A Pocket of Rocks

**Greeting -** *Approximately 1-2 Minutes*

*Take minimal time honoring the team and leaders.*

**Opening Text and Prayer**

I Samuel 17:40 KJV

“And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.”

Slide 1 title Slide “A Pocket of Rocks”

How many have ever skipped a rock on a pond or in the water? Or I should say, at least tried? Raise your hand if you have. Some of you love to go fishing with somebody, and when they're fishing, you throw rocks in.

Slide 2 – Picture of little boy throwing rocks

How many of you remember trying to skip a rock for the first time? And it was miserable. It was terrible.

Slide 3 - Skipping rocks

Rocks. Most can relate with this story at the thought of holding one of those rocks in your hand. It's not hard. When the narrative is well written, when the imagery is easily identifiable, it is something where we can read the story and we can put ourselves in that position.

And while we might not want our sandaled feet in the dew mist of the meadow on that particular day with a giant in front of us, most of us are fine to associate with our hands wrapped around a rock. And it wouldn't be far-fetched for most of you to consider a time when you waded into a stream, and you gathered a rock.

Slide 4 – Diamond Ring Picture

Rocks. Rocks were. Rocks are. Rocks will be important now. Different people are into different rocks at different levels. Some gals might be looking for this type of rock! One of the greatest things you could ever do is go dig in rocks.

Slide 5 – Precious gems at the Louvre’ in Paris

You could go to the Smithsonian. You could look at some 350,000 different minerals, some 10,000 plus gems that are on display. There's nothing but diamonds and gems and emeralds behind glass, highly guarded.

Slide 6 - Plymouth Rock Most disappointing rock

How many of you have ever been to one of the famous places where a rock was supposed to wow you? Plymouth Rock. Let down. Maybe you are picturing

this extravagant rock, more like the Rock of Gibraltar, with the crashing of the waves. Plymouth Rock was feeble enough that it cracked in two when they tried to move it. Now it has a little black cage around it. Not so powerful after all.

Slide 1 Title - Put up for rest of sermon.

As a little boy, did you put rocks into your pocket, like to collect them? There’s a good Old Testament example of somebody who would throw rocks in their pocket or in their shepherd's bag, and it's this guy we call David.

David waded into the stream that day, and he picked up five smooth stones. Has anybody ever heard preaching on the five smooth stones that David picked up? He wades in and he grabs five smooth stones. And somewhere along the way, these stones became the most stretchy stones that were ever broken off of a greater piece. There are all types of reasoning for why there were four more. The most common one seems to be, he probably had more in case he missed.

Or, it was for his four brothers? But in the mind of David, it was not even about the stones. He had become proficient with stones in private times. He had learned how to adequately swing that sling. He learned how to do that when nobody was watching, when he was singing and honoring, when he was fighting off bears and lions. While he was in preparation. I don't think it came at first. I don't even think it was what you could call a natural gifting. I think it was acquired over time. I think it was groomed, processed, and then it was activated.

When it came time to fight that giant named Goliath, he could not wear the armor of Saul, for he had not proved it. He could not wear it. It did not fit him. But what did he know? He knew what it was to carry a staff, and he knew what it was to sling a stone. And so, he went to what he had been trained to do, and he wades into the stream. It is critically relevant that we do identify the intentional portion of the text when it says that he goes to the stream to grab the stones. For in the stream, he gathers what type of stones? Smooth stones. Some of us are not as smooth as we think we are.

But he knew where the smooth stones could be found. It would be found in the flow. At one time, the stones that he was wrapping his hand around were larger than they were at this point. But he had learned in the process of time and over trial and error, and sling and release and bottles on the fence post, and squirrels in the tree and bears, he had found these smooth stones fly better. And so, when he dipped his hand into the stream, he was looking for one that had been in the flow long enough that it could compare to the level of training, and adequate in the hand of a trained marksman. He could begin to do what he knew he had literally, in the private times of his life, been working on. It was in the flow that he found it.

You need to make sure that you are prepared. At times it will be overwhelming, at times the water will seem too much. But it's not about me staying where I've been but be developed into what the Shepherd can use. I've always felt a little bad for those four stones. They got no playing time, they got picked up and not used.

One stone gets used. He picked up five and got one shot and it's the stone everybody talks about.

He reaches into his pocket, feels around, they're rumbling against each other, and he just grabs out one. One stone. One Stone. One stone gets to be the public hero. One stone gets to be the giant killer. One stone gets to be slung out in front of everybody. And every Philistine is going to run when that giant fell.

Every Philistine is going to retreat.

The reason that he knew how to kill a giant in public was because he had fought a number of trials in private. And thank God for the public stones. And some of you will go and you'll do it. And you'll be the giant killers that everybody sees. But

most of you, you have the highest calling of all. You get to go home, and you get to help win private battles. You get to be the stones that no one sees on Instagram. You get to be the stones that nobody talks about. It’s never been about the stone. It’s always been about the work of God. He didn't say, I come to you. Goliath called it a stick. He didn't mention the staff. Goliath was looking at him as a youth. He didn't say anything about his age. It was not about the stick. It was not about the stones. It was not about his youth. He said, I come to you in the name of the Lord!

If you are privileged to be a stone that goes home with the Shepherd, there is no higher calling. Because it was Goliath today, but it'll be a bear tomorrow. It'll be a lion next week. It'll be a naysayer next month. It'll be a hypocrite two weeks from now, and he's going to need stones. He's going to need young men and young women that are tried and proven and trained in the hands of the Shepherd.

Some young men and young women here, you know that God has called you. Your city needs revival. There are giants in your city. There are giants in your field. You’ve got to stay in the pocket with the other stones. Get in the flow. Pray against ego. Pray against intimidation. Pray against measuring up and comparing yourself with the stone that's in Goliath's forehead. It doesn't matter if they are a better preacher. It doesn't matter if they're a better singer. God cannot duplicate you. He needs you to be you.

When it's His ministry, there is no lesser. Think about Him. When God of all creation, manifests Himself in the flesh, He comes. He starts choosing disciples. Like David reaching his hand into the stream, Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee. He saw Simon and Andrew. Hey, come on. They just follow. After, when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, also in the ship. He just called. They just follow him. They weren't ready, but they had great potential. They had great potential that he knew if I could get them just a little closer to the flow.

Were there any of them that were rougher than Peter, the guy who means stone? Were there any of them rougher than that loudmouth ear-cutter, that in front of all of them and seemingly out of time, he's going to say, Thou art the Christ. Jesus said blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona. But he was close enough to the Shepherd

that within a handful of verses, he gets called Satan, because valuable stones take correction. Because it's part of the process. Peter is going to get to be put in a sling and preach Pentecost. Matthew is going to be a latecomer because Judas was a bone.

If you're doing the will of God, you want to be a rock in the pocket of a Shepherd. You want to be a rock that's worth using. How many would be honest with me and say, I still got some rough spots. Some of you have not gotten clarity for what God wants to do in your life. I want you to ask God to smooth you. God's going to give clarity right now in this altar of what you're supposed to do.

I might not be perfect, but I want to be one of those rocks that's in the pocket of the Shepherd. I want to be somebody my pastor can count on. I want to be a young adult that my pastor believes in. I know it might feel dark in that pocket. Might not be much limelight in that pocket. But you didn't get in this for the prominence. You didn't tell God yes for a platform. When you told God yes, you signed up to become a rock in the pocket of a Shepherd.