Weird – Part 3

# A Weird Way to Fight

# (1 Samuel 21:1-15)

Welcome to Christ’s Community Church. Today I hope to encourage you because it seems as if life tends to take the fight right out of you. It dulls your senses, kills your spirit of adventure, and dreams are forgotten, and so today I want to talk to you about a weird way to fight.

We’re in the third week of our series called “Weird” and we’ve been looking at a few scriptures that challenge our faith, calling us to step out from the norm and be a little weird. Last week we were faced with the opportunity to change the way that we’re thinking and to trust that God has a better way. And my studies have been like that preparing for this series, trying to find something different, waiting for something to begin flowing from peculiar places. And so, it’s been weird, kind of like when the Israelites were in the desert, they were thirsty, they couldn’t find water anywhere, and God gave them water from a rock.

And so, this month has been weird, it’s been challenging, because sometimes inspiration doesn’t flow from where I expect it to. Sometimes I’ve got to dig really deep to find that flow of creativity and it’s kind of weird, in fact, maybe you can relate but there’s a certain vulnerability when you’re waiting on God to give you something. There’s a sense of dependency mingled with being still and waiting on God, but there’s an urgency because you just don’t know how long you’re going to have to wait. Sometimes like the Israelites in the wilderness I find myself getting a little thirsty waiting for the revelation of God’s provision, but he’s always faithful.

Today, I want to talk to you about a weird way to fight and I believe that this will be really practical because it doesn’t matter whether you’re watching TV, listening to the radio, or just looking at the weather Channel on your phone or scrolling through your Facebook feed there’s all this crazy fear everywhere. And so, even if you’re trying to avoid the media hype panicking about the coronavirus, the stock market or politics, you can’t seem to escape it because we have all this technology and connectedness. Sooner or later you’re going to find yourself struggling with concerns, wrestling with anxiety, fighting for something, and what you do when you step in the ring determines how much of God is seen in your life.

The apostle Paul recognized this and that’s why he said,

*“Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called…” (1 Timothy 6:12).*

You see, Paul was on the front lines, he was in the fight, and he knew that our struggle isn’t against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, the authorities, the powers, and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. And so, he’d tell you straight up that if you’re fighting and relying upon your own strength, you’re going to get minimal results because,

*“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world…” (2 Corinthians 10:4).*

And so, it’s only as we rely upon God with faith in the fight, in those times of crisis, recognizing that we’re weak, that we discover that he’s strong and he’s all that we ever needed.

In fact, it’s in times like these when people are clamoring, struggling, trying to find a cure for their fears that many will discover just how sick they really are. You see, they don’t know what to do, the world is sick and fearful, and normal just isn’t working. But I want to encourage you that we can fight the good fight of faith, because our God is faithful, he’s unchanging, and he tells us,

*"When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:13-14).*

You see, God gives us the answer, it’s a weird way to fight, but he is the answer. And so, whatever battle you’re fighting or dilemma you’re facing, when you humble yourself, pray and seek him with a repentant heart, God won’t leave you there. This is important to remember because normal just isn’t working. When so many around us are fearful, we can fight the good fight of faith, we can finish the race, because God is here, he’s faithful, and he’s the answer.

I’ve mentioned the apostle Paul, but today I want to share with you about another man who was no stranger to the battlefield, a man of great faith who’d seen God fight his battles. But at this particular moment that I want to share with you today, we see a different side of David, not the man we often think of as a great warrior and conquering King, but a man who was in trouble, fearing for his own life.

You see, David was running because King Saul, the man who was supposed to be his mentor, had actually become his enemy. The man who was supposed to be his spiritual father felt threatened and became jealous of the anointing on David. And so, as we pick up the story, Saul’s son Jonathan had just *the warned David that Saul intended to kill him and the Bible tells us in chapter 21,*

*“David went to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. Ahimelech trembled when he met him, and asked, "Why are you alone? Why is no one with you?" (1 Samuel 21:1)*

*“David answered Ahimelech the priest, "The king charged me with a certain matter and said to me, 'No one is to know anything about your mission and your instructions.' As for my men, I have told them to meet me at a certain place. Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever you can find" (1 Samuel 21:2-3)*

*“Don't you have a spear or a sword here? I haven't brought my sword or any other weapon, because the king's business was urgent" (1 Samuel 21:8)*

*“The priest replied, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of Elah is here; it is wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you want it, take it; there is no sword here but that one." David said, "There is none like it; give it to me" (1 Samuel 21:9).*

And so, here’s David who’d been anointed to be king of Israel, but his kingdom was not yet, positionally he’s not there yet, and verse 10 tells us,

*“That day David fled from Saul and went to Achish king of Gath” (1 Samuel 21:10).*

But in verse 11, the servants of Achish said,

*“Isn't this David, the king of the land? Isn't he the one they sing about in their dances: "'Saul has slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands'?" (1 Samuel 21:11).*

*“David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of Achish king of Gath” (1 Samuel 21:12).*

*“So he pretended to be insane in their presence; and while he was in their hands he acted like a madman, making marks on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard” (1 Samuel 21:13).*

Wouldn’t you agree that that is just weird? The anointed King David, the mighty warrior who’d killed the lion and the bear, who took down the mighty Goliath, now afraid and pretending to be out of his mind in the presence of his enemies. This is just weird, it doesn’t make any sense, and yet this is where we find David. He was fearful, he was insecure, and he began to act like he’d lost his mind; but number one he had a peculiar strategy.

## 1. A Peculiar Strategy

David is running from Saul who’s trying to kill him. Saul was supposed to be his spiritual covering, but now David’s all alone. And maybe you’ve been in that place where you needed somebody to help you, someone to take you under their arm, but there was nobody? This is where David was, he didn’t have any guidance, he’s running, he’s afraid, and he actually runs from bad to worse. Verse 10 tells us that he ends up at the gate of the city of Gath.

You see, the direction he ran brought him to a familiar place, there were familiar surroundings, but it was a very uncomfortable place. In fact, Gath was an outpost of the Philistines and if you remember the story of David and Goliath, it was David who had killed their champion and conquered them. And so, David was on their most wanted list, and now he ends up running from Saul right into the people who hate him the most.

Now, just imagine this for a moment, because this is going to require a peculiar strategy. You see, David had killed their champion, and so they’ve been looking for an opportunity for revenge. The Philistines knew that if they could get him, if they could kill him, they could kill what he represented. And some of you need to recognize that the spiritual attack you’re experiencing is not just for you, it’s because of who’s in you. The attack is because of who you represent and that’s why the warfare is so heavy right now. But you just need to encourage yourself in the Lord your God because it’s always this way before the breakthrough comes.

The Bible says in verse 11 that David realized where he was as he stood at the gate and overheard the king’s servants saying that the one he’d been looking for is at the door. They said,

*"Isn't this David, the king of the land? Isn't he the one they sing about in their dances: "'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands” (1 Samuel 21:11)?*

I wonder if some of you have been in that place where you’re struggling, fighting, just trying to get by, when suddenly you recognize that you’re surrounded by people who are out to get you? This is where David was, he heard the words of the king’s servants and verse 12 says he “took those words to heart and was very much afraid.”

Realizing that he’s surrounded by his enemies David recognizes that he’s going to have to do something quick if he’s going to get out of there alive. And so, he comes up with this strategy, he starts acting really weird, like a rabid dog, because you don’t want to mess with somebody who’s insane, you can’t reason with crazy. David’s at the gate and verse 13 says he started scratching at the door like he wanted to get in, he’s making marks on the door and letting saliva run down his beard. Now the people that were supposed to kill him are afraid to get near him because he’s acting so weird. And so, number two, David changed his behavior.

## 2. A Change in Behavior

No longer is he acting like a warrior or a king but he changed his behavior. And this is important because there are times when our lives are threatened, where the situation we find ourselves in is dangerous, and the only way to escape, the only way to be free is to change our behavior.

David began scratching at the gate and I believe there are some of you who need to make a drastic change in your behavior, you need to begin acting weird, because the old you can’t handle the new anointing. Jesus described it this way in Luke chapter 5,

*“No one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins” (Luke 5:36-38).*

Some of you are going to have to change your behavior, you’re going to have to fast more, pray more, listen to more worship music, surround yourself with other believers. You’re going to have to change because the old you can’t handle the new anointing. You can’t stay the same because that new wine must be poured into new wineskins. And so, you need to surround yourself with people who will push you into the deeper things of God. Because your new life is about growth, it’s about development, it’s about forward progress, and so you just can’t stay the same.

David fled from one enemy only to come face-to-face with another. Recognizing that the only way that he was going to escape was to start acting weird, he started acting like he was insane, scratching at the door; but he wasn’t scratching at the door as if he wanted to get in. You see, he knew they were going to kill him, but he wasn’t ready to give up yet, and so he was just leaving his mark, letting them know that they were this close, and the king said to his servants,

*“Look at the man! He’s insane! Why bring him to me? Am I so short of madmen that you have to bring this fellow here to carry on like this in front of me? Must this man come into my house?" (1 Samuel 21:14-15).*

We’ve got to admit it’s a weird way to fight, but there are some of you that need to start scratching that gate. Some of you were there, you were working in that ministry that nobody sees, that work that nobody celebrates, you’ve been faithfully sowing seeds into the kingdom. You weren’t trying to force your way in, you weren’t even trying to be noticed, because you didn’t want to be seen, but you’ve been getting discouraged. You need to know that the harvest is coming. You need to leave your mark so that number three you’re encouraged as you remember your past victories.

## 3. Remembering Past Victories

It’s remembering the faithfulness of God, remembering the times when he delivered you in the past, and so you just keep scratching and make a mark. You remind yourself that God is not finished with you, even when you can’t see it, even when you’re surrounded by your enemies. That’s what David said in Psalm chapter 23,

*“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies” (Psalms 23:5).*

Now, follow me here for minute, let’s back up, going back to the beginning when David was running from Saul. He went to Ahimelech and the priest asked him what he was doing. David told him he was on a secret mission, his men are going to meet him at a certain place, “Oh and by the way,” he asked in verse eight,

*"Don't you have a spear or a sword here? I haven't brought my sword or any other weapon, because the king's business was urgent" (1 Samuel 21:8).*

And so, David’s scared, he’s running from Saul, he’s fleeing for his life and he goes to church. He’s got all this stuff going on, all of these challenges, he’s feeling all alone, but the priest gives him some bread and a sword for protection. And it’s not just any sword, the priest said in verse nine,

*“It’s the sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of Elah…" (1 Samuel 21:9).*

In other words, God gives him a sword of remembrance to carry with him so that as he walks from one challenge to another, as he faces one enemy after another, he’s reminded that God is with him and that he’s already killed the biggest giant he’s ever going to face.

David’s scratching at the gate, carrying the sword with him, not just a physical weapon, but also a reminder of his past victories, a reminder of the word that God had spoken over him. He’s carrying that sword as a reminder that he hadn’t finished what God started and until he fulfills God’s purpose no demon of hell can kill him and no enemy can take him out. And so, David’s got the sword and some bread, he’s scratching at the gate, but God wasn’t finished with him even though he was in the presence of his enemies.

It’s a weird way to fight, but there are some of you who need to have a weird kind of crazy like that. You see, we have a sword of remembrance too, the Bible says it’s…

*“The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17).*

It’s the word of God that reminds us of God’s faithfulness, of his past victories in our lives, and that he’s not finished with us yet. You see, there are some of you who need to remember your victories, remembering your great salvation, and knowing it’s just a stepping stone to your next victory.

I know it’s weird, but when you’ve been through hell, when you’ve faced the enemy, you’ve been scared, you’ve experienced a lot of pain, you’ve just gotta be crazy enough to believe God’s not through with you yet. You see, it’s a weird crazy that says no to sickness, that tells cancer no I’m not ready, God’s not finished with me yet. I wonder if there’s anyone here who’s ready to fight the good fight, anybody who’s weird enough to believe that our God is able to do more than all we ask or imagine?

David knew what it was like to be in the presence of his enemies. He went from Saul trying to kill him, to the Philistines trying to kill him, and yet God delivered him from them both. The Bible says in first Samuel chapter 22,

*“David left Gath and escaped to the cave of Adullam” (1 Samuel 22:1).*

David escaped and he worshiped God. Listen to what Psalm chapter 34 says, it has this heading: it says this is a Psalm:

“Of David. When he pretended to be insane before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he left.” And then David wrote:

*“I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips. My soul will boast in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears” (Psalms 34:1-4).*

Some of you today may be fearful, you’re worried, but if there was ever a time when God saved you, if he delivered you from your enemies, you need to give God some praise. You see, the enemy was right there, but God said no. Whatever battle you’re fighting when you humble yourself and pray, seeking God with a repentant heart, he won’t leave you there.

This is so important to remember today when so many are fearful around us, because normal just isn’t working, but God is here, he is faithful, and he is working. We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who’ve been called according to his purpose, and that’s why we’re going to give God some weird crazy praise. We’re going to refuse to remain the same, we’re not going to be normal, but we’re going to follow Jesus, we’re going to seek to please him because we don’t care what anybody else thinks. Our God is too good.

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