

In his 2008 book titled *Facing Your Giants*, New York Times bestselling Christian author Max Lucado takes as his basis the rather long first reading we had today from 1 Samuel.

We're all familiar with the story of David and Goliath, and have not only read or heard it from Scripture, but probably also seen it played out in various ways.

Lucado breaks down David's success into two elements.

First, he looks at what everyone is saying in the story.

Saul and the Israelites are all talking about Goliath. Their focus is on the giant.

David, on the other hand, can't stop talking about God.

And that is the first element - look at where the actors in the story are focusing.

The second element of Lucado's break-down is the "*five smooth stones*."

The author breaks out the five stones as five characteristics based on what and how David speaks in today's reading.

The first stone is the past. Not to dwell on our past, but rather to focus on the good things in the past. David knew that God had led Israel out of tougher situations than this, and he also knew that God would do it again.

The second stone is prayer. David knew what God had done before, so he asked God to do it again. And he was not disappointed.

The third stone is priority. The Philistines had insulted God and all of God's followers. And David's love for God transcended any personal pride he may have felt. His reason for what he was doing was out of his love and loyalty for God, and nothing else.

The fourth stone is passion. David confronted something pretty scary. He didn't run away from Goliath, but rather ran right at the giant. He wasn't going to do this half-way, he gave it everything.

The final stone is persistence. Even after he had felled the giant with a stone, David finished the gruesome task that he had set himself to do - cutting off Goliath's head.

And so, for us, when we face our own troubles, or as Lucado calls them, our giants. The first step is to focus on God and not the problem.

Once we are focused, we need to pick up the "*five smooth stones*" - namely, remember what God has done for us already, ask God's help in this situation through prayer, do what we do for God, give it everything we've got, and follow through once God has won the victory for us.

In this way, we realize that everything that we have is a gift from God, and if we lose our focus on God, shift our priorities away from God, forget what God has promised us and already done for us, hold back, or give up ... well, the failure is ours, not Gods.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us pray for the graces we need to follow the example of the little shepherd boy, David, in the story with Goliath. May we realize how much God has done for us, and do our part to honor Him, talk with Him, keep Him in first place, give Him our best, and to always persevere in what we do for Him.