

50 DAYS OF TRANSFORMATION — WEEK 8: MY VOCATIONAL LIFE

Your Dream, Your Giants, Your God

Introduction: The Dream God Gave You

God has given us the unique gift of dreaming — imagining a future that doesn't yet exist. As a pastor, part of my role is helping you discover God's dream for your life. For every one person who pursues that dream, nine hold back — not because the dream is wrong, but because giants stand between them and its fulfilment. This week we revisit David and Goliath, rethinking what the story is really teaching us about giants and how to face them.

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."

Romans 12:2 (NLT)

"¹⁻²So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you."

Romans 12:1-2 (MSG)

Key Learning: God has given us the capacity to dream His future for our lives — and pursuing that dream faithfully is itself an act of transformed thinking.

Rethinking the Story: Giants Are Not What They Seem

Drawing on Malcolm Gladwell's David and Goliath, we re-examine 1 Samuel 17. Both armies were locked in a weeks-long standoff until Goliath was sent out to challenge Israel to single combat — and no one, including King Saul, would answer. Until David, delivering food to his brothers, volunteered.

Key Learning: The story has been told for centuries as an underdog tale, but it's actually about seeing giants for what they really are.

What We Get Wrong About David

David's sling was not a child's toy but a trained artillery weapon. As an experienced shepherd-slinger, David had superior technology and a strategy that changed the terms of the fight before Goliath ever got close.

Key Learning: David wasn't an underdog — he was the right person, equipped with the right tools for the fight in front of him and he went knowing God would conquer the giant.

What We Get Wrong About Goliath

Goliath needed an attendant to lead him to the battlefield, moved slowly, and took an unusually long time to understand what David was doing. His apparent strength concealed real vulnerability.

Key Learning: The giants blocking our dreams are rarely as insurmountable as they first appear.

Four Giants David Faced Before He Got to Goliath

Before David ever faced Goliath, he had to defeat four giants that stand between all of us and God's dream for our life and work: delay, discouragement, disapproval, and doubt.

Key Learning: Every dream God gives us passes through giants long before it reaches its fulfilment — learning to recognise them is the first step to overcoming them.

Giant 1: Delay

David was anointed king — and then sent straight back to the sheep for years. There is always a gap between the day God gives us a dream and the day it's fulfilled; God promises faithfulness over time, not instant results.

“¹⁴David was the youngest son. David's three oldest brothers stayed with Saul's army, ¹⁵but David went back and forth so he could help his father with the sheep in Bethlehem.”

1 Samuel 17:14-15 (NLT)

Key Learning: Don't mistake delay for denial — the waiting season is where faith is built, not where the dream dies.

Giant 2: Discouragement

For forty days Goliath taunted Israel's army, and the whole nation was paralysed by fear. One persistent, confident voice demoralised an entire fighting force — proof that discouragement doesn't need to be true, only loud and constant.

"¹⁶For forty days, every morning and evening, the Philistine champion strutted in front of the Israelite army."

1 Samuel 17:16 (NLT)

Key Learning: Fear is contagious — guard who you listen to, and be willing to be the voice of faith when no one else will.

Giant 3: Disapproval

David's own brother Eliab accused him of pride and deceit for even showing up. The people closest to us can become the fiercest opponents of our dreams — not always out of malice, but because they're looking at our history when God is pointing to our future.

"²⁸But when David's oldest brother, Eliab, heard David talking to the men, he was angry. 'What are you doing around here anyway?' he demanded. 'What about those few sheep you're supposed to be taking care of? I know about your pride and deceit. You just want to see the battle!'"

1 Samuel 17:28 (NLT)

Key Learning: When pursuing God's dream, learn from others but also expect to be misunderstood by some of the people closest to you — and let God's approval matter most.

Giant 4: Doubt

King Saul's doubt was reasonable — he was an experienced warrior assessing an inexperienced boy. But experts operate from what has already been done, while God operates from what they have planned to do. Waiting for every expert to agree can mean waiting forever.

“Farmers who wait for perfect weather never plant. If they watch every cloud, they never harvest.”
Ecclesiastes 11:4 (NLT)

Key Learning: Confidence rooted in God is often mistaken for arrogance by those working only from human experience — don’t wait for the perfect moment to begin.

Four Things David Did to Defeat the Giants

Before David ever picked up a stone, he made four specific choices — choices available to every person pursuing God’s dream for their life and work.

Key Learning: Defeating the giants isn’t passive; it takes deliberate, repeatable choices.

1. He Remembered How God Had Helped Him in the Past

When Saul doubted him, David didn’t argue — he reached into his history with God, recalling how the Lord had rescued him from the lion and the bear.

“³⁶I have done this to both lions and bears, and I’ll do it to this pagan Philistine, too, for he has defied the armies of the living God! ³⁷The Lord who rescued me from the claws of the lion and the bear will rescue me from this Philistine!”

1 Samuel 17:36-37 (NLT)

Key Learning: A specific, personal memory of God’s past faithfulness is one of the strongest foundations for facing a new giant.

2. He Used the Tools God Had Already Given Him

Saul offered David his armour, but it wasn’t built for David’s body or fighting style. David took it off and went back to what he knew — a sling, five stones, and years of shepherding skill. Copying someone else’s method rarely works, because it was tailored to their gifts and calling, not ours.

Key Learning: Stop waiting for tools you don’t have — use what God has already placed faithfully in your hands.

3. He Ignored the Nay Sayers and Encouraged Himself in the Lord

David had almost no human encouragement as he approached Goliath but learned how to find strength in the Lord rather than in the people around him.

⁴⁶David was now in great danger because all his men were very bitter about losing their sons and daughters, and they began to talk of stoning him. But David found strength in the Lord his God.”

1 Samuel 30:6 (NLT)

Key Learning: Don't depend on external validation to sustain your faith — a daily, private relationship with God is what carries you through the deepest difficulties.

4. He Expected God to Act — for God's Glory, Not His Own

David ran at Goliath not with self-confidence but with God-confidence, declaring that the victory would belong to the Lord and that everyone watching would know it. When this church was planted, there were plenty of nay-sayers too — but stepping out in trust is what allows God to act.

⁴⁵David replied to the Philistine, ‘You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies—the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

⁴⁷And everyone assembled here will know that the Lord rescues his people, but not with sword and spear. This is the Lord’s battle, and he will give you to us!’”

1 Samuel 17:45, 47 (NLT)

Key Learning: We get to choose how much God does in our life — faith is the channel through which God's power flows.

Closing: Your Dream, Your Giants, Your God

David and Goliath is a story about facing real giants with the right tools, the right strategy, and the right God.

Key Learning: The dream God placed in your heart is worth picking back up today — the transformation is only just beginning.