against one of those powerhouses who many predicted to win the whole thing.

And if you watch those games, especially in the first round, it's inevitable that you'll hear that matchup compared to David and Goliath. David being the small school, Goliath being the powerhouse that everybody thinks is going to crush them.

And I think that's why people love watching those games, because we love to see the underdog win. Some of my favorite stories and movies are about underdogs.

For example, Rocky Balboa, the washed-up has-been past his prime boxer who stands toe-to-toe with Apollo Creed, the champion for all 15 rounds.

[4 : 01] You have to watch the next movie to see him actually win the championship. Then Daniel LaRusso, the karate kid who beats the bully and who wins the girl in the end.

What about Luke Skywalker? The Tantuin farm boy from a galaxy far, far away who duels the dreaded Darth Vader, leading a rebellion that eventually overthrows the evil empire.

We love underdog stories. Our nation's beginning is an underdog story. We like cheering for the underdog.

The David in a match-up versus Goliath. And I think we enjoy that because we often like to or want to think of ourselves as the underdog, capable of achieving the impossible, silencing our doubters in the process, and then receiving the praise and the glory from others for it.

And I think that's the way most of us have interpreted or have been taught to interpret 1 Samuel 17. You can do it.

[5 : 17] Be like David. But that's not the point of this passage. God's intention is not that you see yourself as David in this text, but that you see your need for a champion like him.

That's the central theme of not only this passage, but all of the Bible. And it serves as the main idea for this morning's message. Jesus Christ is our champion.

Jesus Christ is our champion. Now, we're nearing the end of this series of sermons on biblical typology. If we call it a type in Scripture as a person or an object in the Old Testament that foreshadows and points forward to the coming and the doings of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

And it is through typology that God reveals to us that all of the Bible is truly one story about one person, and his name is Jesus Christ.

And so David is first and foremost a type pointing to Jesus. His victory over Goliath is a forecast of an even greater victory that would eventually come through the promised Messiah, the son of David, Jesus Christ, who would rule from a much greater throne having vanquished a much greater Goliath.

[6 : 58] And so we're going to take a 30,000 foot view of our text this morning and organize these 54 verses into three scenes.

Three scenes that collectively reveal to us and show us that Jesus is the better and truer David, our champion who has conquered our greatest foes, and he's done it for us.

So scene one begins in verse one with a defiant enemy, a defiant enemy. Verses one through four set the stage, providing the setting and the context for this showdown between David and Goliath.

Verse one again, it says, So understand that the Philistines here, they're on Israel's turf.

They are the aggressors. You know, whenever there's a fight on the schoolyard and a teacher comes and separates everybody, what's one of the first questions they ask?

[8 : 11] Who started it? Well, here we learn that it's the Philistines who started it. And then in verse two, we read about Israel's response to their invasion.

Verse two, verse three, it says, And 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. So picture in your mind here, there's two mountains and there's a valley in between.

On one side, you have the Philistines. And on the other side, you have the Israelites. Now, the Philistines, they were a coastal people. And around 13 BC, they began to move inward.

And that's around the time right here in our text this morning. As they moved inward, they built five cities governed by five kings who ruled autonomously.

But they also had formed some kind of coalition where they would work together to advance their purposes. And often that put them at odds with God's people in the nation of Israel.

[9 : 15] They were a constant irritant who persistently and continually harassed God's people. And it's kind of Israel's fault that at this point, the Philistines still existed as a people because God's instruction when they entered the promised land was to clear it out.

Remove everybody within the nation. But at some point, Israel was content with what they had. And they allowed the Philistines to live in those coastal areas which truly belonged to them as God's people.

And so let me pause here and just make an application about that. God expects his commands to be fully obeyed. Not to save us from sin, but to protect us from its disastrous and destructive influence and consequences in our life.

Remember, Jesus compared sin to yeast. He said how a little bit of yeast would spread throughout the whole lump of dough. As Christians, we cannot be content with sin's occupation in our lives.

It's something that the Bible says we must continually be on guard against, resisting it, seeking to put it to death. And we will continue to do that until the Lord returns to put an end to sin once for all for us.

[10 : 46] But he's given us all the resources that we need to combat it now. And avoid the earthly pain and consequences that it causes, not just for us, but for others.

If you remember a few weeks ago, I talked about sanctification. There's positional sanctification.

What happens when you are saved? You are in Christ. You are clothed in his righteousness.

You are declared righteous and holy in God the Father's sight. But there's also progressive sanctification. The pursuit of holiness.

Of being who Jesus has set us free to be. And again, until we reach glorification when Jesus returns and we undergo that final removal of sin from our being, until then, we should not give safe harbor or quarters to sin in any corner or aspect of our life.

Stop, resist it, combat it, and disclose it. One thing I don't think we do well enough is trust each other and confess our sins, as James 5, 16 instructs us.

[11 : 57] Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another. So understand that the Israelites had failed to obey God's instructions when they came into the promised land.

And that failure had consequences for subsequent generations. So here we are. The Philistines advancing into Israel's territory.

The Israelites out to reclaim what was taken and to defend the Philistines from advancing any more forward. And they were drawn up in battle, but no real fighting had taken place yet.

And verse 4 explains why. And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

Now those measurements would put him at nine feet, nine inches tall. And the armor that he wore, described in verses 5 through 6, weighed about 125 pounds.

[13 : 02] Now, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, records Goliath's height as four cubits and one span, which would have put him at six feet, six inches tall.

And there's various reasons to explain why there's those differences. But, you know, honestly, for me, it's not a big deal. I believe that Goliath was nine feet, nine inches tall, just like I believe that God created the world in seven days.

Just like I believe that Jonah was swallowed by a fish who somehow safely delivered him to the land of Nineveh, where he preached and people were saved. God brings dead people back to life. It's not hard to believe that God would create a man nine feet, nine inches tall, in order to accomplish his purpose, which in this case was once again to display his awesome unmatched power.

So here's Goliath, this giant of a man who verses 8 through 10 and 16 say had an equally giant mouth. For 40 days and nights, Goliath would descend down into the valley and he would try to pick a fight with Israel, taunting them, mocking them, challenging their manhood, defying their beliefs and their trust in Yahweh.

[14 : 22] Day after day, night after night, his voice and his blasphemous speech rang in the ears of Israel's army with none of them doing anything to answer his call.

And verse 11 tells us why that was. When Saul, who is Israel's king at this time, and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

I think this is really interesting. Again, Saul was Israel's first king. Israel, if you remember, desired to be like everyone else who had a king.

And God allowed it, but not without warning. So he sent Samuel, his prophet, to them to deliver that warning. He told the people, listen, a king will take much more from you than he'll ever give to you. He'll tax you. He'll take land from you. He'll take your sons to fight his battles. And he'll take your daughters to serve in his house. And the people heard that and they're like, well, okay, we still want a king.

[15 : 35] If you read Romans 1, you understand that one of the worst things that can happen to a people is when God gives them what their sinful hearts desire.

But Israel got their king and that king was Saul. Now look at how he is described in 1 Samuel 9, 2. And he, that's Kish, the father of Saul, had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upward, he was taller than any of the people. So Saul looked like a king.

He looked like a hero. But he didn't act like one. When it came time for Samuel to reveal to Israel that Saul was their king, Saul's action should have discouraged anyone from trusting him with such a great responsibility.

1 Samuel 10 records the revealing of Saul, the man chosen by God to be Israel's first king. So Samuel gathers all the tribes of Israel and through a process ordained by God, Saul, the son of Kish of the tribe of Benjamin, was singled out to be Israel's king.

[16 : 49] But he was nowhere to be found. We read in 1 Samuel 10, 22 through 23. So they inquired again of the Lord. Is there a man still to come?

Because they couldn't find where Saul was. And I love this part. And the Lord said, behold, he has hidden himself among the baggage.

And they ran and they took him from there. And when he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. Now you'd think Israel would have seen Saul's hiding as a cause for concern, wouldn't you?

We're about to appoint this man ruler over us. We're about to hand control of our nation over to him. And he's hiding underneath our stuff.

You know, maybe we need to rethink this whole king thing or at least try to find or ask God for another one instead of placing a crown on the top of this chicken's head.

[18:00] But no, instead we read they were mesmerized when they saw Saul and his appearance and how tall he was, how handsome he was, his strong stature.

We read about that in 1 Samuel 10, 24. And Samuel said to all the people, do you see him whom the Lord has chosen? There is none like him among all the people. And all the people shouted, long live the king.

And now I bring all of this up because as king, Saul represented his people. And as someone who stood a head taller than anyone else in his kingdom, don't you think that Saul should have been the man to answer Goliath's call to battle?

But while Goliath was a defiant enemy, we know that Saul was a defiant king. His desire for self-preservation led him to disobey God time and time again, act like a coward time and time again, and his insecurities crippled his faith.

Saul was Israel's king. Saul was a giant amongst his people. He looked the part, but he remained on the sideline, looking for someone else to fight the battle that I think should have been his.

[19:40] Israel needed a better representative. They needed a better king. And God would provide one in an unexpected way. And that's the second scene that we come to now, an unexpected representative, an unexpected representative.

Before looking at verse 12 of chapter 17, back up with me to chapter 16. Again, Saul's repeated defiance displeased God.

And so God sent Samuel to Bethlehem to track down the man who would be Saul's successor. God sent him to a man named Jesse who had many sons.

And God told Samuel that one of those sons would be the one who would serve as Israel's new king one day. And so Jesse introduced Samuel to seven of his eight sons.

And when Samuel saw Eliab, the oldest son, and he looked at his appearance, he was certain that he was the man that God had chosen, only he wasn't.

[20:49] In 1 Samuel 16, seven, we read, but the Lord said to Samuel, do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees.

Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. And so Jesse presents six more sons to Samuel, but none of them are God's chosen man.

And then finally Samuel, perplexed, I'm sure, asks Jesse, are there any others? Do you have any other sons? And Jesse says, well, yes, I do.

He's the youngest. He's out shepherding the sheep. And Samuel says, well, bring him to me. And we read about what happens in verses 12 and 13 of chapter 16.

And he sent and brought him, that's David. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the Lord said, arise, anoint him for this is he.

[21:47] Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

So David's anointing here was an external symbol of an inward work of God. It would be years before he would ascend the throne, but God here had empowered him for that task.

God didn't need a big man. God needed the right man. A man who loved him wholeheartedly. Neither Samuel nor David's own father, Jesse, expected that this dirty, grubby little shepherd boy would be able to be used by God to achieve such great things for his glory.

And when we move on now to chapter 17, verse 12, it doesn't appear that Jesse was terribly impressed with that whole anointing ceremony that had recently occurred back in chapter 16.

David is still tending his father's sheep while his big brothers are off to war. To Jesse, David is still a boy best suited for running errands and watching sheep.

[23 : 07] David is a humble and he's an obedient son. And he follows his father's orders in verses 17 and 18. And he takes food to his older brothers who are at war.

When David arrives on the scene, he sees that there's not much fighting going on. In verse 23, he lays his eyes on Israel's defiant enemy, Goliath, for the first time.

He hears the blasphemous words spewing from his massive mouth. And he observes that Israel is doing nothing about it. And so we pick up in verse 24.

All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were much afraid. And 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. So David asks these questions.

[24 : 07] He's taken all of this in. Apparently news of this standoff hadn't reached his home in Bethlehem. And then in verses 26 through 27, we see David asking a couple of more questions just for clarification.

It says there, and 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 would defy the armies of the living God?

And the people answered him in the same way. So shall it be to the man who kills him. Now the reward for taking down Goliath was a serious haul.

Riches from the king, marriage to the king's daughter, the princess, which would make them royalty then. And he would never have to pay taxes for the rest of his life.

And so you'd think that there would be one crazy soldier that would at least attempt it, right? And this is all to show just how fearful they were of Goliath because all of them were thinking, well, what good is it?

[25 : 17] You're not going to be able to reap those rewards because if you go out to face him, you'll die. But David was undeterred. He is a man again after God's own heart.

He's not focused on earthly improbabilities or impossibilities, but on heavenly realities. And he's willing to endure the shame that often comes along with trusting in God.

And in verse 28, Eliab, his older brother, is hardly out to win brother of the year. Still bitter for being passed up for his much younger brother.

He lashes out at David when he sees him. Verse 28, it says, Now 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 sheep in the wilderness? Now understand, Eliab's question isn't intended to elicit information about the flock, but to put David in his place.

[26 : 22] You're not a soldier. You're a shepherd. You're a servant. You're an errand boy. Go back home. And Eliab continues to shame David and dress him down in the rest of verse 28.

I know your presumption and the evil of your heart. You have come down to see the battle. You know what's really sad and tragic?

When God's people face opposition and discouragement from people who are supposed to be on God's side. Like Peter with Jesus, remember?

Forbidding Christ from going to the cross. Earthly mindedness is often used by Satan to oppose God's will and those who seek to obey it.

Sometimes the biggest obstacle Christians face in following Christ and achieving his mission are other Christians acting like cowards.

[27 : 26] So Goliath is not the real problem here. A leather strap and a small stone will fix him. The real menacing giant in this story is the unbelief that dominates the hearts of God's people.

And that's sin. I think God was more insulted by Israel's disbelief than by anything Goliath said about him.

You know, we should expect someone like Goliath to act the way that he did and say the things that he did but God's people should know better. Israel needed a better representative than the ones that they had.

They needed a better king who was willing to represent them in battle and lead the charge to vanquish their foes. And the representative that God chose was someone no one expected.

Now we move on to scene three which is a shared victory. Saul gets word that David is asking questions and wants to fight and so he brings David to him.

[28 : 43] He points out all the reasons to David why he can't win. You're young. You've never killed a man before let alone a giant of a man. Goliath is a grizzled veteran.

He's skilled in hand-to-hand combat. Do you know what you're volunteering for? Do you realize what you are up against? David gives his respectful answers in verses 34 through 36 telling Saul basically look I've defended my sheep from lions and bears and you know tigers and the evil or the wicked witch of the east if she would have been there as well.

Right? Lions and bears and tigers of mine not to David. And so he's saying to Saul look this dude he's tall but he doesn't have fangs or claws and besides more importantly David says in verse 37 the Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and 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. Saul then attempts to dress David in his armor but it's not a good fit.

It's not a good fit for both the reason that physically it wasn't a good fit for David but more importantly David wasn't looking to fight Goliath with defensive armor.

[30 : 16] It wasn't a good fit for the type of fight that he was going to fight. David is all about the run and gun offense here. I'm going to charge I'm going to kill this guy I'm not looking to defend myself I'm all about offense.

He's a shepherd at heart with the courage of a warrior and a great faith and a big God and he goes out to meet Goliath and when Goliath sees him he's unimpressed.

Verse 43 when the Philistine looked and saw David he disdained him for he was but a youth ruddy and handsome in appearance and the Philistine said to David am I a dog that you come at me with sticks and the Philistine cursed David by his gods and the Philistine said to David come to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beast of the field and now we come to my favorite part in this passage which is David's righteous trash talk then David said to the Philistine you come to me with a sword and a spear and with a javelin but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts the God of the armies of Israel whom you have defied this day the Lord will deliver you into my hand 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 the wild beasts of the earth that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel and that all the assembly may know that the Lord saves not with sword and spear now hold on to that thought for a moment for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into my hand I love it and you know the rest David charges Goliath he slings his stone with deadly accuracy crushing his head defeating the defiant enemy and cutting off his head verse 53 through 54 says then David ran stood over the Philistine took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it when the Philistines saw their champion was dead they fled and the men of Israel and Judah rose with a shout and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath now verse 53 and 54 and the people of Israel came back from chasing the Philistines and they plundered their camp and David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem but he put his armor in his tent see David and his victory as Israel's representative was their victory when David wins the entire nation wins with him even though they had nothing to do with it they did nothing to earn that victory now hold on to that thought as well the message of this entire event isn't no matter what the odds are you can do it it's not just believe in yourself our sinful world loves to promote that message and Christians often fall prey to it thinking that they are like David that they can name and claim blab and grab whatever victory over whatever enemy they are facing and that they have the power in and of themselves to conquer giants

God does not want us to read this story and come away with a cocky assurance in ourselves yes David was able to overcome insurmountable odds but in this story you and I we are not David you know who we are we're the scaredy cats up on the hill afraid maybe even we're like Saul prone to seek our own comfort and self preservation and so we stand in a similar situation to Israel in need of a representative to save us from the menacing giant of sin humanity's most serious and fundamental problem is sin sin is the problem behind all of our problems and like

[35 : 41] Israel there is nothing that any of us can do about it or I think truly desire to do anything about like Israel we hide in our tents trying to ignore our sin problem because we're too afraid to face it in God's judgment that looms over us like Goliath loomed over them for our sins we need a representative to challenge this giant of judgment on our behalf and Jesus Christ is the unexpected

representative of God like David he was born in Bethlehem he had no form or majesty that we should look at him no beauty externally that we would desire him like David he was mocked by his people he was shamed by his brothers like David he looked past that shame to pursue the will of God focused on advancing his kingdom and bringing

God glory like David Jesus vanquished our enemy David cut off Goliath's head but Jesus on the cross crushed the head of the serpent not with sword not with spear but a sinless life an atoning death and a victorious resurrection that we did not and could not earn but that he invites us all to share in the greatest foe the real giant in our lives is the one that Jesus already defeated at Golgatha when he shouted from the cross it is finished David was a great champion a king that was loved by his people but not even he could overcome his sin and he sinned a lot and he sinned big and David knew and he looked forward to God's bringing a true champion a conquering champion a better representative a truer shepherd a greater king and he writes about that in

Psalm 110 amen the Lord says to my Lord sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool the Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter rule in the midst of your enemies your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power and holy garments from the womb of the morning the dew of your youth will be yours the Lord has sworn and will not change his mind you and he's talking about Jesus here he's been talking about Jesus are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek the Lord is at your right hand he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath he will execute judgment among the nations filling them with corpses he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth he will drink from the brook by the way therefore he will lift up his head and so the main application I have for you this morning is this trust in

Jesus your champion trust in Jesus your champion brothers and sisters you have a champion in Jesus no power can match him no enemy can defeat him and the battle has already been won and he shares the victory of what he's achieved with you with us you didn't deserve it you couldn't earn it he won it and he shares it and so in knowing this what we should understand is that in Christ there is nothing to fear we shouldn't be hiding behind the walls of our churches when we've been commanded by our good shepherd our victorious warrior our conquering king to go to advance to take ground from his defeated foes to speak the truth to make disciples that they will know and trust in Jesus their champion too don't fear the taunts of those who don't believe in him and don't listen or be one of the voices in the church who acts like an unbelieving believer you are in Christ and there is nothing that can separate you from him and so be of good courage be full of joy be dutiful and serving the true and better

David Jesus Christ the son of God the Lord strong and mighty prince of peace lord of lords king of kings and savior of the world I have two application questions for you to look at later today maybe this week as you I hope go back and read over this passage again question number one how should this passage encourage and inspire you to know that Jesus has faced the giants of sin death and Satan so that you don't have to as Christians we should be of all people the most joyful the most encouraged because we have a champion we have a savior who is Jesus Christ and then secondly do you live as if Jesus is your champion what are you afraid of what are you anxious about what are you worried about do you live as if Jesus has slain the greatest giants that you'll ever have to face and if not why not why not let's pray heavenly father we thank you for your word and for its truth and for how you use it to convict our hearts of sin how you use it to remind us of who you are and what we have in Jesus

[42 : 45] Christ your son how you use it to encourage us and to bless us and to purify us and to remind us of the great promises that we have in Jesus Christ God I pray that we would be a people of great courage knowing that our champion has come that our champion has won the battles that we could not win and that he shared that victory with us and that Lord in being encouraged by that we would be the kind of people that you command us to be to advance your kingdom to not be afraid of those who oppose us but to continue to speak the truth and declare who you are in the hopes that you will use us to communicate the gospel and that men women and children will be saved and they'll know how great of a champion Jesus Christ is

Lord we need your help in this and we pray that you give it and we trust that you will in Jesus name we pray amen