Icebreaker

Most of us are very familiar with the story of David and Goliath. There are seven "characters" in the story: the Philistines, the Israelites, Jesse, Eliab, Saul, Goliath, and David. In our personal story of salvation, which character is a prototype of you and me? David? Death?

Context

This week's lesson is a little "light", meaning that it will not contain some of the deeper theological truths that we will encounter in the next two lessons from this chapter. We have a lot of scene setting and character introduction in this particular part of the story. But all of Scripture is profitable, so we should not skip over these verses too quickly.

While some of the things we learn are "simple", they are still important and provide an opportunity to discuss application of these basic truths for us today.

Discuss

1. If you examine the grammar behind the first two verses, we see that the Philistines "gathered" (active voice) at Socoh, while Saul and the Israelites "were gathered" (passive voice). **Is Saul leading Israel, or is Israel just being reactive to what is happening around them? Do you like following leaders that don't seem to have a direction or goal they are moving toward? Why or why not?**

   Application: **Are you more likely to make good decisions if you are proactive with your decisions or if you choose to react to what is happening around you? Why do people tend to be reactive instead of proactive in their decision-making?**

2. Read 1 Samuel 16:7 and 1 Samuel 17:4. **What would the "world" think at the sight of Goliath/ Compare that to how the Lord's people should look at Goliath based on these two verses.**

   Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31. **Why does God use the foolish, weak, low, and despised things of the world? Does this mean God can't/does not use people who are wise or connected or strong?**

3. Consider the description of Goliath in verses 4-7: (these would be the most advanced weapons of the day)
   - 9 feet, 9 inches tall
   - Bronze helmet on his head
   - Bronze armor that weighed 126 pounds
   - Shin guards of bronze
   - A spear with an iron head weighing 15 pounds
   - Another person carried the shield in front of him

   Why does the author include so much detail in describing Goliath?

   Read Psalm 20:7. **Why is it easy to be awed/overwhelmed by the strength and power we see in the world?**

   Application: **What can we do to maintain/strengthen our faith in God, in spite of the seemingly overpowering strength of the world?**

4. Read 1 Samuel 8:17-18. Goliath's words in 17:8 reveal that Samuel's warning in 8:17-18 has come true. **Do you think the people of God remember Samuel's warning at this moment?**
5. Read Judges 16:15-21. **How are Samson and Saul similar in their circumstances?** (I know this is conjecture but based on Saul's character seen in chapters 14 & 15) **If Saul had decided to fight Goliath would he have been able to win? Why or why not?**
6. Read 1 Samuel 17:12-18. What do you notice about the description of David in contrast to the description of Goliath?
7. Look at 1 Samuel 17:15, 20, and 25. **What do you notice about how David treats resources and tasks entrusted to him?** Read Luke 16:10-12. **What is the connection between responsibility towards worldly resources and our responsibility to spiritual resources?**

   Application: **What are some ways we can teach our children/grandchildren to be good stewards of earthly resources?**

8. Notice a progression in regard to Goliath. In verses 4 & 8, Goliath comes out from the Philistine camp and calls on the Israelites to send a man down to him. After 40 days of taunting the Israelites, we are told in verse 23 that Goliath came up out of the ranks. The two armies start out on two mountains with a valley between, but over time the Philistines have come to the foot of the Israelites camp and Goliath has come up to the Israelite camp. **How are the encroaching Philistines similar to what happens when we allow a "small" sin to encroach into our lives? (See James 1:14-15 & Psalm 7:14)**