Thankful Thursday Bible Study

At Friendship Baptist Church
12noon and 6pm

Facing the Enemy and Winning

Unit Introduction • 1 Samuel 17
November 12 and November 19, 2026
Rev. James A. Terrance, Jr. • Pastor–Teacher

Introduction

The enemy seeks to weaken our trust in God, inflame sinful desires, and turn everyday tensions into lasting division. David's encounter with Goliath teaches courage rooted in the living God. These lessons connect that account with New Testament teaching about resisting the devil, mastering carnal appetites, and growing in spiritual and emotional maturity.

Why this unit matters

Our relatives, coworkers, and church members are not our ultimate enemy. We resist the devil while taking responsibility for the pride, jealousy, resentment, and uncontrolled appetites within us. Through Christ, we can grow secure in God's love, practice self-control, replace habitual complaining with encouragement, and respond to conflict without hostility.

Biblical Context

First Samuel describes Israel's transition from the judges to kingship. Saul's disobedience leads God to reject his kingship (chapter 15). God then sends Samuel to anoint David, Jesse's youngest son, and the Spirit of the LORD comes upon him (16:1–13). David is chosen by God before the army recognizes his ability.

In chapter 17, Israel and the Philistines face each other across the Valley of Elah. Goliath proposes combat between two representatives, with the defeated nation becoming servants. His repeated challenge frightens Saul and the army. David understands that Goliath has defied the armies of the living God, and he trusts the LORD who previously delivered him (17:26, 37).

The central truth is that God saves his people through his chosen servant; military size and equipment do not determine the outcome (17:45–47). David's victory belongs within the larger biblical story that leads to Jesus, the Son of David, whose death and resurrection defeat sin and death. We apply this account through New Testament teaching: resist the devil, put sinful desires to death, and stand in Christ's strength (James 4:7; Romans 8:13; Ephesians 6:10–18). Goliath is not identified as Satan, and the account does not promise immediate relief from every trial.

The Two lessons

Lesson One • November 12: Recognize the Enemy and Stand in Faith
Lesson Two • November 19: Use God's Weapons and Give Him Glory

Bring your Bible. Read the assigned passage, discuss the questions, and use the lines for personal reflection. Both lessons follow the same sequence: introduction, context, people, terms, study, cases, transformation, and daily practice.

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Lesson One • Recognize the Enemy and Stand in Faith

Key Verse • 1 Samuel 17:37 (KJV)
"David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee."

Thursday, November 12, 2026 • 12 noon and 6 pm

Lesson Introduction

Read 1 Samuel 17:1–37; James 1:13–15; 4:1–7. Learn to recognize the devil's deception and your own carnal desires, face fear with trust, and respond with discernment.

Why This Lesson Matters

Fear and insecurity can make criticism feel like a threat to our worth. Discernment helps us recognize temptation without blaming people or excusing our own reactions. God calls us to trust him, receive correction wisely, and refuse the desire to retaliate.

Biblical Context and Significance

Goliath's forty-day challenge leaves Israel afraid (17:1–16). David arrives while obeying Jesse's request to deliver provisions. He hears the same threat but interprets it in light of Israel's relationship with the living God (17:17–26). Eliab questions his motives, and Saul doubts his ability; David recalls God's earlier deliverance (17:28–37). His courage rests in God's faithfulness, not in the absence of opposition.

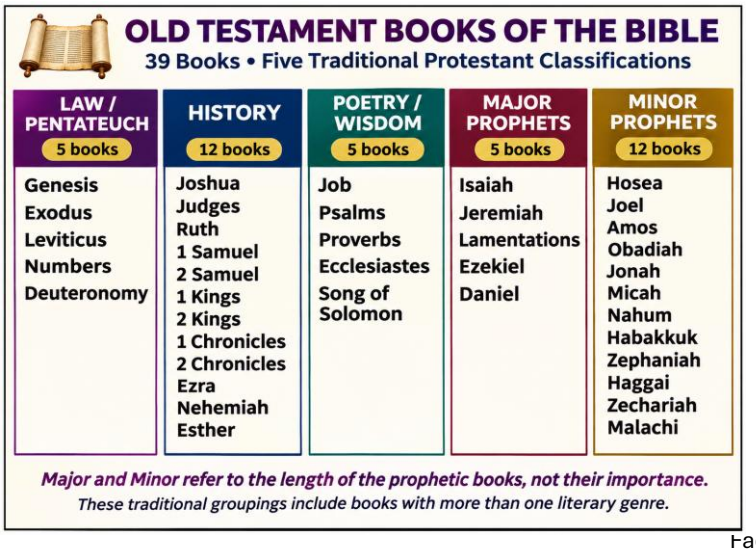
Opening Reflection

When someone criticizes or discourages you, what thoughts and feelings shape your response? What truth about God could help you respond with faith and self-control?

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Lesson One • People and terms

Key People in the Text

David • 17:12–15, 20, 32–37. David is Jesse's youngest son, a shepherd from Bethlehem who has already been anointed by Samuel (16:1–13). He obeys his father's errand, remembers God's earlier deliverance, and volunteers to face Goliath. His courage grows from confidence in the living God, not from a claim that he is naturally invincible.

Goliath • 17:4–11, 41–44. Goliath is the heavily armed Philistine champion from Gath who challenges Israel to send one man against him. His appearance, threats, insults, and repeated challenge spread fear through Israel's camp. He trusts his military advantage and curses David by his gods, making the confrontation openly theological as well as military.

Saul • 17:11, 31–39, 55–58. Saul is Israel's king, responsible for leading the people but deeply afraid alongside his army. He initially measures David by age and military experience, then allows him to fight and offers armor. His response exposes the limits of judging God's possibilities by visible qualifications alone.

Jesse • 17:12–20, 58. Jesse is David's father, an older man from Bethlehem whose three oldest sons serve in Saul's army. He sends David with food and asks him to bring news about his brothers. An ordinary act of family responsibility places David at the scene of a public crisis.

Eliab • 17:13, 28–30. Eliab is David's oldest brother and one of Jesse's sons serving in the army. He angrily questions David's motives and belittles his shepherding responsibilities, although David has arranged care for the sheep (v. 20). His accusation illustrates how discouragement can come from familiar people, but the text does not say Satan directed him.

Abinadab and Shammah • 17:13–14. These are David's next two older brothers, who join Eliab in following Saul to war. The account names them as part of David's family connection to the army but records no individual speeches from them. Their presence helps explain Jesse's concern and David's assignment.

What do these people reveal about trust and responsibility?

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Lesson One • Understanding spiritual conflict

Key Theological Terms

Read Ephesians 2:1–3; 6:10–12; James 1:13–15. These passages help us distinguish related sources of opposition without blaming every difficulty on a demon.

Satan. Satan is a personal spiritual adversary who deceives, tempts, and opposes God's purposes (John 8:44; 1 Peter 5:8–9). He is a creature, not God's equal, and his defeat is secured through Christ (Hebrews 2:14). Believers resist him through submission to God, truth, and steadfast faith rather than fascination or fear.

The world system. This means patterns of desire and conduct that resist God's rule (1 John 2:15–17). Messages such as "satisfy every urge," "never admit you are wrong," and "your worth depends on applause" feed pride and discontent. Believers test these messages by Scripture rather than adopting them as rules for life.

The flesh or carnal appetite. The flesh is our fallen tendency to seek satisfaction, control, or recognition apart from God (Galatians 5:16–21). Ordinary desires become sinful when we insist on satisfying them in ways that dishonor God or hurt others. We cannot blame the devil for choices we must confess and bring under the Spirit's direction.

Spiritual warfare. Spiritual warfare is resistance to the devil's schemes through dependence on Christ and his provision (Ephesians 6:10–18). It includes rejecting lies, controlling our speech, resisting temptation, and refusing bitterness. People are not our ultimate enemy, and painful emotions are not automatically evidence of demonic activity.

In one current struggle, what pressure is outside you and what sinful response needs attention inside you?

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Strategies to Recognize

Notice deception that distorts God's truth (John 8:44), temptation that appeals to desire (James 1:14–15), and anger that gives the devil opportunity (Ephesians 4:26–27). Fear, wounded pride, and rehearsed offenses can distract us from obedience. Ask: What am I believing, wanting, and preparing to do?

Lesson One • Study the Word

Explore the Scripture

1 • Notice the voice that shapes your fear

Read verses 4–11 and 16–24. Goliath repeats his challenge morning and evening for forty days. Israel hears his words and retreats; repeated exposure to a message does not make it true.

What details make Goliath intimidating? What repeated message now tempts you to give up or compromise?

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2 • Do not let distraction choose your battle

Read verses 26–30. Eliab questions David's motives, but David continues asking about the challenge. We should listen to correction while refusing the impulse to turn every insult into a personal campaign.

How can you distinguish loving correction from belittling criticism? Which argument might be pulling you away from obedience?

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3 • Remember God's faithfulness and respond

Read verses 31–37. David recalls the lion and bear as occasions of God's deliverance. Memory strengthens trust, but yesterday's rescue does not give us permission to invent promises about every outcome.

Name a past experience of God's care. How can it support a wise, courageous step this week?

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Lesson One • Applying the Word

Case Studies and Discussion

Case study • Tension at the family table

At a family gathering, an older relative compares a young adult unfavorably with a successful cousin. Embarrassed and angry, the young adult wants to expose the relative's past mistakes. Later, the criticism keeps replaying in their mind: "I will never be good enough."

What lie about personal worth needs to be rejected? What desire for revenge needs to be surrendered? Use Romans 8:15–16 and James 1:19–20 to plan a calm response.

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Case study • Complaining in the church group chat

A church volunteer is disappointed about a change in ministry assignments. Every group message becomes another complaint about the leaders. Others begin taking sides, and a newer member says, "I thought this church was a family." The volunteer does have a concern that deserves a respectful conversation.

How can a legitimate concern be addressed without spreading division? What should be said privately, and what encouraging word could help the group? Read Philippians 2:14–16 and Ephesians 4:29.

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Tips for a transformed life

Pause, pray, and name the feeling before speaking. Examine the desire beneath your reaction. Replace "I must prove myself" with trust in God's acceptance through Christ. Take concerns to the appropriate person instead of recruiting an audience. Encourage one person each day.

My specific change this week will be...

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Lesson One • Practice and prayer

Spiritual Weapons for Daily Life

Stand in truth by reading Scripture in context; exercise faith by recalling God's character; pray before reacting; and seek wise support from the church. These are first steps in the fuller armor teaching of Ephesians 6:10–18, which Lesson Two develops.

Daily Practice and Personal Commitment

Days 1–2: Read 1 Samuel 17:1–30; identify fear and a distracting argument. Days 3–4: Read James 1:13–20; record a trigger, desire, and faithful response. Days 5–6: Read Romans 8:1–16; rest in your identity in Christ. Day 7: Read James 4:7 and share one step of obedience.

My action and accountability partner…

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Closing Prayer

Lord, expose deception and search our hearts. Give us courage to obey you and humility to receive correction. In Jesus' name, amen.



Lesson Two • Use God's Weapons and Give Him Glory

Key Verse • 1 Samuel 17:47 (KJV)
"And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands."

Thursday, November 19, 2026 • 12 noon and 6 pm

Lesson Introduction

Read 1 Samuel 17:38–58; Ephesians 6:10–18; Philippians 2:14–16. Practice prayer, Scripture study, self-control, encouragement, and peacemaking while giving God glory.

Why This Lesson Matters

Spiritual growth becomes visible in our words, habits, and relationships. God equips us to resist a complaining spirit, discipline our appetites, and encourage others. Confidence in Christ frees us from the constant need to win arguments or receive everyone's approval.

Biblical Context and Significance

David sets aside Saul's untested armor and approaches Goliath with familiar shepherding tools (17:38–40). Goliath trusts his visible advantage, but David announces the LORD's power and purpose: the earth must know Israel's God (17:41–47). God brings victory, and Israel's army advances (17:48–58). Christians now resist evil through truth, faith, prayer, and Spirit-shaped conduct; this military victory is not permission to harm people (Ephesians 6:10–18).

Opening Reflection

When a challenge ends well, who receives the credit in your story?

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Lesson Two • People and terms

Key People in the Text

David • 17:38–50. David rejects armor he has not tested and takes the tools he knows. He declares dependence on God before he acts. His confidence places God's honor above personal display.

Goliath • 17:41–51. Goliath despises David's youth and threatens him with violence. He curses David by his gods and relies on superior weapons. His defeat exposes the limits of outward strength before the living God.

Abner • 17:55–57. Abner commands Saul's army and brings David before the king after the victory. Saul asks about David's father, and Abner initially cannot supply that information. The exchange draws attention to the family of the young deliverer; it does not require us to invent an explanation for everything Saul knew or forgot.

Israel and the Philistines • 17:1–3, 24, 51–53. Israel is God's covenant people, here represented by an army immobilized by fear. The Philistines are Israel's military opponents in this account, and their army flees when its champion falls. These historical groups must not be mapped onto modern races or ethnic communities as God's favored people and hated enemies.

What do these people reveal about trust and responsibility?

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Lesson Two • Understanding spiritual conflict

Key Theological Terms

Self-control and spiritual discipline. Self-control is Spirit-produced restraint over desires, words, and actions (Galatians 5:22–23). Spiritual discipline means repeatedly making room for prayer, Scripture, obedience, and accountability (1 Timothy 4:7–8). These practices express dependence on grace; they do not earn salvation.

Discernment. Discernment is the learned ability to distinguish truth from deception and faithful action from sinful compromise (Hebrews 5:14; 1 John 4:1). It grows through Scripture, prayer, wise counsel, and attention to the fruit of a teaching or choice. A strong feeling or suspicion about someone is not sufficient proof of spiritual insight.

Security in Christ and emotional maturity. Believers are received through Christ, not through constant approval from other people (Romans 8:1, 15–16). Emotional maturity includes naming hurt honestly, examining our interpretation, and choosing a faithful response instead of letting the feeling rule. Being anxious or grieving does not mean we lack faith; we can seek prayer, wise support, and appropriate care.

Repentance and sanctification. Repentance means turning from sin toward God in honest trust and obedience. Sanctification is God's work of making believers increasingly holy as they respond to his Word and Spirit (Philippians 2:12–13). Growth is the fruit of salvation by grace through faith, not a way to earn it (Ephesians 2:8–10).

Victory and giving God glory. Christian victory rests in the crucified and risen Christ and includes resisting sin, persevering in faith, and finally sharing in resurrection life (1 Corinthians 15:57–58). Giving God glory means acknowledging his worth and power in our words and conduct. A faithful response during an unresolved trial can honor him as truly as a visible breakthrough.

Which definition corrects an assumption you have held? What would change in your daily response?

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Strategies to Recognize

Watch for bitterness disguised as "just being honest," gossip disguised as concern, and pride that refuses correction (Ephesians 4:29–32). The devil opposes unity; our own desires also produce quarrels (James 4:1–7). Test your response: Will it build someone up, solve a problem truthfully, or merely release my frustration?

Lesson Two • Study the Word

Explore the Scripture

1 • Use what God provides with dependence

Saul offers armor; David has not tested it and cannot move confidently in it (17:38–40). He takes familiar tools and approaches Goliath. The text does not teach that equipment, training, or planning are unspiritual; it exposes confidence that rests only in outward advantage.

What skill, preparation, or faithful relationship has God already provided? Where are you trusting a method more than God?

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2 • Let God's honor define the victory

Read verses 45–47. David speaks so that the earth may know Israel's God and the assembly may know that the battle belongs to the LORD. His purpose reaches beyond personal recognition.

How would your prayer change if God's honor mattered more than proving someone wrong?

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3 • Act faithfully and share the testimony

Read 1 Samuel 17:48–58. David acts, Goliath falls, and Israel moves forward. God's deliverance benefits the whole community. Our response is obedient action and humble testimony, not self-promotion or delight in another person's humiliation.

Lesson Two • Applying the Word

Case Studies and Discussion

Case study • Pressure at work

A coworker receives praise for a project you helped complete. You feel overlooked and begin criticizing everything the coworker does. You are tempted to withhold information so the next project fails. At home, you replay the incident and speak sharply to your family.

Which responses reveal jealousy, insecurity, or revenge? How could you clarify your contribution honestly while encouraging your coworker and protecting your family from displaced anger? Read Ephesians 4:25–32.

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Case study • When an appetite takes control

A church member uses late-night shopping and endless scrolling to escape family stress. Spending grows, prayer and Bible reading disappear, and simple questions from a spouse trigger anger. The member says, "The devil is attacking me," but refuses to discuss the habits that are damaging trust.

How can this person resist the devil and also accept personal responsibility? Name a practical boundary, an honest conversation, and an accountability step. Read James 4:1–7 and Galatians 5:16, 22–23.

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If the situation does not improve immediately, what would faithful victory look like this week?

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Tips for a transformed life

Schedule a daily appointment for prayer and Bible study. Set one boundary around a tempting habit. Turn a complaint into a prayer, a respectful request, or an expression of thanks. Practice an apology without excuses. Speak one specific encouragement and take one step toward peace each day.

My specific change this week will be…

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Lesson Two • Practice and prayer

Spiritual Weapons for Daily Life

Read Ephesians 6:10–18. God's armor pictures his provision for standing firm in Christ. These are daily practices of dependence, not a ritual formula or a guarantee of an easy life.

Truth • verse 14. Stand in God's truth and practice honesty. Check a frightening claim against Scripture and facts before believing or spreading it.

Righteousness • verse 14. Rest in your right standing through Christ and practice conduct consistent with him. Refuse the dishonest shortcut even when it promises relief.

Readiness from the gospel of peace • verse 15. Let peace with God prepare you to stand and to carry good news. Pursue reconciliation without hiding wrongdoing or abandoning appropriate boundaries.

Faith • verse 16. Trust God when accusations and temptations press upon you. Answer "God has abandoned me" with what the gospel reveals about his faithful love.

Salvation • verse 17. Remember your identity and hope in Christ. Refuse to let shame become the final verdict over a person God calls to repentance and restoration.

The Word of God • verse 17. Use Scripture in its context to expose lies and guide obedience. Read a passage carefully instead of treating an isolated verse as a magic phrase.

Prayer and watchfulness • verse 18. Pray in dependence on the Spirit, remaining alert and persistent for all believers. Ask a trusted church member to pray with you and help you follow through.

Daily Practice and Personal Commitment

Days 1–2: Read 1 Samuel 17:38–58 and Ephesians 6:10–18; practice prayer and truth. Days 3–4: Read Galatians 5:16–26; set one boundary. Days 5–6: Read Philippians 2:14–16 and Ephesians 4:29–32; replace a complaint with encouragement. Day 7: Thank God and review your growth.

My action and accountability partner…

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Closing Prayer

Father, help us stand in your truth, walk by your Spirit, and honor Jesus in every response. Keep us grateful and faithful in victory and in waiting. Amen.

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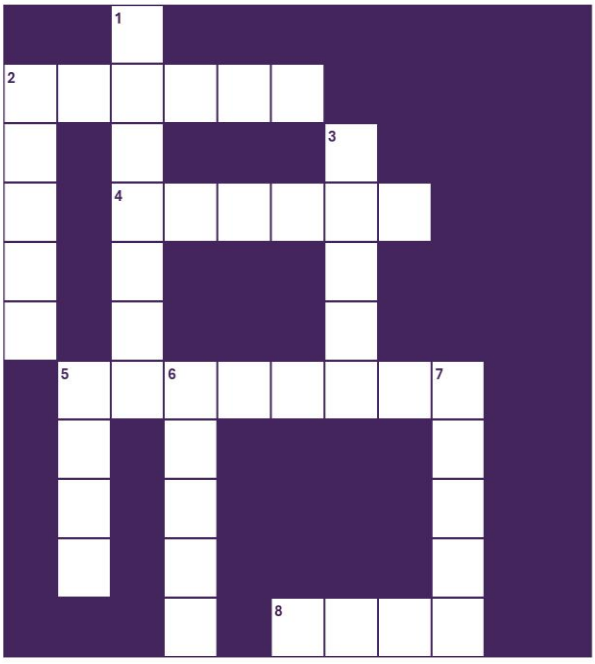
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1 SAMUEL 17



DAVID AND GOLIATH

Use the clues and word bank to fill in the grid.

WORD BANK

DAVID • ELIAB • GOLIATH • ISRAEL • JESSE

LORD • SAUL • SHEPHERD • SLING • STONES

ACROSS

2. Five smooth objects David chose (v. 40).
4. Nation facing the Philistines (v. 2).
5. David’s work caring for sheep (v. 34).
8. The battle belongs to the ____ (v. 47).

DOWN

1. Philistine champion from Gath (v. 4).
2. David’s stone-throwing tool (v. 49).
3. David’s father (v. 12).
5. King who offered David armor (v. 38).
6. David’s oldest brother (v. 28).
7. Young man who defeated Goliath (v. 50).