

September 18, 2016

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Date: 18 September 2016

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 00] Good morning.

This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. If any of the kids want to join us, you're welcome to Come On Up. Come On Up.

Come On Up. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Welcome to Pendleton Center United Methodist Church. I'm Scott Dabb. If you are new to our church, please pick up a gift at the connection site in the back of the sanctuary after worship.

And please fill out your friendship card to get on the mailing list, sign up for activities, and for prayers and concerns, or notes for the staff. Enjoy the service. Thanks. Well, we are glad to have you here this morning.

[1 : 41] Your opportunity for ministry on the clipboards this morning is our prayer vigil, where we do 24 hours of prayer here at the church. So if you'd like to sign up to help out for an hour, we'd love to have you come down for two hours, or 24 if you want to.

We have all sorts of openings, where we can pray before God and just lift up our concerns and our thoughts to God. Why don't we do that right now, shall we? Dear Lord in heaven, we thank you for today.

We pray your blessings upon us. We ask that you would touch us and reach into our hearts and souls to be our strength and help us to worship you in glory and honor today.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. I did want to mention, if you happen to have a young person in your life, 11 years old, or 6th grade, I guess it is, and older, who would like to be or interested in confirmation, that's going to start today, actually.

And that's at 1245, 1245. So if you want to know more about that, you can see Pastor Sherry or myself. I'm going to invite you to stand as we're going to sing together, A Mighty Fortress is Our God.

[2 : 49] A mighty fortress is our God. God's strength is our God.

For still our ancient foe God seek to work us long His craft and power are great And armed with cruel hate On earth he's not his ego Did we in our own strength confide Our striving would be to his way Were not a bright man on our side A man of God's hope to his way Must cast clue that may be Christ Jesus did his King Lord, set an oath his name

From age to age must stay And he must win the battle And though this world with devils filled Should pretend to run to us We will not fear for God and will His truth to triumph through us The Prince of darkness grieve We tremble not for him His rage we can endure For love is doom is sure One little one shall fail The world above all earth we cross

No place to let the fire The Spirit and the gifts are ours Through him who will not side him Let good death in them grow This powerful I will sow The body they may kill God's truth of life is still His kingdom is forever The Lord be with you The Lord be with you I invite you to take a moment And share the peace of the Spirit With one another The Lord be with you I invite the children to come up and join me now Any of the kids want to come up and join me?

The Lord be with you I'd like to invite the children to come up and join me now.

[6 : 37] Any of the kids want to come up and join me? Any other kids want to come up?

I need to ask you a question. And we have to be careful with knives, right? Which do you think of the knives would be more dangerous? This one or this one?

This one or this one? This one over here, you think? It's a sword, yeah, which is a big, big knife. But you know what the difference is?

This one's been filed down so it won't hurt anybody. I did that on purpose, yeah. So even though it could be sharpened up to be dangerous, right now it's not as dangerous as this one, which I will not run across my hand because it probably hurt me.

See, sometimes we think because it's big, it's stronger. Or because it looks big, it's stronger. Or it looks more dangerous. But the truth of the matter is sometimes little things are actually more dangerous.

[7 : 51] And little things are sometimes stronger than big things. And the truth is that God always wants us to remember that the biggest thing of all is always with us. And who's the biggest one of all?

God. So if God is with us, it really doesn't matter what we're facing. God will be there. So don't be afraid. Don't be afraid of even little knives or big knives. Don't be afraid of big people or little people.

Because remember, the biggest one in the universe is with you. Okay? What do you want to share tonight or today that you're thankful for? Raise your hand if you want to share something. I'm thankful for my baby sister and that my mom and dad got married this weekend.

Thank you. I'm a family. My brother. I'm the family.

God and my mom. Friends and family.

[8 : 51] All right. Lord, we thank you for the blessings you give to us. And we thank you that you're always with us. Bless us and give us strength that we might never be afraid. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Okay, you guys can all go out to church school today. All the kids are welcome and invited to go out to church school. In your bulletin you'll find that there's an envelope for a special offering today.

We take up special offerings from time to time. You're encouraged to participate in the ones that you particularly want to support. This one is for a mission called Seneca Street, which is something we do in downtown Buffalo on Seneca Street, actually.

And in Buffalo, in this community, pretty much all the churches have left the neighborhood. And we keep a church open down there, even though most of the members are children.

We don't have very many adults. We've got lots and lots of kids. So we go down there and we feed the kids. They have an after-school program. They've got a lot of activities to try and bring hope to a place where things don't have a lot of hope.

[10 : 01] So we help with that in a lot of different ways. If you'd like to be more involved in that ministry, you can talk to Gidget Hughes or anybody else who would try to share that with you. If you'd like to give an extra gift to that, we'd invite and encourage you to go ahead and do so.

This morning I'm thankful because those of you who are music effectiendos may have noticed we have a different piano in our church. We have had a generous gift given to us as a memorial.

So now we've got a new piano that Kathy's playing up there for our services. You know, people give great gifts to us in many different ways. And as they bless us, they bless the work of God in the world.

So let's give our thanks and return our thanksgiving to God with our morning tides and our offerings. So many lives are empty.

So many walk alone, weary, sad, and longing for home.

[11 : 33] Reaching out for something they cannot seem to find. Lord, let your love illuminate the pathway to my side.

This is my command that you take your brother's hand and love him as I at first loved you.

Love you. Let the warmth of your embrace give him strength to run the race.

May your love's work be the evidence of grace. Children cry in hunger as parents strive for bread.

Still their hearts are lost and unfath.egree Haveliness Broken people wander, oh God, where can you be?

[12 : 52] Share my heart with those who meet and bring them back to me.

Give the hungry food to eat Give the warm and tears to drink Give the broken ones a place that Jesus freed This is my command That you take your brother's hand And love him as I have first loved you Let the warmth of your embrace Give that strength to run the race May your lovesworth be the evidence of grace Make your lovesworth be the evidence of grace

May your lovesworth be the evidence of grace May your love be the evidence of grace May your love be the evidence of grace May your love be the evidence of grace All blessings come.

Praise the Lord, we praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, we praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord, we praise the Lord. Amen. Dear Heavenly Father, we do give you thanks and praise for this day.

[15 : 15] We give you praise for the opportunity to come and gather together in worship. We thank you, Lord God, for such blessings that you afford out into our lives.

We can only stand in awe of how amazing you are. Lord God, we return some of that to you as we remember who we are and offer it up for the work of your hand in this place.

We especially, Lord God, ask for a blessing upon the offering for Seneca Street. We ask in Jesus' name, Lord, that you would bless it. Oh, Lord God, give each and every one wisdom to know how to best use it for the furtherance of your kingdom.

We pray for your blessing upon that church down in Seneca Street, the work that's being done there. Let it be a light shining through your Lord.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please be seated. Oh, mercy. We have many joys and blessings in this place, in our world, in our lives.

[16 : 30] Amen. Amen. And I know that we also come before the Lord with concerns. And we want to lift those up before the Lord. We especially have Jan Hodge going in for surgery this week, so we want to keep her lifted up in our prayers.

And we'll be looking after her, don't you fear, but you pray for her. And Pastor Bill Edmister, who is Pastor Gene Edmister's husband, his brother Richard, his younger brother, died suddenly this week.

And the visitation will be here at 1 o'clock on Tuesday, followed by the funeral service at 2 o'clock. And we just want to keep him lifted up in our prayers.

It's a very sad time for them. With these concerns and those that are on your heart, let's turn to the Lord in prayer. Heavenly Father, Heavenly Father, we come before you in trust, in hopefulness, that you will hear and answer our prayers.

Lord God, we know how much you love us. We love you too. We come before you lifting up the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ and the needs of this world.

[18 : 20] Lord God, we need you so much, Lord. Lord God, we pray for all those who are sick and infirm, who are in need of a healing touch from you.

Make them whole, Lord God, in their spirits and their souls and their bodies. from the tops of their heads to the soles of their feet. Let them feel your presence and know you.

Draw them near to yourself, Lord. Help those who are caring for them also, Lord God. Help them to be patient, compassionate, and give them wisdom to know how to best care for those who are in need.

Lord, we pray for those who are grieving losses of all kinds. We ask for your Holy Spirit to just envelop them with arms of love, with arms of comfort.

Let them feel themselves sheltered beneath the shadow of your wings. Give them rest, Lord God, in their weariness. Help them, Lord.

[19 : 31] Draw them closer to yourself and put in their hearts a great hope for eternal life. Ease their suffering, Lord.

Lord God, we pray for those families that are in need of healing.

Families that are in need of help, Lord God. Whoever they may be, whatever their troubles may be, Lord God, we ask in Jesus' name that you touch them. That those in families who know you would be strengthened to pray, would be strengthened in their faith, and pray, Lord God, if there are those members and families who do not know you, that they would be drawn toward you, that they would see your love and your grace and your mercy in the hearts and the minds, in the actions and the words of their family members who do know you.

Let them be drawn toward you, Lord. Be in their midst. Restore their love, Lord God.

Father, we pray in Jesus' name. As we come, as we worship you, as we sing the songs, as we hear the words, as we pray the prayers, Lord God, that you would wash over us, transform us and make us into the people you called us to be.

[21 : 12] Strengthen us. Give us faith to show who you are wherever we go. Help us, Lord, to share your love.

Help us, Lord, to draw many to come to know you. Be with Pastor Tom as he delivers the message that you have given to him.

May it be a blessing to him and to us. May it teach us your ways. Lord God, we pray make all of our worship to be a blessing to you.

Because that is why we came. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord? Amen. Amen.

Good morning. Scripture reading this morning is from 1 Samuel 17, verses 8-11, 26-35, and 40-49.

[22 : 45] Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine? And are you not the servants of Saul?

Choose a man and have him come down to me. If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects. But if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us.

Then the Philistine said, This day I defy the armies of Israel. Give me a man and let us fight each other. On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

David asked the men standing near him, What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?

They repeated to him what they had been saying and told him, This is what will be done for the man who kills him. When Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, Why have you come down here?

[23 : 54] And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is. You came down only to watch the battle. Now what have I done, said David?

Can't I even speak? He then turned away to someone else and brought up the same matter. And the men answered him as before. What David said was overheard and reported to Saul and Saul sent for him.

David said to Saul, Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine. Your servant will go and fight him. Saul replied, You are not able to go out against the Philistine and fight him.

You are only a young man and he has been a warrior. He has been a warrior from his youth. But David said to Saul, Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it, and rescued the sheep from its mouth.

When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it, and killed it. Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag, and with a sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.

[25 : 07] Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield-bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him.

He said to David, Am I a dog? That you come at me with sticks? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. Come here, he said, and I'll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals.

David said to the Philistine, You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel.

All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves. The battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands.

[26 : 12] As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him, reaching into his bag and taking out the stone. He slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead.

The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. It was a little longer than that.

A few things you might not know is that David was promised if he defeated the giant, he would receive a princess to marry and some money and not have to pay taxes again.

David went out to face the giant, and Saul wanted to put him in his armor with his shields and all his battle gear and such, but it didn't fit David because David was too small to fit into Saul's armor.

So David went out with a slingshot and faced down the giant. Davy and Goliath. Anybody remember that? Hey, Dave, don't go by the train, Davy.

[27 : 22] That was a different Davy and Goliath, the only cartoons we were allowed to watch on Sunday morning back in the day. This is David who faced the giants. In this sermon series, we're talking about our fears, the things that cause us to tremble in life.

There's lots of different things that we'll be talking about, but today I want to talk about a couple that are very powerful. We're afraid to die. It's put in us naturally by God.

God has created us with this apprehension about death, even though it's a shadow. It feels so powerful. And so often in our culture, we think that it's the ultimate failure to die, and yet there's also a living death that feels sometimes like we would rather not even survive this life, that feeling as if we've been humiliated or embarrassed.

And we face both of these in this story. And we're going to look at the story of David and how he learned how to face his fears and how God helps us to overcome fears.

Somebody asked me the other day how old I am. Well, the next birthday I have is the big six old. Okay? Wow! 60!

[28 : 40] That's an old man. At least that's what I thought when I was a kid. Somebody 60 is so old. They're older than dirt. I mean, you know, they must be like from a different century.

Oh, I am from a different century. That's right. 60. It's interesting how certain numbers impact us more than others. If I thought I was 56, I wouldn't think that next year would be such a big year.

But because I'm 59, I think, oh, those numbers. See, we're also going to talk about phobias. And believe it or not, as people, we have some pretty big phobias about numbers.

Here in our phobia closet, the great frightening danger is numbers. Do you know that there's hotels where they won't even put a 13th floor on there because they're afraid of what might happen if they do?

We had a fellow who used to list the hymns on a board up here. And one of the hymns we liked to sing was number 666. He'd put 667 minus 1, you know.

[29 : 44] Because we have a phobia, a concern about numbers. numbers. And that number 16 means that I'm no longer young.

I don't want to think I'm old, but I have more than half my life behind me. That's almost a certain thing. And we do have an apprehension, a natural one about death.

In this story, David had to face death. So did his brother, his oldest brother, Iliab, and Saul, the king, had to face death. Even Goliath faced death. And we all have to face death.

Someone once said, the only two things that are certain in life are death and taxes. Yeah. They're afraid. In fact, in verse 11, it says, Saul himself, the great king, was terrified.

Terrified. We get terrified. Back when I was a kid, the number 9-1-1 didn't mean anything.

[30 : 48] It was just three numbers. Now if you put 9-1-1 together, the first thing we think is emergency. And if we say it a little differently and we say 9-11, we think terror.

As I was going to bed last night, I was watching the news about a pipe bomb going off in New Jersey and something blowing up and hurting 26 people in New York City.

We're terrorized. We feel a sense of impending doom that at every turn and every corner there's something or someone that wants to hurt us. Even though I walked through the valley of the shadow of death, David said in that song of his, I won't fear any evil because God is with me.

And probably the most important thing that I'll say this morning is to remember that God holds everything, not just our daily life. He holds all of eternity in his hands.

Matthew in chapter 10 says to us, don't be afraid of those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Be afraid of the one who can destroy both the soul and the body in hell.

[32 : 03] God is with us so we can walk through the shadowy, frightening valleys of life. A lot of times I'll be talking to people, you've heard me say this, you've probably heard it too.

They'll be talking about their troubles or their difficulties or this or that and somebody will pipe up and say, better than the alternative. I always say it. I love that line because you know what my answer is.

Well, no it's not. Freaks them out. No, it's not. Glory's a lot better. No more suffering or pain or sorrow or mourning or tears because that will have passed away.

It's a lot better. They just kind of stop and look at you like how can you say such a thing? Well, because in this world we get a glimpse into heaven and a glimpse into hell.

The best of this world is only a taste of the glory to come and the worst of this world is only a little bit of what could happen if we go the wrong way. Better than the alternative.

[33 : 08] Not really. And sometimes some people feel the way life is with its dangers, its fears, its worries, its humiliations and its hurts. But they'd rather be better off not even here.

One of the things about this story that we don't recognize is it's not just a story about facing death. It's about facing down our humiliation, our embarrassment. And we become a culture that lives in embarrassment, lives to embarrass us.

And some of us invited Facebook embarrassment, right? You haven't read something on that? And you go, oh, don't say that. I can't believe you did that. You didn't really put that picture on there.

Oh my gosh. We live our life out loud. And then we find out what happens with that. But even if we try not to, ask Colin Powell what he thinks about privacy.

It doesn't matter who you are. What happens in Vegas? Gets caught on a cell phone. Remember that. We live in a culture where we not only dread death, we dread a feeling as if we were dying away here.

[34 : 24] Because we can die to this life or we can die in this life in a sense of embarrassment and humiliation. Because sometimes what seems like the strongest or when we do stand up or when we do try to be brave and we do try to be the hero, it turns out like this guy with the sword.

Maybe he's this guy over here. See, here's the problem.

Here's the problem. We don't want to be the guy with the sword, right? We don't want to be the guy who stood up and made a fool themselves. And by the way, why in the movies do they always make it so hard to kill a hero?

Why does, you know, the Riddler come up with some crazy way to kill Batman instead of just like that, you know? And another thing, nothing to do with my sermon, but you know, the bullets bounce off of Superman's chest, right?

But he ducks when they throw the gun. What's that all about, you know? I'm sorry, that has nothing to do with anything, but we don't want to be embarrassed. And you can't believe that the guy who played Superman didn't feel embarrassed, but people would ask him that.

[35 : 45] And Saul doesn't want to be embarrassed either. Gaius is a nine-foot-tall giant. That's big. I've met tall people, but nine foot?

That's tall. And he's personally challenging somebody to come and fight him. And you know who he's really calling out? He's calling out Saul.

Because if you read about King Saul, you'll find it says in the Bible, he stood a foot taller than everybody else. Saul was used to being the big guy, the giant, who would walk around and look down on everyone.

And now he's facing somebody bigger than him. And it's embarrassing. I don't want you to misunderstand. Saul wasn't afraid to die.

I don't believe that because Saul went into battle a lot of times. He was a warrior. He was a soldier and a king who had led his armies into battle. And he risked death a lot of times.

[36 : 45] He was afraid that he was going to be known as the one that lost everything for the nation of Israel. And he'd be embarrassed forever.

A lot of things we're afraid of. Right there. There's a lot of things we worry about and we shrink away on. In the book of Romans in chapter 8, Paul says to us, what should we say in response to these things?

If God is for us, who can be against us? What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

Are any of these things so bad that they could truly, honestly keep us from the power of God? Goliath comes out.

He sees this little guy, David, and he curses him by his gods. Now most of us would say, we are not afraid of somebody else's gods.

[37 : 51] They don't mean anything to us. But are we so courageous? In fact, when we're looking at these phobias, they came up with the idea of being afraid of numbers.

I said, nobody's afraid of numbers. That's silly, right? Nobody's like this guy. When he wakes up, the first thing he sees is the clock. 6.13 a.m. The same numbers every morning.

I have one hour and 15 minutes before I have to be at work. 4-3. Channel 43 every morning. Coffee takes five minutes to make. Breakfast takes 20 minutes to make.

And eat. It consists of two eggs, two pieces of plain toast, eight ounces of pulp-free orange juice, and my precious coffee to drink. My life begins, lives, and ends with numbers.

I can't stand them. They terrify me. But I can't live without them. Only 37 minutes left. I shower in exactly 11 minutes. And I get dressed in four.

[38 : 51] I do my hair in eight seconds with only six moves of the cone. I brush my teeth, which takes two minutes because nine out of ten doctors say so.

And if nine out of ten doctors say so, it must be true. When I was a kid, I never worried about what my cholesterol level was. But now, oh my gosh, cholesterol level, blood pressure.

But what's your sugar level? What's your iron level? What other numbers do we work? Our weight, our age, oh my gosh. Are you 20-20 in your eyesight?

How much is in your 401k? And if it's not there, will you survive? What year are you in in high school? What's your phone number? What's your other phone number? What's your other phone number? What's your other phone number?

And what's your address? And what's your code? Don't you hate that? Everywhere you go, somebody wants to know your code. What's your code for this? What's your code for this? What's your code for that? What's your code for this? I don't know!

[39 : 50] And I don't want a code! Driving me crazy. What's your day of birth? Have you noticed what the polls have done lately? That should frighten you.

What about the rate of inflation? What did the stock market do last week? It's all numbers, all numbers. How many pills do you take? You know, I had a lady, she was telling me about her friend who won \$5,000 at the casino, which is the number, by the way.

And she went into a bank and opened up a bank account two weeks ago at First Niagara. And she can't find her money. She's got a bank book that tells her she has money in an account, but she doesn't even know what bank it's in.

Numbers! Codes! It can make you crazy! Because we let these numbers sink into our lives and control us as if they matter more than they should.

And the longer we live, the more we're afraid because we have more to lose and less time to recover. There's a story about a guy who went into a church and he was giving his testimony.

[41 : 02] And he got up and he said, you know, when I came to this town, I didn't have anything but the shirt on my back and the \$20 bill in my pocket. And I came to this church and I was praying to God and God said, give everything to have.

So I gave my \$20 to God. And God blessed me and now I can tell you I'm a multi-millionaire. He sat down and laid me next to him and said, do it again!

Well, that's a little harder to do it again! I gave him \$20! You see, the problem is we start to feel as if somehow, somehow, we're not sure that we can trust even what we used to trust.

So fear gets us on the wrong side of God. We get on the wrong side of God because we're afraid. We're afraid of death. We're afraid of being embarrassed. We're afraid of losing.

We're afraid of being sometimes those heroes themselves embarrass us. We all admire the people on that 9-11 day that were running into the buildings while everybody else was running away.

[42 : 11] They were talking on the news last night about how the bomb went off and people started running away and some people were running in. How would you feel if you were the one of the ones running away?

Isn't that what you're supposed to do is run away? What other people are running? Should I be running? Am I a coward? Stop running that way. Turn around so I can feel okay to run away. Right?

Because it's hard. And we can find ourselves even being upset with the heroes. Eliab was David's older brother. David shows up and he's talking about facing this giant and Eliab's like, what are you doing here?

Blowing off your mouth. You should be taking care of sheep, you little punk. Stop making such noise. Why? Because Eliab was feeling guilty.

After all, he's the one who's standing in the battle armor every day on the line when Goliath comes and calls him out to battle. And in our last week's chapter it said, Eliab was taller and bigger than everybody else.

[43 : 14] He was the giant in the family and the little punk David is making him feel bad. And everybody knows what David's like so they keep pushing him down. They said, you've got an illegitimate birth.

You're too young. You're too small. You're cocky. Sometimes we push people down that could be heroes and we break them before they even get started.

I was talking to somebody now from this church. You wouldn't even know them the other day and they said something to me that just shocked me. They said, this was a young lady and she said to me, well, ever since I was a little girl, my father told me I'm ugly.

Now this is actually a gorgeous woman and she says, ever since I was a little girl, my father told me I was ugly. I'm thinking, really? Fathers are supposed to tell all their little girls that they are the most beautiful woman in the world.

Amen? That's what a father is supposed to say. Even if it isn't true, you say it. I mean, really? This is your little girl. She's the most beautiful girl in the world for you.

[44 : 19] You understand? This poor girl's got a problem with her self-esteem. She feels like she's really nothing. I've known her for a long time and she's always, I wonder where did that come from?

Now I know. Destroy a person before they even become a person. Destroy a hero before they can even become a hero. Why? Because we've got a problem with our own self-esteem.

We don't feel good about us. So we push them down. David faced Goliath and Goliath was a great big giant and yet Goliath was mostly talk.

He starts trash-talking David. Who are you, you little... I could take you out. I could do this. You're a little bum. Who are you? How dare you come before me? All this trash-talk he's doing, acting like the big giant.

But I don't know if you know, he had a shield-bearer in front of him according to the story. He's got a guy... He's got a little young guy. He's probably about 15 years old and he's carrying a shield in front of the giant.

[45 : 23] So Goliath's going into the battle and there's this guy in front of him. Right? You know? Because Goliath isn't going to be the first one in even though he's the giant. It's fascinating.

Things we're afraid of are sometimes more afraid of us than we realize. I don't know if you've ever realized that this is the truth. The United States is the giant in the world.

You do know everybody you're afraid of. They're more afraid of you. And yet, for some reason, we've decided that we're afraid of the shadow of death. We're afraid of what people say and what could be.

We're afraid of terrorists on every turn and yet more people are killed in Chicago every year than by terrorists in five years. And less people are killed in Chicago than were killed 30 years ago.

And yet, 30 years ago, we'd send our kids out into the street and say, come home when the streetlights come out. Now we won't even let them go out to the streetlight because we live in fear. Now, I'm not saying you shouldn't have precautions or be careful.

[46 : 29] I'm saying we're letting shadows, we're letting shadows frighten us. We're worried and afraid and afraid when we should stand there with the heroes and being the heroes.

Have you ever actually faced death? Maybe some of you have. In my neighborhood, we had a gang called death. You know, they had jackets and on the back it said death.

These guys were bad. I mean, I wasn't very good and I ran with gangs, but I ran with gangs and we carried a chain or a club or something. These guys carried guns, you know, so if we got in a fight with them, we'd look like the guy with the sword, you know.

These guys were bad. The president was in prison. They were bad guys. We had a problem with gangs in our neighborhood so the police put a curfew on.

Anybody caught outside after 12 o'clock would be arrested automatically. My friends and I decided to sleep out on the porch at my house. We're out in the porch sleeping out and we got a great idea.

[47 : 37] Let's go to the drive-in. You know, we'll sneak out and go to the drive-in, right? Because that's the kind of kids we were. So we snuck out to the drive-in and on the way home we saw some lights coming down the street and we knew we could get arrested if this was a place so we all scattered like this.

There were about seven or eight of us, you know? Bunches, young, tough punks but we ran. We did. Some of us hid behind a boat closest thing by and wouldn't you know that that car pulls in the house with the boat.

What are the odds of that, right? And so you know what we did, us tough, strong, brave young guys, we ran like the wind down this path and one guy got out of the car.

One guy and he starts walking down the path towards us. So I hid in the bushes, got down low. I figured he'd probably walk past me and even if he did see me, I got seven of my buds with me.

There's one guy! This shouldn't be a problem. We can take one guy! He reached down, grabbed hold of my collar and I saw across the back of his jacket D-E-A-T-H and my friends scattered like the wind.

[49 : 03] Stuck me in his car. I had no idea what he was going to do. He drove me home and he rang the doorbell and I faced the real giant.

My father wasn't home. I'm not talking about him. Some of you may not know but my mother, she had polio when she was young so she was in a wheelchair and she comes to the door and answers the door and we're sitting in the kitchen with this guy from death and they're saying things like, does there anything wrong with that boy?

I'm going to come over here and burn your house down. Now, I didn't care. I wasn't afraid. You know why? I had mom with me. I wasn't worried at all. Mom was there.

I'm good. A few years later, a number of years later, my mother is talking to me as an adult and going, are you serious? You brought a gang member into my house.

He's sitting in my kitchen and said, burn your house down. I'm a lady in a wheelchair. But she was a hero.

[50 : 11] The problem is we look for our heroes in the wrong way and in the wrong place. We go down a back alley. Who do we want? We want a giant with a sword and a big weapon to protect us.

But see, if we can defend ourselves, if we have all that we need to protect ourselves, then we don't need God. In fact, God uses the things that we would think aren't very much to prove who He is.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 1, we read, God chose the lowly things of this world to despise things and the things that are not, to nullify the things that are, so that no one might boast in Him.

God works through regular people. God works through David, who is the smallest person in this story. God works through people who others would say are no one to prove who God is.

Verse 26, David's talking about this. He says, who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?

[51 : 24] We forget who's with us. And so we push down the heroes and we shrink away at ourselves when we're meant to be heroes.

Saul looked at David and said, you can't fight this guy. He's been fighting since he was a teenager and you're only a teenager. Hello? Did he hear what he said?

If Goliath could fight when he's a teenager, couldn't David do the same? Timothy says to us, don't let anyone look down on you because you're young.

Set an example for the believers in speech and conduct and love and faith and purity. Sometimes it's the young that are the bravest. Sometimes it's the poorest that are the strongest.

Sometimes it's the smallest that are the ones that give us the example. David faced a giant. Saul tried to give him his arm. He said, I don't use that stuff.

[52 : 21] And he went out with a slingshot. You've got to picture this. A guy in full battle armor, this giant facing against a kid with a slingshot. No weapons in the way in which we think of weapons.

But David said, all these gathered you will know that it's not by sword or spear that the Lord saves. For the battle is the Lord's and he'll give all of you into our hands.

He went with what God gave him to be. He was willing to stand up when everyone else was trying to push him down. He killed a giant with a rock.

You can hear the story on the other side. I thought you had a giant. Yeah, somebody threw a rock at him and he died. A rock? How embarrassing. A rock? A rock?

A rock. Don't be afraid. Don't be afraid to be the hero. And don't be afraid to embrace and support and encourage the heroes.

[53 : 30] You might change everything. In the book of Philippians it says that we can do all things through Christ who gives us strength. So long as God is with us nothing can stand against us.

God is the one who gets the victory. We keep depending on us. And of course if it's dependent upon us we'll lose. But it's dependent on the God of the universe.

The only thing certain in life is death and taxes. Well not for David. He won the battle and so not only did he marry the princess not only did he get a pile of money but he didn't have to pay taxes the rest of his life.

A lot of you are going yeah! Wouldn't you love that? Don't have to worry about that number April 15th right? It doesn't mean anything anymore. You're exempt from taxes.

And if you can be exempt from taxes maybe you can be exempt from death. because God plans a victory for us. A victory in glory that if we trust in God and have faith in God he'll take us through that shadow we call death and we don't have to be even afraid of death itself.

[54 : 46] Reject the rejection. Refuse to live by the standards of fear. Refuse to live by the broken world we're in. when the giant closed in on David he wasn't one of the ones running away he was one of the ones running in.

Oh those are brave people but they're just regular people being brave. This one boy wasn't afraid he trusted God and he not only changed a nation he changed the course of the world.

After all he knew the worst that can happen is you might die and then you'll just go to glory. That's okay. The end is near is what Peter says to us of all things we need to live knowing that we walk in the valley of the shadow of death.

Iliab you can picture his older brother Iliab he could have been the hero he could have faced the giant he could have been the one that everybody was talking about but he said who am I?

I'm just the guy who stands on the line who am I? I'm just a nobody I'm just one of the people who am I? I'm not a hero that's what we said we said we failed who am I to stand up to the bully in school?

[56 : 08] Who am I to talk about God when it's embarrassing? Who am I to be someone who cares for the weak and the poor? Who am I to love the unlovable? Who am I to stand up for people who should be stood up for?

Who am I to be brave when everybody else is running away? Who are you? It's not who you are it's who's with you the God of the universe who can change everything and transform our fears into victory don't be afraid of that and don't be afraid of being humiliated for goodness sakes Christ was humiliated on a cross and he overcame all of it know who's you are and live into it and God will give you the victory who am I that the Lord of all the earth would care to know my name would care to feel my heart who am I that the bright and morning star would choose to live or lay for my ever-wandering heart not because of who I am but because of what you've done not because of what I've done but because of who you are

I am a flower quickly fading with the day and God tomorrow a wave tossed in the ocean a wave born in the wind will you hear me when I'm calling won't you catch me when I'm falling that you've told me who I am I am yours I am yours who am I that the eyes that see my sin would look on me with love and watch me rise again who am I that the voice that comes to me would call

I am a flower to the rain and calm the storm in me not because of who I am but because of what you've done not because of what I've done but because of who you are I am a flower greatly fading with the day and gone tomorrow a wave tossed in the ocean a vapor in the wind still you hear me when I'm calling but you catch me when I'm falling and you told me who I am I am yours

I am yours I am yours I am yours I am yours I am yours I am yours I am yours I am yours I am your my mKay yes I am yours I am yours I am yours I am yours I am yours I am yours I am yours I am your ■■■■ I am yours I am tôi I am yêu I am yours I am your I am Tracy I am yours I am my I am your I am your high I will trust the Lord forever.

[61 : 02] I will trust Him at all times. He has delivered me from all fear.

He has set my feet upon the rock. I will not be moved.

And I'll say, Lord, Lord, You are my sin. I will trust Him at all.

I will trust Him at all. I will trust Him at all. I will trust Him at all.

I will trust Him at all. I will trust Him at all. I will trust Him at all.

[62 : 17] I will trust Him at all. I will trust Him at all.

I will trust Him at all. I will trust Him at all.

I will trust Him at all. I will trust Him at all.

I will trust Him at all. I will trust Him at all.

I will trust Him at all. I will trust Him at all.

[63 : 20] I will trust Him at all. I will trust Him at all. of me My very present health in time of me My very present health in time of me Water you turned into wine Poking the eyes of the blind

There's no one like you There's no one like you Into the darkness you shine Out of the ashes we rise There's no one like you There's no one like you There's no one like you Our God is greater Our God is stronger God you are harder than any other Our God is healer Awesome in power Our God Our God Into the darkness

Into the darkness you shine Out of the ashes we rise Our God Our God The Jesus No one like you There's no one like you There's no one like you It's no like you Our God The God Our God Is greater Our God Is stronger Our God is greater, our God is stronger, God is more higher than any other.

Our God is healer, our soul and power, our God, our God. Our God is more than ever, our God is more than ever, our God can stand again.

Our God is greater, our God is stronger, God is more higher than any other.

[67 : 08] Our God is greater, our God is stronger, God is more higher than any other.

Our God is healer, our soul and power, our God, our God. Our God is greater and stronger and more powerful than anything that we can face in this world.

Jesus has given us the victory if we will accept it, embrace it and live by it. But we run into fear and we don't trust and we end up sinning and we go away from God.

And so as we prepare ourselves for the table of victory, a table of celebration, let's prepare our hearts by saying a prayer of confession together.

Gracious Redeemer, we have sinned. We have not always trusted you. We have not always loved you.

[68 : 38] We have not always loved others. We have not always loved others.

Set us right. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hear the good news. Jesus Christ died for each and every one of us while we were still sinners. This proves God's love for you and for me.

So in the name of Jesus Christ we can proclaim, sins are forgiven. Glory to God.

Amen. Our God invites all of us.

[69 : 56] Each and every one of us. To receive him. There is none that God would want left out. Not a single one.

That's evident at the table. In the United Methodist Church, everyone is welcome at the table. You don't have to be a member. You don't ever have to have been here before.

You don't even have to be a member of any church. If you love God, repent of your sin, and seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

If you want Jesus in your life, you are welcome to come to the table. Because we believe it's here that you receive the fullness of grace, the fullness of mercy, the fullness of God's love for your life.

So you are welcome to come to the table this morning. Even if it's your first time here, you're welcome to come to the table this morning. If you've been coming all your life, God has something fresh and new for you too.

[71 : 03] The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right, and a good and joyful thing always, and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image, and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets.

And so, with your people on earth, and all the company of heaven, we praise your name, and join their unending hymn. Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Holy are you. And blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ.

Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people.

[72 : 27] He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, Jesus took bread, and he gave thanks to you. He broke the bread, and he gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, Eat.

This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. And when the supper was over, he took the cup.

He gave you thanks and praise, and gave it to his disciples. He said, Drink from this, all of you. This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new covenant, poured out for you, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. So, in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving, as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

[73 : 55] Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here. And on these gifts of bread and wine, make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world. until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your Holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. Amen.

Shall we pray together the prayer Jesus taught? Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[75 : 14] For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen. For those who are serving this morning, please come forward.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

We're all welcome to the table.

A place where we need God and we come and give our lives to God. You're welcome to join us at the Rail of the Prayers for Healing and Anointing and Light a Candle. Come and join us with you. Thank you.

[78 : 08] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[79 : 48] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[81 : 33] Thank you. and desert but you shall not die of thirst you shall wander far and safe deep though you do not know the way you shall speak your words in the foreign lands and all will understand you shall see the face of God and live be not afraid I go before you always come follow me and I will give you rest if you pass through raging waters in the sea you shall not drown if you walk amid the burning plains you shall not be hugged if you stand before the power of hell and death is at your side know that I am with you through it all be not afraid

I know before you always come follow me and I will give you rest rest don't let numbers frighten you over there they had one that was the number 30 we used to say you can't trust anybody over 30 now I'm double over 30 and I'm still not afraid of me the Lord gives you strength I know you feel sometimes like you need to be anxious don't be anxious about anything the Bible says God is with you God stands with you God goes with you go out and be the power of God in this world and show this world what real courage real conviction is that the people of God are not afraid of the shadow of death we're not afraid of even being embarrassed for our God because our God is a great God and he goes with you always go on the strength and the power and the peace of all that God offers in Jesus name amen

God to by God we are the God we are we.