

So, this morning, as many know, I had the pleasure of being at St John's, and leading their service. And we all know the Lutheran services are a little different than our services. They're a little more formal. They're a little more straightforward. So, when I got up there, and I thanked them for allowing me to come and be a part of their service. So I told them, we do service and our message a little different. So today I asked them because I said, I know, you are all good Lutherans. I know you all grew up in the church. I know you all went to Sunday school. You went to VBS, and you know, the story of David and Goliath. So I don't need to tell you the story. And they all smiled because everybody knows that story, even the unchurch, know this story. This is a wonderful story.

It's a story that teaches us about the underdog. It's a story that tells us that if we have faith in God, we will be protected and victorious no matter what. We can be oversized. We can be overpowered. It doesn't matter. We will win because we know how great David is. And they smile because they believe it, too.

And then I said, well, we don't follow the same lectionary that you do. You are expecting a sermon about the gospel of Matthew today, about the Parable of the Weeds. Unfortunately, we're going to be talking about David and Goliath. And at my church, when I tell a story about something that we all know as children, I say, we're gonna change it a little today. We're going to do a little twist. Now, the only time I've ever gotten pushed back on that was Noah. Norma got so mad, I could see it on her face when I did it that time with her.

But today, I'm going to ask all of you to forget the story. I want you to forget the story of David and Goliath. I want you to forget how great David is. And I want you to think about it from Goliath's perspective. I want you to think about this story in terms that he would receive himself.

Now we know that Goliath is very big. In our reading today it says he was 10 feet in. Most of it says that he's four to six cubits. That's a cubit, So he is about six and a half feet tall. Now, most of the other people around him, the Israelites, the other Philistines, are going to be about five eight. So he's going to be very big. That's why they make a point saying that he's from Gath. Gath is where Enoch raised his family. It was one of the five cities that survived after the flood of Noah. Now Enoch is also Noah's grandpa, so he left Gath before everything happened. But then Noah's son went back. Ham went back to Gath. And that's where these people come from. So, this is somebody that is descended from Adam, from Enoch, from Noah. And he's very big, And he's probably been very big all of his life, And generally when you have somebody that's bigger and stronger and faster than everybody, they're the people you put Center, right?

When we were growing up, the tallest person in my class, Craig Kirkpatrick, was bigger, faster than all the rest of us, and so we always went behind him. He made sure us little guys were always taking care, as I'm sure Goliath did. Now, they also are mandatory to serve in the military, so he had no choice to be in this army. It was the creed he had to be there. So he's bigger. He's stronger than everybody else. He's in the military, and he's taken care of his friends and his family that have to be there, too. Now, the one thing our reading left out today, the Philistines didn't start this war. Saul started this war. So this evil King from Israel started this war, marched into Gath, started killing people and won. And his son went to the next Philistine city, killed people, and won. And eventually his army got so small, he had to go back to Israel.

So, now the Philistines are sitting there. They've retreated. We got to defend ourselves. We have to protect our own in this. They've come to us. They've killed us. They've tortured us,

and we're just supposed to take it. So the Army goes, and they start going into Judah, just south of Jerusalem, into this valley. And along the way, Goliath realizes he doesn't want any more of his friends or family to die. He doesn't want anybody else because he knows that the people they're fighting are their cousins. They know that the Israelites are also descended from Adam, from Enoch, from Noah. He doesn't want any more death. So, how can you stop it because he's not the one that decides us?

He knows that he is bigger and stronger than most people and walks into each city and says, I will take one person. If I win, you all are now part of our army. You're part of our country. If you will, we become yours. This way, only one person dies, not thousands of people.. He's protecting his friends. He's protecting his family, and he's protecting all of the others too.

Now we know through the Old Testament that the best part about the Old Testament is gossip. We know that it spreads really fast, and as he's going along and doing this, he's creating an image of himself that he is 10 feet tall. That he does do these monstrous things, And he knows when he gets to the next city, half of them are going to run and hide,.So he's saving them too. Because they're not going to be there to fight if something goes wrong, And he works his way to the valley. And he knows that's where this evil King Saul is. And he knows it's where his army is. And he knows that if he takes the Philistines down this hill, they're gonna get slaughtered because the Israelites are up here. So he leaves them there, and he goes down by himself. He knows that if he's down here by himself, if the Israelites come down then his army can come down. And it's the last thing he wants, but it's the safest for both armies. And he tells them. Bring me your best fighter, you all believe in the same thing, right? You are all part of this. Bring me your best fighter, and we can settle this one on one. Nobody else has to die. For 40 days he tells them this and nobody comes. On the 40th day he's standing there and he sees this little boy coming up to him, with a shepherd's hook. That's it. That's all he sees is this shepherd hook.

Now if that's you, what do you think? I'd be mad because here I am this great warrior, and I don't want to hurt anybody really. And the last thing I want to do is kill a child, but this King is going to force you to it. He's going to force me to be a terrible person because I'm going to have to kill this kid, or I'm going to have to let this kid kill me. And I don't want that either. I'm being forced to do something that I don't necessarily want to do.

Well, we know how the story turns out right. We know that this kid killed this great warrior. We know that Goliath is the villain, right? We've been taught that all our lives. We've been taught that he was meant to do this.

In the reading, I said about earlier gospel reading for Saint John's in Matthew. Jesus is telling everybody the story of how these seeds, he's got a wheat field this farmer does, And in the middle of the night, somebody goes through and throws weeds all throughout it. And as the wheat and the weeds grow, they look the same. There's no difference. They look exactly the same. And then it gets to the point that the wheat is ready to harvest and you still see all of these weeds. So his slaves go up to the farmer and says, hey, what do we do? He said, take the weeds out first and bundle them, and then take the wheat. Take the bad out, and then the good. That way you get the best. You get the most of both.

Now, what did they do with those weeds?They burned them. They started fires with them. But more importantly, they started the fires in new houses. When they built houses back then, they were built of what we would call adobe now. And they would take all the weeds and

they would light them in fire to cure the foundation and cure the outside. So, even these terrible things still have a purpose and help others, even though initially we look at them and we think they're bad.

There's another story that we talk about at least once a month, that we're very familiar with where somebody else does something bad. But God placed them there intentionally to really do something good. I see confusion, so the point that I'm talking about is communion. And if Judas hadn't have done something bad then Jesus would have never been betrayed. He never would have been crucified. And he wouldn't have died, risen, and ascended for us so we can live. So, even though we see people as bad, we don't always know the whole story. We don't know why they're there. We don't know what their intentions are. We've grown up our entire lives, thinking that Goliath was this terrible person who just went out to kill everybody in sight. But he didn't necessarily mean to do that.

But it was important for him to face David. It was important because that gave the Israelites strength. It gave them the knowledge to know because they already know about King David. They already know what he did for their people. They know that he was the father of Solomon who rebuilt the temple. He knows we know that he's the ancestor of Jesus, so if he wouldn't have survived, right then, where would we be now? If Goliath hadn't been put in David's path to show the Israelites that even when they're conquered, there is still hope. There is still a chance that they all come out of this, because as long as you have faith in God, you will always be protected. And it's important to remember, we don't always know the other person. You don't always know the other side. We're very quick to judge. And Paul tells us in Romans that we are not supposed to do that. When we judge somebody, we're truly judging ourselves. We all have a point. We all have a purpose in this world. We might not understand what somebody else's is, but we still need to give them the grace because God put them in our path for some reason. Not always what we think it is.

Let us pray.