

Today we hear the familiar story of David and Goliath. This isn't the big and powerful "King" David - at least not yet. This is the young shepherd who had yet to make sense of the call God had placed on him. A mere boy, without much experience or power.

In the story, we hear that "*David selected five smooth stones*" and placed them in his bag. Hardly what anyone might consider an 'arms race,' yet there is a lesson to be learned in this story.

In my preparation, I read through this story a couple of times to come up with a list of "five lessons" from the story of David and Goliath. If you will indulge me, I would like to explain these five characteristics that apply to David's victory over Goliath - and hopefully can be applied in our own lives.

1. Think big.

David didn't let the fact that the entire Israelite army was quaking in their boots before the terror that was Goliath. David knew that God was with Israel, and would be with him - and instead of placing arbitrary limitations on God's Providence, David stepped out in Faith, and not only thought big, but acted the same way.

2. Stick with what you know.

Once King Saul and the soldiers realize that David is serious about going up against Goliath, they go about trying to re-create him in their image. Sword, shield, armor. But David knows what he is about. He sets all of the best resources of war aside, and goes out - unprotected, with his staff, his sling, and a handful of stones.

3. Prayer beats power every time.

In the eyes of the world, Goliath had it all. Power, strength, self-confidence, and an awful lot of insulting words to throw about things. David, instead of returning the insults or boasting - speaks the truth in what turns out to be a Word of Prophecy ... ending with the prayer "*For the battle is the LORD's and he shall deliver you into our hands.*" David focused on God's promise, not on Goliath's threats.

4. Trust God and His plan.

Throughout this entire event, David could have run away or backed out - and it is doubtful that anyone would have criticized him for it. He could have changed his mind - after realizing that he didn't know what to do with the weapons given to him ... after he saw how big the giant really was ... or even just out of self-preservation. Yet he trusted the Word God had given him, and he put it all on the line for God.

5. God wins in the end.

We all know how the story ends. One shot ... one stone ... one dead giant. God's ways are so beyond our own ways - He will overcome our weaknesses and He will overcome any obstacles that may seem too much for us to handle - if we only trust in Him and His power ... instead of trusting in ourselves, our plans, and whatever power we think we have.

Today is also traditionally the Feast of the Chair of St. Peter in Rome - and for the past 100-plus years, the beginning of the Church Unity Octave, also known as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. May our prayers and actions reflect Jesus' prayer to His Father that His followers "may all be one."