



# GOING DEEPER GUIDE

## STICKS AND STONES

### WEEK ONE: ANOINTING

Pastor Stephen opened the year with a report from Guatemala. This Sunday, was the first message of the Sticks & Stones series, which presents five “secret weapons” to make our New Year’s Resolutions more than words. This week’s secret weapon was “Anointing.”

#### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

1 Samuel 16:1-13,19 | Mark 12:41-43 | 1 Samuel 17:37

#### SERMON HIGHLIGHTS

This series opens in 1 Samuel 16, where the Lord instructs the prophet Samuel to go to Jesse of Bethlehem and to anoint the one the Lord identifies (who would later be David, the young boy who would slay Goliath and become the King of Israel).

Though we are not called to be a king, we are anointed by God to achieve important works. To be anointed means to be singled out by God for special favor and responsibility. While the Lord would anoint David through the prophet Samuel, in John 14, Jesus promises us that the Holy Spirit would anoint each and every one of us. In order to correctly function, you must first be filled. If we are filled with Christ (Christ literally means the anointed one), the anointing is not just on us, but alive within us.

Anointing is meant to enable, equip, and empower us every day. When Samuel met with Jesse of Bethlehem (v. 4-13), he could have chosen any of his sons. In fact, most of his sons seemed to be fit to receive God’s anointing, but as Samuel said, “People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

After Samuel anoints David in verse 13, the next time we see David is not on a grand stage. Logically speaking, a unique anointing should immediately warrant a greater assignment. However, in verse 19, the next time we see David, he is tending sheep--the same assignment that had him left out of the initial conversation. God does not promise a new activity with every fresh anointing. Instead of confusing the fresh anointing God wishes to give with the activity we wish to receive, God may want to grow us like He did David, where he gave him things in the field that made him fit for the fight. **Perhaps the first word God wants to speak to us this year is not to do something new, but to do exactly what we’ve been doing with a greater anointing and awareness of God’s Spirit at work within us.**

## Discussion Questions

### FAMILY DISCUSSION

1. What are your New Year's Resolutions for 2018? Take some time for each person to share what they are committing to do this year.
2. **Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13.** What does "anointed" mean? Do you believe God anoints us for a specific purpose? If so, what does that knowledge do for your attitude toward your life?
3. "In order to correctly function, you must first be filled correctly." Going into 2018, what habits are you looking to create that will keep you filled with the anointing that comes from the Holy Spirit?

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4. How would you describe your current "assignment?" How might you be anointed specifically for that?
5. When the Lord told Samuel to anoint one of Jesse's sons, David wasn't even in the room. What is the significance of David, one of the most valuable people in the Bible, not being visible when he was anointed?
6. Who do you know that lives an "invisible" calling but makes a valuable impact on your faith?
7. How do you encourage yourself to stay faithful to something when you don't feel valued?
8. **Read 1 Samuel 16:19.** This is the first time we see David after he receives his anointing. What is he doing? What do you learn from this?
9. Are there any greater "assignments" that you are aspiring for? What are they? What is happening in your current "assignment" that is preparing you for something greater?
10. Sometimes we don't receive a greater assignment but a fresh energy for the one we are currently in. How can you change or improve your approach to life in 2018?

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### WEEK TWO: ABILITY

Pastor Stephen continued the Sticks & Stones series, which presents five “secret weapons” to make our New Year’s Resolutions more than words. This week’s secret weapon was “Ability.”

#### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

1 Samuel 16:13-23 | Proverbs 18:16 | 1 Corinthians 15:10

#### SERMON HIGHLIGHTS

Unfortunately, many people separate spirituality from skill. What's dangerous is that God deposits gifts within us that we may never develop. **What you are is God's gift to you. What you become is your gift to God.** God will uniquely tailor your gifts to fit the assignment He gives you, but it's our responsibility to develop God's deposit. It is not enough to simply love God and give back to Him our half-hearted efforts. Before David became King, he served as both a shepherd and later as a harpist for King Saul. Because God anointed David as a talented musician and David spent the time and energy to grow as a harpist, God blessed him with the opportunities he needed to become the king he called Him to be. **While you can't put in what God left out, you must work out what God's put in.** God can only work through what we've worked on.

When the time came for David to fight Goliath, King Saul considered David to be a mighty warrior--not because of his fighting skills, but because of his excellence as a harpist. We will often discover our callings in the midst of our contradictions. If you don't realize that your uniqueness is often the emergence of what makes you effective, you will spend all your life trying to fit a mold and missing the meaning of what God uniquely put inside of you. At the intersection of our idiosyncrasies is our effectiveness. Instead of apologizing for the parts of us that don't make sense, we can offer them to God and ask Him to make something out of them that would become our unique expression of thankfulness to God.

Ultimately, David's decision to simply do his job with diligence, excellence and with the uniqueness of his ability are what prepared him to fulfill one of his greatest purposes--defeating Goliath. If we embrace every experience God wants to bring us through, God will stack our skills together to achieve something far greater than anything we could ever form on our own.

## Discussion Questions

### FAMILY DISCUSSION

1. **Read 1 Samuel 16:17-18.** What was Saul looking for? What were David's qualifications for being brought to the king?
2. What did it take for David to be skilled at playing his instrument?
3. What is diligence? Why is it important not just to serve God, but to serve Him with diligence?

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4. "While you can't put in what God left out, you must work out what God's put in...God can only work through what we've worked on." What would you say are your "gifts" - the things God has given you to accomplish his will for your life?
5. How can you find more ways to do what you're good at?
6. When is it appropriate to focus on acquiring new skills and when is it appropriate to focus on developing the gifts you already have?
7. How did David's experience as a Harpist and shepherd make him unique?
8. What idiosyncrasies make you different from everyone else? How does your uniqueness make a way for you to uniquely serve God?
9. What experiences have you had that have prepared you for where you are today?
10. What are you currently doing to create opportunities and gain experiences that will allow you to further develop your abilities? How will this help you honor God?

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### WEEK THREE: ATTITUDE

Week three of the "Sticks and Stones" series was about "attitude." This week, we discussed the importance of passion in our lives.

#### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1 Samuel 17:17-26 | Psalm 51:12

#### SERMON HIGHLIGHTS

Before David fought Goliath, he had no idea of the magnitude of the assignment he would soon undertake. David was simply running an errand for his father. Obeying his father, he set out early in the morning to deliver bread and cheese to his brothers. When he got there, he ran to the battle lines to see how his brothers were doing. By obeying his smallest assignments with such a willing heart, David found himself in front of Goliath, in position to be used by God in a greater way than he could have imagined. **In order to slay the giant, David had to be willing to carry the cheese.** Sometimes, we would like to skip the cheese and go right for the giant. But, that's not how God works. One of the most important small assignments you can undertake is coming to church every Sunday. It prepares you for the big ones.

David should have been intimidated by Goliath, but he didn't run, he stepped forward to fight in confidence. It's not that people who do great things for God don't hear intimidation, it's that they push through it. They recognize that if something is intimidating, it must be valuable and worth doing. When we see intimidation as an invitation to develop the gifts God has given us, we can have the confidence to fight the battles we never thought we'd win.

Long after David fought Goliath, he prayed in Psalm 51:12 that God would restore a pure heart and grant a willing spirit within him. He said this after committing adultery with Bathsheba. The same passion that gave David the confidence to fight Goliath was the same impulse that later caused him to act on his sinful desires. Our passions can lead us astray. It is important to learn how to channel our passions in the right ways. We have to learn which battles are worth fighting and where to put our energy.

## Discussion Questions

### FAMILY DISCUSSION

1. Take a moment to reflect on last week's message about ability. What abilities have you been working on developing this week?
2. How can someone's attitude affect someone's ability and anointing?
3. **Read 1 Samuel 17:17-23.** What small assignment was David tasked with?
4. Describe David's attitude toward that assignment.
5. How David's passion for the small things set him up to face Goliath?
6. What are you most passionate about?

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7. What are the small assignments in your life for which you need to increase your passion? What can you do to create a willing spirit to accomplish your small assignments?
8. How did the same passion that glorified God get David in trouble with Bathsheba?
9. What passions of yours have gotten you in trouble? Or Which passions are in danger of getting you in trouble if they are not channeled correctly?
10. Who are the people in your life who can help channel your passions? What does it mean to channel your passions?
11. How do you distinguish between an invitation to push through and a situation you need to let go?
12. What intimidations are you currently up against? What invitations are at the bottom of these intimidations?

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### **WEEK FOUR: APPROACH**

In week four of this series, we discussed David's approach to three different forces that he faced when taking on Goliath. We can apply these same approaches to our own lives when our enemy tries to take us down.

#### **SCRIPTURE REFERENCES**

1 Samuel 17:26-50 | 1 Corinthians 15:57-58 | 2 Corinthians 2:11 | Colossians 2:15

#### **SERMON HIGHLIGHTS**

**Accusation** - When David got to the battlefield, his oldest brother got angry at him, accusing him of being conceited and wicked at heart. David could have tried to defend or explain himself, but his response was to turn away. Likewise, the Enemy will always have an accusation that threatens our ability to follow God. Whenever we try to step out in faith or attempt to honor God with anything in our lives, the Enemy will accuse us in an attempt to discourage our faith. God, on the other hand, will never accuse us. God will convict you in order to change you, but He will never accuse you in order to shame you.

**Belittlement** - After David turned away from his brother's accusation, he was brought before King Saul. Saul belittled him, saying that he was not able to fight Goliath, and that he was only a boy. In response, David recited confidently all the prior victories God had given him when he was just a shepherd boy. Whenever the Enemy says, "You're not able to," or, "You're only," recite God's faithfulness and cling to the victory He promises in His Word.

**Provocation** - Goliath was an infantryman, meaning he fought with a sword. David, however, was a slinger, specializing in casting stones from a distance with high velocity. So when David approached Goliath, he did so on his own terms. Armed with a sling and a stone, David kept his distance. -Meanwhile, Goliath shouted at David, trying to provoke him into coming down to his level. Had David complied, he would have certainly lost. Likewise, the Enemy will always provoke us to come down to his level. If we comply, we will lose every time. However, You are a slinger. Your enemy can't defeat you if you keep your distance.

## Discussion Questions

### FAMILY DISCUSSION

1. Take a moment to reflect on last week's message on attitude. How does your attitude shift by focusing on the things you're most passionate about?
2. **Read 1 Samuel 17:26-29.** How was David accused by his brothers? Why does this seem so unfair?
3. Have you ever been unfairly accused? What does that feel like?
4. What does it mean to be belittled? Have you ever experienced this? Share.
5. **Read 1 Samuel 17:31-33.** How was David belittled by Saul?
6. Do you ever belittle yourself in your own mind? How so?
7. How did David have the advantage over Goliath as long as he kept his distance?
8. How do we keep our distance from Satan, our enemy?

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9. What accusations from the enemy are you currently up against?
10. We are told that David turned away from his accusers (brothers). How do we "turn away" from accusation from the enemy?
11. What was David's response to Saul's belittlement?
12. How can you use God's faithfulness to confront belittlement?
13. What battles are you fighting currently? As a group share some Scripture or encouraging words to better help each other approach your personal battles this week.

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### WEEK FIVE: ADVANTAGE

In week five of "Sticks and Stones," we wrapped up the series by preaching about the advantage David had over Goliath. As believers, we have this same advantage over whatever comes at us in life.

#### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1 Samuel 17:45-58 | 1 Samuel 21:8-9 | John 16:33 | Romans 8:28

#### SERMON HIGHLIGHTS

David's advantage was more spiritual than tactical. It wasn't necessarily about his technique, but it was his trust in God that gave him the advantage. David wasn't surprised by the presumed disadvantage he had against Goliath. Instead of being caught off-guard by the size and strength advantage Goliath had over him, David recognized it and proceeded to identify his advantage as a slinger. Likewise, every believer has an advantage over spiritual opposition, but very few act on it... We don't need a greater advantage, just a greater awareness of the advantages we do have. If nothing ever comes against you, how will you ever overcome the world? **Our awareness is key because after all, every unrecognized advantage is an unclaimed reward.**

We aren't meant to merely survive the Enemy's advances. We're meant to conquer them completely and take hold of the reward God has set aside for us. When David killed Goliath, he didn't just hit him with a rock. Once Goliath fell, he walked up, drew Goliath's sword, and decapitated him. Needless to say, there was no doubt who conquered who in this fight. This stood in stark contrast to the rest of the Israelites, who were stuck in survival mode--all they wanted to do was to avoid dying at the hands of Goliath. David however, used his advantages to decisively defeat him. Likewise, some believers are content with simply receiving their salvation. However, it is not enough to simply escape our sin. Through the daily process of sanctification (which means to learn to live a holy, set-apart life), we can allow Jesus to fully eliminate the darkness from our lives. Jesus didn't just defeat sin. He destroyed it. Never again would sin be a disadvantage for His children.

## **Discussion Questions**

### **FAMILY DISCUSSION**

1. As we wrap up this series, what was your biggest takeaway? Is there anything you are going to apply to your life from this series?
2. Why do you think David was so confident over Goliath?
3. What does it mean to live life in "survival mode?" How were the Israelites approaching this battle this way? How was David's approach different?
4. How do we remember our advantages in life instead of only focusing on our disadvantages?

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5. In which areas of your spiritual life are you settling to merely survive instead of conquer?
6. How did David's act of cutting off Goliath's head with Goliath's own weapon foreshadow Jesus's work on the cross?
7. Put yourself in David's shoes as he is drawing Goliath's sword. What does it feel like to find you have a weapon available to you that you could only have if you entered the fight?
8. What weapons do you now have at your disposal that are left-over from other battles?