

McCabe UMC
The Power of Small
I Samuel 17:32-49: June 30, 2013
Pastor Rick Fossum

Have you ever watched a bird build it's nest? Last spring, Nancy and I watched a pair of robins build a nest near our patio door. It started with one small twig and then another and another until finally the nest was finished. When it was finished, the mother robin sat down and laid three eggs. Soon, three cute little baby robins popped out. It all started with one little twig. *The power of small.*

I believe it's the many small things we do in life that gets most things done.

A general of an army may make the battle plans, but it's the soldiers on the ground who do the actual work. Or, a director of a symphony may find the music to play and direct the symphony, but it's the musicians that make the music. *The power of small.*

When is the last time you used a hand saw? A quick lesson: You take the saw and you go back and forth, back and forth until finally the board is sawed in two. Now, we all know that it wasn't the last cut that sawed the board, but rather it was many smaller cuts before the last one that sawed the board in two. Again, *the power of small.*

Don't ever let anyone tell you that small things don't matter. They do matter and they matter a lot.

Our Scripture lesson today is about the power of small. It's the story about David and Goliath and it's also a story about God using the power of small things to accomplish great things.

Three thousand years ago, give or take a 100 years, the Philistines and the Israelites were fighting each other . . . again. These two nations were always fighting each other. The Philistines were camped on one hill and the Israelites were camped on another hill and in-between them was this valley.

One day, Goliath, a Philistine soldier, walked into the valley and issued a challenge to the army of Israel.

Now, Goliath wasn't your normal, everyday soldier. He was big . . . real big. According to the some Bibles, Goliath stood 8 1/2 feet tall. He wore a heavy bronze helmet and body armor that weighed 125 pounds. His weapons included a sword, a spear and a javelin. The javelin had a pointed tip that weighed 15 pounds. You didn't want to mess with Goliath.

So one day, Goliath walked into the valley in-between the two armies and he issued this challenge to the army of Israel: **“Hey Sissies,”** Goliath thundered, **“send out your best fighter to meet me in battle . . . one on one. If your fighter defeats me (fat chance) the Philistines will become your slaves. But, if I defeat him, you will become our slaves.”**

Well, the army of Israel including Saul, Israel’s king, were terrified. There wasn’t one soldier who wanted to fight Goliath.

For the next forty days, Goliath repeated his challenge. Each time, he would mock and ridicule Israel and it’s army and it’s God. And each time, the soldiers of Israel would shake in fear.

And now, the small part. One day, a boy, we don’t know how old he was, the Bible just says **“a boy”** brought some food to his three brothers who were in Israel’s army. The boy’s name was David. While he was there, he heard Goliath issue his challenge. David saw how scared and terrified everyone was of Goliath including his three brothers.

David got mad. He didn’t like Goliath or anybody else mocking his God. In David’s book, nobody mocks God and gets away with it. So, David went to Saul, the king, and told him that he would fight Goliath.

Saul looked at David and he laughed. **“You’re just a boy,”** he said. **“He’ll have you for lunch.”**

David replied, **“I am a shepherd of my father’s sheep. I know how to protect them. I have fought lions and bears and defeated them just like I will defeat this Goliath.”**

“Kid, you’ve got guts,” Saul said or something like that. Since Saul didn’t have a *plan ‘B’*, he agreed to let David fight Goliath. He gave David his armor to use in the battle, but it was too big and too heavy for David.

Instead, David picked up five stones from a nearby stream and put them in his shepherd’s bag along with his trusty sling. The sling was two long pieces of leather with a flat piece of leather tied in the middle for the stone. **“This is all I need,”** David said.

And so, the giant Goliath and the boy David met on the battlefield in the valley in-between the two armies. Goliath took one look at David and he laughed. **“A boy! You’re just a little boy. Is this the best Israel can do? I’ll tear you into pieces and feed you to the wild birds and animals.”**

David mocked him right back. **“You may have your sword and spear and javelin, but I have the power of God with me. God will help me defeat you. Bring it on!”**

And the two warriors ran toward each other. David stopped in front of Goliath, reached into his bag for one of the stones, put it in his sling, twirled it around and around and let it fly. It

was a bulls-eye! The stone hit Goliath in the forehead sending him to the ground with a mighty thud!

When the dust had cleared, there was the boy David, with his sling in his hand, with one foot on Goliath's chest and both arms raised in victory while the army of Israel cheered.

The power of small or maybe we should say, **“the power of God using small things.”**

God has a history of using small things to accomplish great things. Jesus started out as a baby. You can't get much smaller than that. He learned. He grew. Eventually, he took the sins of all human kind with him to a cross on Calvary where he died for us and in the process of his dying all of our sins were forgiven.

It's the power of God using the power of small things to accomplish great work.

When I look at McCabe we wouldn't be McCabe without the power of God behind the many things you do to serve Jesus Christ through this church. Ushers and greeters, garden workers and kitchen workers, musicians and Sunday School teachers, newsletter and bulletin folders, board and work area volunteers, communion servers and church decorators, UMW workers, Sojourners, Tuesday Morning Work ladies and and many, many more. You all have contributed to McCabe helping to make McCabe into the strong and vital and healthy church that it is today.

Every little thing you do, every prayer, every smile, every hug, every word of encouragement, every helping hand, every act of support has the power of God behind it.

I don't know what McCabe will look like in five or ten or twenty years. But I do know this: we'll be just fine if we continue to rely on the power of God to be the power behind everything we do.

Remember this: Behind the power of small is the power of God. God takes what we do and combines it with what others do to help make small things great. It's how God works.