

# Sermons at First Church

**A Ministry of the Word**

**June 7, 2015**

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**First Presbyterian Church**

**Clarksburg, WV**

**1 Samuel 17:32-51**

**Mark 4:35-41**

*David said, "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." (1 Samuel 17:37 N.R.S.V.)*

## **Battling Giants**

I am a child of God. I believe in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. And I believe he has the power to change my life and your life.

A friend of mine posted on face book the other day. "Whatever 'it' is, I just don't have 'it,' in me this morning." Most of us can relate. There are times in our lives when the battles we face seem simply overwhelming. There doesn't seem to be any way we can survive, let alone win. We are too tired or too scared to even get up and face the day. We just don't have "it" in us.

Both of our scriptures speak to condition. I am choosing today to focus on the Old Testament lesson. There we find the famous story of David and Goliath. This has long been a popular children's story and rightly so. When you are a child, the world is full of giants. Every adult around you is a giant compared to a First Grader.

In our Old Testament story, the Israelites have entered the promised land and settled there. Yet they are far from secure. The people of the coastal cities, collectively known as the Philistines, kept trying to conquer the Israelites. The Philistines were a fierce warriors. They were professionally equipped and trained. Goliath was from the city of Gath. Gath was famous for its giant warriors. Even so Goliath may well have been a giant among giants.

To put this in perspective, the NBA has some basketball players that are seven feet tall. These men are rare exceptions. The average man in the U.S. is about 5' 10", so these NBA players are better than a foot taller than average. That makes them stand out in an ordinary crowd as being head and shoulders above the rest.

Goliath was nine feet tall. That means that he was three feet taller than even the big men in the Israelite army. Keep in mind that before the age of guns, size was a tremendous advantage. The movies often show the little guy beating the big guy, but in real life, 99 times out of a 100 the big guy pounds the little guy into the dirt.

Goliath was not merely a big man - he was huge! No wonder none of the Israelites wanted to fight him. Goliath was starting to spook the army. “Hey you Israelites, how about we make this just between champions? Instead of a lot of people being killed, just send out your best man and the two of us will fight - winner take all. That is unless you are all scaredycats!”

King Saul and his generals were desperate. If this kept on, the Israelite soldiers would start to desert. They had to do something, but what? Then David, the shepherd boy, comes and saves the day. To be fair, one must say that God saved the day. But God worked through the boy David.

Whatever “it” is, David had it. David had “it” in him to face the giant. What David had was faith and trust in God. The scripture is clear that it is God who defeated Goliath. But David still had to have enough faith to show up. As someone once said, “Sometimes half the battle is just showing up.”

Now listen, many of us here today are facing giants in our own lives. It can be exhausting, and intimidating, and overwhelming. Some days we just don’t feel like we have “it” in us.

Maybe we really don’t have “it” in us. But that is okay because of “who” we have in us. 1 John 4:4 “For the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.” Even when we are running on empty, we still have access to God’s power. We keep showing up, we keep having faith, we keep fighting for what is right because we know that the God we serve is a Giant Killer.

Do you have giants in your life today? Perhaps you are fighting with the insurance company or some other big faceless corporation. It is a fight to just speak to a live person. Then, like as not, they may well give you the run around. “I am sorry, but I can’t help you. That’s just the way it is. I don’t make the rules.” Have you been there?

We keep showing up, we keep fighting for what is right, we keep living and loving, because the God we serve is a giant killer. “The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”

Perhaps you are fighting against a disease. Just the word, “Cancer,” strikes fear in many of our hearts. Cancer is a pretty big giant. It is exhausting fighting a disease like cancer. Surgeries, chemotherapy, radiation - and all the ups and downs of the good news, then bad news. Sometimes it can feel like you are on an out of control roller coaster. We keep showing up, we keep having faith, we keep living and loving, because we know the God we serve is a giant Killer. “The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”

Perhaps you are fighting a giant in your job, or in trying to get a job, or in trying to get a better job. It is hard to keep going in when you are constantly being told “no.” Sometimes we just don’t have it in us to get up and try again. Yet, the good news is, that as Christians, we are not on our own. We keep showing up, we keep having faith, we keep living and loving and seeking, because the God we serve is a giant killer. “The one who is in you is greater than the one who is

in the world.”

Perhaps what you are fighting as much as anything else is the fear itself. That day when Goliath was taunting them, the Israelite soldiers were frozen with fear. David not only fought the giant, but in showing his trust in God, he gave the Israelite soldiers the courage to enter the fight. That is something we can do for our brothers and sisters. We can help push back the fear.

I was reading about a man who was caught in a rising storm in an open boat. The Coast Guard sent a helicopter to pick him up. On the way back to shore the storm got much worse and the helicopter was being tossed every which way by the wind. Suddenly the pilot said, “uh oh!”

“What now? ,” the passenger cried.

“I’ve got the hiccups,” said the pilot, “quick, do something to scare me.”

“Just like that,” the passenger later said, “the storm outside didn’t seem all that bad.”

This is one of the wonderful things about the church family. We lean on each other. We model for each other power of faith. We don’t do that by trying to convince people that they are not really fighting giants. We do that by assuring our brothers and sisters in Christ, that God is bigger and stronger, than all our problems.

We keep showing up. We keep living and loving. We do not give in to fear. Because we know that the God we serve is a giant killer. “The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”

Amen.