

15 July 2012

THE RISE OF ISRAEL

E100



This week for the E100 readings we looked at the story of Samuel, Saul and David.

In the David story we read of his encounter with Goliath. The giant who seemed too big and too strong to be defeated. He must have been an impressive sight being close on three meters tall. Standing there in all his glistening armour, boldly taking his stand, day after day. By the fortieth day he must have looked even bigger.

Have you noticed the longer you leave an issue the bigger it seems to get, rather than dealing with the issue straight away? It may be a difficult discussion you need to have with someone. The longer I leave things the more I go over it in my head the bigger it gets.

The anxiety meter goes up and it can look very overwhelming. Have you ever had that sort of experience?

No doubt that's why Paul wrote: "Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold." (Ephesians 4:26)

What other 'Goliaths' do we face in life? What other 'Giants' seek to intimidate us, to deflate us, standing there seeming too big and too powerful for us?

The Children of Israel faced a dilemma. Samuel was a faithful prophet but his sons weren't. What were they to do? Here's their answer; "They said to Samuel, 'You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.'" (1 Sam. 8:5)

One of the biggest 'Giants' in my life has been to be like everyone else. Feeling the need to fit in and be accepted. The

nation of Israel by their actions are seeking to fit in, are looking to the people around them to solve their dilemma. Have you ever felt the pressure to fit in? Have you ever felt the need to be loved and accepted, and then sought to please others?

We all have the need to be loved and accepted? It's a true 'Giant' in everyone's life. And we are all tempted to find that love and acceptance doing what everyone else does; look good, act to impress, be successful, work hard, be respectable, seek the praise of those we value, be anti establishment.

When David went to fight Goliath he didn't worry about how he looked. If he did, he wouldn't have gone, or he would have got dressed up in Saul's armour and Goliath would have slaughtered him. Goliath was far too strong and too skilled for David to tackle on Goliath's terms.

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

At times I've tried to take on the 'Goliaths' in my life on their terms. They set the agenda and then I try to respond using their world view, their vocabulary, trying to persuade them that they were wrong using their methods of understanding. And every time I get slaughtered.

What did David do? He didn't accept Goliath's boast about who was or wasn't god. David knew who the LORD was. David knew he had been anointed by the LORD to succeed Saul as king. David had lived his life with the LORD who had protected him in the past from the lion and the bear. David knew the LORD and knew the LORD would not change, just because this guy had an ego bigger than himself.

David's security and confidence isn't founded in his fighting ability but in the LORD he knows and has shared his life with. David's courage comes from the LORD and the promises he has made.

Have you noticed that whatever you look to for love and acceptance is your god? In life idolatry is never far from the surface. Which is the story of David and Goliath; not who's the strongest but who is the real God.

Are the gods of war, the gods of success, wealth, comfort, ease, power and position the real gods. Or

What 'Giants' do you face?

is the LORD the real god. The God of the shepherd boy, the God of the slave nation, is he the real god.

When it come to being loved and accepted, what has God done in your life?

In the waters of Baptism God the Father has adopted you as his child. So I can never hear enough, what God our Dad said when we were baptised: "You are my child, chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life." (Mark 1:11) Not only were those words spoken but we also

received the gift of the Holy Spirit; God in person living with us, now.

Talk about being loved; your Father has loved you with his life. He has had his heart torn out that you might be loved. Jesus death on the cross isn't some nice story we learned as children, it's the huge cost that was paid so that your adoption

as the Father's child is valid. This is love beyond compare. This is love we could never ever hope to earn, or deserve.

The language of 'getting what I deserve' comes from a sense of insecurity, from a sense of needing to fight so I don't lose what's mine. It's quite simply not the language of love. The language of love is me dying so that you get what you need, at my expense, because I can always trust the Father. I have nothing to prove, and nobody can stop my Heavenly Dad from loving me. Even though at times I try hard with my own stupidity! Nothing and nobody can stop our Heavenly Dad from loving us.

From our baptism we step into life loved and accepted. We are marked by his love and are the pride of his life. What beautiful words we hear from the lips of our Heavenly Father. Now we can step out into life confident, knowing who we are; the Father's loved children, recreated in his image, the image of Jesus.

We have nothing to prove. That's also one of the big giants of life; having to prove ourselves. That can only lead to a life of slavery; and as we know we are not slaves but free children of the Father. We don't have to prove ourselves, we can now discover the joys of being true to who we are. We can discover the amazing joy of living life loved by the Father, letting our lives become opportunities to express and discover his loving. If all I'm doing is proving myself, I'm robbing my life of love, because if I get what I deserve I'll never be loved. Love is never deserved only freely given.

But I know daily I'm tempted to prove myself; to make something of myself. Daily I'm tempted to compare myself and listen to many voices that assess my worthy according to what I do. The temptation to respond impressing others, doing what is declared profitable, doing another course to get another degree, doing another program to look

Let Jesus slay the 'Giants'

productive, doing what others want so they'll say 'well done'. What a 'Goliath' insecurity is. But just last week I was remind we're not 'human doings' but 'human beings'. Life is about being true to who you are. Life is found being in intimate, loving relationships.

Jesus comes and invites us to find our security, our identity in him. Anything else only results in idolatry, which never results in the life Jesus gave his life for us to enjoy with him and his

Father. Feeling insecure in my identity can be so crippling, so soul destroying.

This week I've been reminded to slay the 'Giants' of; Security, Identity, Acceptance, Purpose not with my own efforts but with Jesus love and grace which he has won for me thought his death and resurrection. In Jesus I'm adopted as the

Heavenly Father's child, in him I can live from who I am, letting that shape life, letting that shape what I do.

Let us pray. Jesus thank you for slaying the 'Giants' in our lives. Thank you for giving your life so that we can find life in you. Thank you that we can be confident of who we are in you. Thank you that we can always step into life accepted and loved. Thank you that the 'Giants' we face don't shape us but that our lives are shaped by our relationship with the Father in the Son empowered by the Holy Spirit. Amen.