



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Through the Bible

April 7 - 13

1 Samuel 16 - 17

Things to Know

VBS MAX Simpsonville Volunteers Needed

June 23 -26, 2025 - [Click Here to Volunteer!](#)

VBS MAX Haywood Volunteers Needed

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Gospel Connections and Conversations

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Studying God's Word *In Community*

*Reminder. Seek to understand and apply God's word, **not** rehash the sermon.*

Sermon Recap

- **God's Faithfulness:** God doesn't leave His people defenseless against overwhelming odds—He raised up David in the past just as He has given us Jesus,

our champion, for the battles we face today.

- **David as Christ's Forerunner:** Like David who fought alone on behalf of all Israel, Jesus stepped into our battle against sin and death as our representative, securing a victory we could never win on our own.
 - **Faith Over Fear:** When everyone else saw an undefeatable giant, David saw an opponent smaller than God—reminding us that faith sees our challenges through God's perspective rather than being paralyzed by fear.
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Read

Read 1 Samuel 16-17 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
 - What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
 - Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
 - What do you need help understanding about this passage?
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Scripture

**1 Samuel 17:
48-58**

⁴⁸ When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹ And 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.

⁵⁰ So 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. ⁵¹ Then 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. ⁵² And the men of Israel and Judah rose with a shout and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath^[f] and the gates of Ekron, so that the wounded Philistines fell on the way from Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron. ⁵³ And the people of Israel came back from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp. ⁵⁴ And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

1 Samuel 17: 48-58

⁵⁵ As 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.” ⁵⁶ And the king said, “Inquire whose son the boy is.” ⁵⁷ And 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. ⁵⁸ And Saul said to him, “Whose son are you, young man?” And David answered, “I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.”

[The Holy Bible, English Standard Version](#). ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. 1 Samuel 17: 48-58

Living on Mission In Community

In 1 Samuel 16-17, we see obedience displayed in multiple ways that demonstrate its centrality to walking with God. Samuel shows obedience when he follows God's instructions to anoint David despite his fear of Saul's reprisal. David exhibits obedience by faithfully tending his father's sheep in obscurity before his anointing, and later by delivering provisions to his brothers as instructed. Most notably, David's obedience shines when he steps forward to face Goliath while everyone else retreats in fear. His obedience flows from a heart that trusts God's faithfulness based on past experiences with the lion and bear. David obeys not through reckless confidence but through faith-filled courage, refusing the conventional armor of Saul and instead relying on God's provision. Throughout these chapters, obedience isn't presented as mere rule-following but as a wholehearted response to God that flows from knowing His character. In what specific area of your life is God calling you to step forward in obedience today, even when it seems risky or goes against conventional wisdom?

Before you close the group, answer this question:

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?
 - *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
 2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
 3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*
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Leader Resources

Additional Curriculum: David and Goliath!

Leader's Guide

This small group session is designed to follow a Sunday sermon on David and Goliath from 1 Samuel 17. The goal is to help participants dig deeper into the biblical text, apply the message to their lives, and support one another in facing their own challenges with faith.

Session Length: 60-90 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Bibles
- Paper and pens
- Optional: Whiteboard or large paper for group notes

Preparation:

- Review the entire guide and Scripture passage (1 Samuel 17)
- Reflect on the main points from the Sunday sermon
- Pray for your group members and their specific challenges

Group Session Outline

Opening (25-30 minutes)

Prayer & Ice Breaker (10 minutes)

Begin with a brief prayer, thanking God for His Word and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion.

Sample prayer: "Lord, thank you for your Word that speaks to us today just as it has throughout generations. As we discuss the story of David and Goliath, open our eyes to see how you want to work in our own lives. Give us the courage that comes from trusting you. Amen."

Ice Breaker Question: "If you could have dinner with any biblical character (besides Jesus), who would you choose and what one question would you ask them?"

Leader Note: This light-hearted question helps people engage before diving deeper. Encourage brief answers to keep things moving.

Group Vulnerability & Accountability (15-20 minutes)

Prompt for Sharing: "We all face giants in our lives—challenges that seem overwhelming or impossible. What's a 'giant' you're facing right now, and how is it affecting your relationship with God and others?"

Accountability Question: "Last time we met, some of you shared challenges you were working through. Would anyone be willing to update the group on how that's going?"

Leader Note: Model vulnerability by being willing to share first if needed. Affirm those who share and remind the group of confidentiality. This is not primarily a time for advice-giving but for listening and supporting.

Sermon Reflection (10-15 minutes)

Have group members share what stood out to them from the sermon on David and Goliath:

- What was one key point that resonated with you from Sunday's message?
- Was there anything that challenged your thinking or raised questions?
- How did the sermon connect with what's happening in your life right now?

Leader Note: This helps everyone reconnect with the sermon content and brings those who may have missed it into the conversation. Note themes that emerge as people share, as these might guide which aspects of the following discussion you emphasize.

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Bible Study & Discussion (30-40 minutes)

1. Seeing Giants Through God's Eyes (10-12 minutes)

Read 1 Samuel 17:4-11, 24-26

Key Teaching Points:

- The Israelites saw Goliath and were terrified; David saw the same giant but had a completely different reaction
- The difference wasn't their physical abilities but their spiritual perspective
- David saw the battle as spiritual, not merely physical—Goliath had defied "the armies of the living God"

Discussion Questions:

- How did the Israelites' view of Goliath differ from David's view?
- Why was David so concerned about Goliath's defiance of God, when everyone else was focused on his size and strength?
- What "giants" do we tend to focus on in our own strength rather than seeing them as opportunities for God to work?

Leader Help: J.D. Greear notes: "David looked at him; and do you know what David thought? David said, 'Look how much smaller he is than God is!' So David decided he would go. Armed in the power of Almighty God, David, with that sling, and with those five smooth stones, went out and won the victory."

2. Drawing Courage from Past Faithfulness (10-12 minutes)

Read 1 Samuel 17:32-37

Key Teaching Points:

- David's confidence wasn't based on naive optimism but on specific experiences of God's deliverance
- The battles with the lion and bear were preparation for facing Goliath
- God uses "ordinary" moments of faithfulness to prepare us for greater challenges

Discussion Questions:

- How did David's past experiences with God's faithfulness prepare him for this moment?
- What experiences of God's provision or protection can you recall from your own life?
- How might God be using your current circumstances to prepare you for future challenges?

Leader Help: Adrian Rogers emphasizes: "Real courage comes from knowing how God has worked in your past: 'David had learned to go from victory unto victory. And before Jesus met and defeated Satan at Calvary, He met and defeated Satan in the wilderness. And Jesus had gone from victory unto victory.'" Highlight how David's seemingly mundane job as a shepherd became his training ground for a national crisis.

3. David as a Type of Christ (10-12 minutes)

Read 1 Samuel 17:38-51

Key Teaching Points:

- David represents Christ as God's anointed deliverer who comes in unexpected form
- Like Jesus, David fought a battle that benefited others who could not save themselves
- David's victory over Goliath prefigures Christ's victory over sin, death, and Satan

Discussion Questions:

- What similarities do you see between David's battle with Goliath and Jesus' battle against sin and death?
- How does David's willingness to face Goliath alone mirror Christ's sacrifice?

- How does this story deepen your appreciation for what Jesus has done for you?

Leader Help: Adrian Rogers points out. "Not only therefore do I believe that Goliath of Gath is a picture of Satan, but I believe that David is a picture of our Savior. I believe here we have a prefiguring of the Lord Jesus Christ, who fought for us a vicarious encounter with Satan himself. Vicarious means 'in our place,' 'one standing in the place of another.' Here David stood for them all that day, just as the Lord Jesus went to bloody Calvary and stood for me and stood for you on that day: a vicarious encounter."

Robert Bergen notes: "The young man David, the sanctified, sent, and saving one" points toward Jesus. Like David who was anointed but not yet king, Jesus was anointed at his baptism but hadn't yet taken his throne. As David fought on behalf of God's people when they couldn't save themselves, Jesus fought the ultimate battle against sin and death that we could never win.

Personal Application (10-15 minutes)

Individual Reflection (3-5 minutes) Have everyone take a few minutes of silent reflection to consider these questions and jot down thoughts:

1. What specific "giant" are you facing that feels overwhelming right now?
2. How might God's perspective on this challenge differ from your own?
3. What "stones from the brook" has God already equipped you with to face this challenge?
4. How does seeing Jesus as your champion (like David was for Israel) change how you approach this challenge?
5. What step of faith could you take this week to move forward with courage?

Small Group Sharing (7-10 minutes) Divide into pairs or groups of three to share responses and pray for one another.

Leader Help: Encourage specific, actionable steps rather than vague commitments. For example, instead of "I'll trust God more," aim for "I'll start each morning reading Psalm 27 and journaling about God's faithfulness." Remind group members that while David's example inspires us, Jesus is our ultimate champion who has already won the decisive victory. Our battles are fought from victory, not for victory.

Closing Prayer and Commitment (5 minutes)

Gather back as a full group and close with prayer, focusing on:

- Thanking God for sending Jesus as our ultimate champion
- Acknowledging our dependency on Christ's victory rather than our own strength
- Asking for courage to face current challenges through faith in Christ
- Committing to supporting one another through difficulties

Group Commitment: Have each person share one way they will support or encourage someone else in the group during the coming week.

Leader Note: Consider following up mid-week with group members via text or email to check in on their "step of faith" and offer encouragement. Remind them that Jesus has already won the ultimate battle with our giants of sin and death—we now fight from His victory, not for victory.

Supplemental Leader Resources

Key Quotes from Theological Resources

On David as a Type of Christ:

"Not only therefore do I believe that Goliath of Gath is a picture of Satan, but I believe that David is a picture of our Savior. I believe here we have a prefiguring of the Lord Jesus Christ, who fought for us a vicarious encounter with Satan himself. Vicarious means 'in our place,' 'one standing in the place of another.' Here David stood for them all that day, just as the Lord Jesus went to bloody Calvary and stood for me and stood for you on that day: a vicarious encounter." - Adrian Rogers

On the Parallels Between David and Jesus:

"David pictures the Lord Jesus so much in the Bible that sometimes in the Bible Jesus is called David. Did you know that? And the Bible calls Jesus 'my servant David,' because David is so much like, in many ways, his greater Son, the Lord Jesus." - Adrian Rogers

On David's Perspective:

"David had his eyes upon God, and therefore he was filled with a purpose. The fear of man made Saul a coward. The fear of God made David a hero." - Adrian Rogers

On Faith vs. Size of the Challenge:

"The size of the giant is not the problem (it never is); the smallness of our confidence in God is the problem. It's always the problem." - J.D. Greear

On God's Selection of David:

"The Lord has a way of choosing the person people think the least likely, but nevertheless David was good-looking; ruddy implied light-skinned by comparison with his compatriots, and therefore striking in appearance. His selection, however, was entirely the Lord's doing." - Joyce Baldwin

On the Spiritual Nature of the Battle:

"This is no ordinary battle, but one in which God's honour was at stake, and in this circumstance David's exposure to danger permitted God's honour to be more clearly acknowledged than if David had more obviously been a match for the Philistine." - Joyce Baldwin

On David's Fight Representing All Israel:

"This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand... that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and 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." (1 Sam 17:46-47) - Robert Bergen notes that this vicarious representation where "one man was to fight for all" points directly to Christ's representative work on our behalf.

On Remembering Past Deliverances:

"Some saints have very short memories. It has been well said that we write our benefits in dust and our injuries in marble, and it is equally true that we generally inscribe our afflictions upon brass, while the records of the deliverances of God are written in water. It ought not so to be." - Charles Spurgeon

Alternative Discussion Questions

If your group needs additional conversation starters or wants to explore other aspects of the text:

1. Why do you think Eliab (David's oldest brother) responded so negatively to David's questions?
2. How does Jonathan's response to David (in chapter 18) contrast with Saul's?
3. What does this passage teach us about how to respond when people mock our faith?
4. David fought Goliath "in the name of the Lord." What does it mean practically to do things "in the name of the Lord"?

Additional Christological Discussion Questions

For groups wanting to explore the Christ-centered aspects of the text more deeply:

1. How does David's role as shepherd prepare him for his role as champion, and how does this parallel Jesus' identity as both Good Shepherd and Savior?
2. In what ways was David's victory a "vicarious" victory (won on behalf of others), and how does this point to Christ's vicarious work on the cross?
3. David was anointed as king but not yet crowned when he faced Goliath. How does this parallel Jesus' first and second comings?
4. How does David's willingness to fight against overwhelming odds reflect Christ's willingness to face the cross?
5. What does David's rejection of Saul's armor teach us about Christ's methods versus worldly