

## Facing Your Goliaths

Romans 15:04b

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

You could probably realize it yourselves, but this is an amazing book here. It contains some of the most beautiful writing in the whole world. You see where a lot of the song writers got their good lines from and it's a book in the Old Testament called Ecclesiastes. And those of you who know a little about Greek philosophy know that it really comes out of that background and yet it's from a higher source than that.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 is some of the most beautiful literature in the world. "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing."

And really the cadences are beautiful and none of our English poetry is better than that. It's the same if you've ever looked at the love poem just a few pages later. It's the Song of Solomon chapter 4:1. "Behold, you are beautiful, my love, behold, you are beautiful! Your eyes are doves behind your veil. Your hair is like a flock of goats, moving down the slopes of Gilead. Your teeth are like a flock of shorn ewes that have come up from the washing, all of which bear twins, and not one among them is bereaved. Your lips are like a scarlet thread, and your mouth is lovely. Your cheeks are like the halves of a pomegranate, behind your veil. Your neck is like the tower of David, built for an arsenal, whereon hang a thousand bucklers, all of them shields of warriors. Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle that feed among the lilies. Until the day breathes and the shadows flee, I will hie me to the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense. You are all fair, my love; there is no flaw in you. Come with me from Lebanon, my bride; come with me from Lebanon."

So some of the most beautiful lines that exist in literature, exist in this book and then you probably know that it's not famous just for its literature, but for its wisdom. I mean it has more good directions for everyday common sense situations than probably any other book, and you will get it there in Proverbs 6:6 and of course it gets to the heart of what we all face in slothfulness. Proverb 6:6, "Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer or ruler, she prepares her food in summer, and gathers her sustenance in harvest. How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a vagabond, and want like an armed man. A worthless person, a wicked man, goes about with crooked speech, winks with his eyes, scrapes with his feet, points with his finger, with perverted heart devises evil, continually sowing discord; therefore calamity will come upon him suddenly; in a moment he will be broken beyond healing. There are six things which the Lord hates, seven which are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and a man who sows discord among brothers. My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching."

So it's literature and it's wisdom -- and then you and I have shared how it's better history than any other history we have for the period from 1500 B.C. to about a 100 A.D. Remember how we

mentioned that there are Latin and Roman historians like Tacitus and Pliny and Sallust and Jewish historians like Josephus who cover especially that period, the first 100 years of our era, but none of them are reinforced by the number of manuscripts that this book is reinforced by. When you look at Tacitus, you are dealing with maybe about 20 or 25 ancient manuscripts. When you look at this book [the Bible], it has 4000 ancient Greek manuscripts. So in an amazing way it's not only literature, it's not only wisdom, but it is better history than we have any other place for that period of time.

And of course one of the people that these books talks about in the last part is Jesus of Nazareth. It describes how he was a man who lived a sinless, perfect life, who had power over the forces of nature and power to heal diseases and to raise people from the dead, and how he explained to us that he was really the son of the Creator of the world, and he was going to leave the earth when he died and then come back to assure us that he was speaking truth and that's exactly what he did.

And when he came back, he said something even more remarkable about this book and I'll show you where it is loved ones, it's in Matthew 5:17 and this is what Jesus of Nazareth who has shown himself more than any other man to be the son of the Creator of the world said about this Bible. Matthew 5:17, "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." And Jesus said this book has actually the commandments of our Creator in it. This book is actually written by our Maker and it shows us what our Maker thinks and it shows us the way he wants us to live.

So this book is really not just literature and not just history, and it's not just wisdom, but in this book, God himself has spoken to different people down through the years, and this morning that temporal word is able to fade into the background and God is able to speak an eternal word to you personally. So that's the importance of it, that through this book, your Creator is able to speak to you this morning. That's what that verse says in Romans 15:4, "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction," that we might receive encouragement and steadfastness from the Scriptures and that's why we study this book, loved ones.

Now I want to share with you one word that I just know God wants to speak to some of you today. It's Psalm 37:5 and it's something that God says to you about anything that is worrying you to death, anything that's just worrying you to death. Psalm 37:5, "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act." "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act." We human beings, especially with our Western educational system, have a great misconception about life and it is loved ones a misconception, and the misconception is this: that we are meant to handle everything that life throws at us with the aid of our education and our own will power, and if we don't do that, we are less than men, we are less than women, we are less than mature adults or human beings. Now that misconception comes from a lie that our forefathers espoused away at the beginning of creation and I'll show you the lie. It's in Genesis 3:5, "For God knows that when you eat of it," that is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you'll be like God, knowing good and evil."

That was the lie, and Adam passed that on down through all the teachers and all the school teachers, and all the moms and dads right down to our present day, and we are encouraged to believe that if we just know the difference between good and evil, if we just know what is right to do, and what is

wrong to do, then we will be God. And we will be able to handle everything that comes to us in our lives by our own unaided effort. And so, we tend to live that way. Now the killer is this: reality and the whole purpose of life make that impossible. The whole purpose of life itself, the whole reason why the Creator put you and me on this earth actually contradicts that completely and utterly.

And I'll show you the purpose that he had. It's John 17:20, it's part of Jesus prayer. "I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word." That's us. "That they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." That's why God made us, so that we could come into a oneness with him and dwell in him. That's why he put us on earth. He put us on earth with all kinds of things that would come into our lives that we would not be able to handle on our own. So that, as we attempted to have dominion over the works of his hands by drilling the oil wells, by building our bridges, by creating our businesses, by trying to build our homes, we would repeatedly come against things that we could not handle on our own, and we would be driven into him to receive the strength and the wisdom to do it.

So reality, and the purpose of reality, dictates that we are not here to handle life on our own, and our Creator never meant us to. And the reason he put us here was, that as we try to tackle life, and the things that will be bigger than we are able to handle ourselves, we will be driven more and more close to him, and more and more into a oneness with him. But do you see that we've been brought up the other way, we've been brought up to think that's weakness. We've been brought up to think, no we ought to be able to handle it like our dads did on their own, but that was never the Father's intention. The whole purpose of God putting us here at all, is to bring us into a oneness with himself, to begin to experience his strength coming through us to the world, so that it's his strength that is made known, and it's his strength that is seen, and it's his strength that prepares the world for the great plan he has for it after this life is over.

His purpose is to bring us into a oneness with himself. So, you can bet your boots that he is going to allow you to come into countless situations that you cannot handle on your own, because he doesn't want you to handle them on your own. And yet we poor little souls fight against that, and we oppose it and we accuse each other and are hard on each other, because we're not able to handle these things alone. We were never meant to handle them alone. In other words, you are always going to face things that you can't handle yourself.

The great error that you and I make when we read the story of Goliath is this, yeah well I mean Goliath, he was really too big for David to handle obviously, and it's just a unique once in a lifetime situation. It isn't. Goliath is God's norm for you and me. Goliath is God's norm. God will constantly be allowing Goliaths to occur in your life. Things that are too big for you to handle. And that's so that you will be driven to God himself for the strength, and the wisdom, and the grace, and the faith to deal with that giant.

Now, you'll have no trouble distinguishing your Goliaths. He was about nine foot tall, I reckon. He was six cubits in a span and so it's probably about nine foot tall, so you can't miss him, he's up there somewhere. You'll always know your Goliath. You've all kinds of little things you can handle on your own: tying shoelaces, getting up for breakfast and getting the car started, and going through some typing that you have to do during the day. There are lots of things we can handle on our own, but the really precious things are the Goliaths that God allows to come to you, because those are the ones that he is going to use to draw you into himself. So, you'll always know your

Goliath because it will always be some guy who is nine feet tall, something that makes you feel there is no way I can pay this bank debt, there's no way I can pay this check this month. There's no way I can see my way through this marriage problem. There's no way I can sort out my future. There's no way I can make this personal relationship work.

Every time you feel a thing is impossible, that is your Creator saying to you, now we got a real life Goliath here that you and I are going to tackle together. But that's it. In other words, you rejoice when you see a Goliath. You don't look at him and say, I'll never handle that myself. That's exactly why he has come. Of course God knows you can't handle it yourself. That's why he is there. Immediately you see a Goliath, you rejoice that your Creator has sent this Goliath for one purpose.

And the purpose is there if you look back at that story of David in the Old Testament. And it's 1 Samuel 17:26: "And David said to the men who stood by him, 'What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?'" That's why God allowed Goliath to come into your life. So that you yourself would see that there is a living God and so that other people around you in your home and in your work situation would see that there is a living God, that's why God sent that Goliath.

And you can see how often we must drive God crazy. Because the Goliath comes and we start trying to dynamite under his feet to try to tackle him ourselves, and God says, no, no you will never do it. He will fall on you and crush you. I send them to you, so that I could be showing my strength in you and through you to other people. So Goliath, loved ones, is somebody that you welcome. He is not someone that you resent. And you have faith in God when you say that. You've faith in God when you say, "This Goliath has not come because the banking system is corny or is ridiculous or is perverted. This Goliath has not come because the people in my home won't behave properly. This Goliath has not come because the whole United States economy is working to make me a failure." You don't say that. You say, "This Goliath has come because my Creator knows that I need a Goliath at this time."

"I need something that will draw me more deeply into himself and will drive me out of myself," -- and so part of your faith, is actual faith that this is not a result of an uncontrolled power of evil. You see, that's where we get into this dualism. We get into the idea that evil and good are fighting it out even and sometimes one wins, sometimes the other wins. No, if you're Islam you believe that, if you're a Zoroastrian, you believe that. But no, Jesus has taught us, God is in complete control and he sends the Goliaths through the free will of his messenger, Satan. Satan exercises his free will, and God uses that free will to turn it into a Goliath that will draw you to depend on him and not on yourself. So whenever you see something that's bigger than yourself, you begin to adopt that attitude to it.

Now, how is God going to bring the answer for you in your Goliath? Well, loved ones, the first thing to do is Psalm 37:5: "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act." Commit your "Goliath"? No, no. So, you've a financial situation that is impossible. You have an imminent disaster coming in your domestic situation; you have an intractable problem at school; immediately you commit your WAY to the Lord, you don't commit your Goliath to the Lord. You don't start looking at your Goliath and examining him and looking thoroughly at the appearance of impossibility that he has, you don't look at your Goliath. You commit your way to the Lord that is your way of life. The whole way your life has been developing over these years, the whole way you have started to manage your life; you get out of the life management business, you get out of the universe ruling business,

you commit your way to the Lord. The reason the Father has sent you this Goliath is, because you're getting uppity. You're getting everything under your own control and it's so limited, that he knows you're going to die in misery, and so he sends a Goliath to lift you out of your tendency to manage your own life. That's why the first step is to commit your way to the Lord. To back right off this whole situation, see why is it a Goliath to you? Well, because you're trying to tackle it yourself, that's why it's a Goliath.

It's a Goliath because you are used to the idea that only your ability is available. And that if you don't do something about it, it will all collapse and the Father knows that and he knows that it's only a matter of time before you hit a nervous breakdown with that kind of attitude to life, and so he has sent this Goliath to get you to step right out of the world management, right out of the universe ruling situation, right out of the control your own life situation and to commit your way to the Lord.

In other words, step right back. Look away from Goliath completely and say, "Lord, I commit my way to you, whatever way this goes, whether he kills me or not, I commit this to you, Lord. I commit my way to you, I commit my life to you, I commit it to you, whether it's a failure or whether it's a success, I commit my way to you whatever you want." That would help a lot of us, of course, to see straight on the Goliaths, because a lot of the Goliath that we have are things that we won't let go of. There are houses that we won't sell or a car we won't sell or a stereo we won't let go of or the relationship that we have to have and the fact that it's a Goliath at all, shows that you're way off course, you're way off course.

When you are on course, the Lord is giving you prosperity and strength. When you hit a Goliath, he is giving you that to show you you're way off course, and he wants you to commit your whole way to him and say, "Lord, whatever you want to do, I'll do." That's the first thing. Step right back and commit your way to the Lord.

The second step is in that verse, "trust in him and he will act". Trust in him and he will act. Trust is really nice, because it's what you did when you were a little guy or a little girl and your dad said he would carry you over this river, over this narrow bridge and you were so used to being confident about him, that it didn't matter how perilous the bridge looked, he just put you in his arms and you just lay there in trust, absolute trust. In fact it was kind of fun you remember, being in your dad's arms, because it seems you were safer than if you were in your own arms. It always seems safer when you are in your dad's arms or your mum's arms. That's what trust means.

If you commit your way to the Lord, God will tell you, send that check in, write that letter, make that phone call, just do that and then trust, just rest and trust in God. Here's what we do: we make the phone call, we send the check in, we write the letter and then we get down to the real business of worrying and we start trying to think, now, what will he do if he gets this letter, and what will she do if she gets that phone call, and how will they react and how will I react, and we wear ourselves out. We go through all the motions of all the possible variations and permutations that could take place.

That is not trust. That is still the business of taking care of your own life and controlling your own affairs. No, trust in God. Live in trust in him through this coming week. Not a word, not a shadow of doubt, not a moment of anxiety, you do what he tells you to do and you trust in him. And God does for you what he did for David. And he by his own power brings the Goliath down and don't try to get some heavy armor on, don't think, well, I'll just help God. God is usually saying, "Don't

help me, don't help me, just don't help me." Don't help him. Make things hard on God and easy on yourself. Just rest in him, don't put armor on. If he tells you to pick up five little stones, don't argue with him, don't say, "Oh, these stones won't kill Goliath." They won't kill Goliath, that's not what is going to kill Goliath; it's going to be God's power through your faith. You're just picking up the stones to show that you do trust him and you know that this whole thing is going to be a supernatural work of his. Loved ones, that's it.

This dear book says, if you are facing a Goliath, something that is bigger than you can handle, know that God has sent them to you. And he sent him to you for one purpose: that His strength and His life would be seen by you, and by others who know you. And he says to you commit your way to the Lord, whether it goes well, whether it goes bad. Commit your way to the lord, commit your whole life to him, stop trying to run it yourself and then trust in him. That is, do whatever he tells you, send whatever thing you're supposed to send and then rest in trust and then God will act.

Just one last thing. If you worry and are anxious, if you keep on brooding about the thing or are anxious, you prevent God acting. That's it. You prevent God acting. He is only able to act by your faith and through your faith, and if you don't rest, but you worry and are anxious, you don't exercise faith and that prevents him operating. Now you may say, "Wait a minute, why should the mighty God of the universe tie himself to my fate?" For one reason, for free will; he wants to preserve your free will and he will never release his mighty power unless you believe him to release it.

You don't give something to an attorney and then go back the next week and take it out of his hands and then the next week go back and give it to him again, and then go back the next week and take it out of his hands, you don't. The man wouldn't deal with you at all, he'd say, you either leave it in my hands and I deal with it, or you take it over yourself. Now it's the same with the Father, loved ones.

Now have you such a thing? I mean you're very unusual, if you don't. I wonder is there one of us here this morning who has not something in our lives that is bigger than we can handle. Either it's a chronic anxiety that we have about our future or it's a present impossible situation that we're facing.

Loved ones, you can take a definite step this morning. You can take a definite step in line with reality. You can first of all thank God for the Goliath, thank him that he refuses to let you go on playing at God. Thank him. Secondary causes are useful philosophically, but really from the point of view of spiritual experience, it's God that finally allows this thing to come to you, so thank him for it. Don't see it as some wildcat comet that has happened to come into your life, see it as something that the Lord God knows you need, and thank him for it.

And then commit your way to the Lord. Back off this business of trying to control your life, trying to make it go a certain way, say, Lord whatever way you want us to go, I'll commit it to you, and then trust in him. That is, do what he tells you to do practically speaking, and then forget it, and live in absolute trust and cast the thing from your mind as far as the East is from the West, and then your God will act.

Let us pray.

Dear Father, we've been so used to the idea that we had to tackle everything ourselves, otherwise we

were inadequate, that when we come to these things that are bigger than us, it seems all we can do is be paralyzed with worry, because we know inside ourselves we'll never be able to do enough to slay the giant. But now Father, we see that these giants are sent lovingly using Satan's freewill as a messenger, but they are sent by you to us in order to eject us out of our own self-control, and the way we are trying to rule our own lives, and becoming more and more uppity and more and more independent day by day. So Father, we would now in regard to our Goliath's, we would commit our way to the Lord.

Lord, you're the Father and the Creator of the whole universe, we commit our way to you, we commit our way for our future to you, for our present job, we commit our marriage to you, we commit our friendships and our relationships to you, and we say Lord, whatever way you want to work those out, you do it. You are God, and we're going to back off trying to control our own way. We commit our way to you, we'll be glad to walk it Father, we know you love us because of Jesus' death, we will walk it, whatever it is.

So now Father, this morning, we commit our way to the Lord, and then Father, we intend now to trust you by obeying whatever thing you tell us to do, and then by continuing to trust you through this coming week, and to live free from anxiety and worry, and live in peace and rest, realizing that we've handed the thing over to the best person in the world. And then Lord, we know that you will act. So Father, we thank you for these giant obstacles in our life, which you and we are going to see defeated and slain together by your power. And now the grace of our Lord Jesus and the love of God be with you now and evermore. Amen.