

**2024-06-23 ... 10am Morning Worship Sermon ... Revd Sue Armstrong
1 Samuel 17: 32 -49; 2 Corinthians 6: 1 – 13; Mark 4: 35 to end**

Today's readings all seem to me to give us examples of the 'unlikely' nature of God.

In the story of David and Goliath we have a renowned warrior proud of his prowess, affronted when he sees the slip of a boy come out to challenge him. But David has already validated himself to Saul – his trust is in the Lord (it is a story I often use in school to illustrate trust), and it is a wholehearted trust. And we all know the story – David, without any trappings of war but upheld by God slays Goliath and the attacking Philistines are defeated. Certainly unlikely – not just in their eyes but possibly Saul's too.

In our second lesson Paul too is unlikely, after all he was a rabid persecutor of Christians until everything changed for him – a seaport – an absolute sink of depravity, immorality – every kind of excess. Yet here he is preaching Christ's gospel of love, truthfulness, care, support and demonstrating all of that in his life as he stays among them.

So, two unlikely things – Paul and Corinth and yet both are transformed through God's love shown in Christ.

Our third 'unlikely' is of course Jesus – not the kind of Messiah that was expected and frequently challenged because of this. Not a rigid law-keeper, not from the 'right' levels of society, 'right' education and yet

In our Gospel today, again it is the unlikely that displays God's power shown in Jesus. Here we have a terrifying storm springing up so quickly that even men who knew the sea of Galilee were caught out and they turn to their leader, teacher, friend who, tired out is sleeping! When they wake him, convinced they are going to drown, He uses those wonderful words '**Peace, be still**' – the wild weather dies back and they are reminded that faith and trust were needed, but this demonstration of power awes them – re-enforcing their understanding of Jesus as God's Son – full of power and might.

Each of our readings helps us to see and appreciate how trust in God achieves things that without this could not be possible, even though they came from unlikely beginnings.

Reassuring then that we, as most unlikely beginnings are yet capable of achieving with God's help, through Jesus.