

# 1 Samuel 17:17-58

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[ 0 : 00 ] 1 Samuel 17, 1 Samuel 17. We're going to finish up where we started Wednesday night, 1 Samuel 17. 1 Samuel 17, our text, and that's going to be a long portion of scripture. We're going to pick it up in the 17th verse, and then we're going to finish that chapter, which will get us down to the 58th verse. So 1 Samuel 17, verses 17 through 58. Again, it'll be a large portion, so I want you just to kind of stay with me. We'll put it in context. If you remember, we are looking at so much more than David versus Goliath here in our text. We introduced it this way Wednesday evening, and while I don't think that the traditional view is wrong, this is David versus Goliath, but the reality what we see is immediately following the anointing of David, the choosing of David, and God is looking at the heart of David, the event which comes after that really shows us why

God chose David over his brothers and even over Saul. So it's the revelation that happens in the place of the battle that really defines for us what it is God is looking for in the individual he uses. So as we've looked at that, we've kind of titled that chapter, the 17th chapter, Character Revealed, how God reveals who we are in the midst of the battle. And we looked at the first part of that in the first 16 verses, those who fail. Those who fail the test, if you will, because the battle doesn't prove the man, the battle shows the man or woman, right? Who we are prior to the conflict is just put on greater display in the midst of the conflict. Everything comes to a head, if you will, as soon as the Goliath shows up. So we looked at how Saul was probably more fit than anyone, but yet he was the first one to offer a reward for anyone else that would do it. We also saw how all of the men of Israel and Judah were gathered there, and each of them trembled, and each of them ran away. And we are being introduced to this concept that they were drawing up in battle of Rae. We'll see it in just a moment.

But none are ready to go. All they see is Goliath and all of his armor and all of his size and all of his appearance. They see him in his taunting. And for 40 days, both morning and evening, he does it, and they're just waiting. They're just waiting. Well, all that's about to change, and we're in the 17th verse. And we see here, it says, Then Jesse said to David his son, Take now for your brothers an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to your brothers. Bring also these ten cuts of cheese to the commander of their thousands, and look into the welfare of your brothers, and bring back news of them. For Saul and they and all the men of Israel are in the valley of Elah fighting with the Philistines. Now, we looked at the irony of that. Jesse made the comment that Saul and David's brothers and all the other men were in the valley fighting with the Philistines. If you remember from the first 16 verses, no one was in the valley. Everybody was standing on a hilltop looking at the valley because nobody wanted to go down to fight. Now, the people at home assumed they were fighting a battle. The reality is, is they were just scared to death of going into the valley. So we keep going on. So David arose early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper and took the supplies and went as Jesse had commanded him.

And he came to the circle of the camp while the army was going out in battle array, shouting the war cry. Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle array, army against army. Then David left his baggage in the care of the baggage keeper and ran to the battle line and entered in order to greet his brothers. As he was talking with them, behold, the champion of the Philistines from Gath named Goliath was coming up from the army of the Philistines. And he spoke these same words. And David heard them.

[ 4 : 08 ] When all the men of Israel saw the man, they fled from him and were greatly afraid. The men of Israel said, have you seen this man who is coming up? Surely he is coming up to defy Israel. And it will be that the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel. Then David spoke to the men who were standing by saying, what will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should taunt the armies of the living God? The people answered him in accord with this word saying, thus it will be done for the

man who kills him. Now Eliab, his oldest brother, heard when he spoke to the men and Eliab's anger burned against David. And he said, why have you come down?

And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart for you have come down in order to see the battle. But David said, what have I done now? Was it not just a question? Then he turned away from him to another and said the same thing. And the people answered the same thing as before. When the words which David spoke were heard, they told them to Saul and he sent for him. David said to Saul, let no man's heart fail on account of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine. Then Saul said to David, you are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth. But David said to Saul, your servant was tending his father's sheep when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock. I went out after him and attacked him and rescued it from his mouth. And when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him.

Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them since he has taunted the armies of the living God. And David said, the Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, he will deliver me from the hand of the Philistine. And Saul said to David, go and may the Lord be with you. Then Saul clothed David with his garments and put a bronze helmet on his head and he clothed him with armor. David girded his sword over his armor and tried to walk for he had not tested them. So David said to Saul, I cannot go with these for I have not tested them. And David took them off. He took his stick in his hand and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook and put them in the shepherd's bag, which he had even in his pouch and his sling was in his hand. And he approached the Philistine. Verse 41. Then the Philistine came on and approached David with a shield bearer in front of him. When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him for he was but a youth and ruddy and handsome in appearance. And the Philistine said to David, am I a dog that you come to me with sticks? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

The Philistine also said to David, come to me and I will give your flesh. Pay attention to this talk. Okay. Come to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field. Then David said to the Philistine, come to me. You come to me with a sword, a spear and a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted this day. The Lord will deliver you up into my hands and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not deliver by sword or by spear for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hands.

[ 7 : 46 ] Then it happened when the Philistine rose and came and drew near to meet David, that David ran quickly towards the battle line to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead so that he fell on his face to the ground. Thus David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone and he struck the Philistine and killed him. But there was no sword in David's hand. Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with him. When the Philistine saw that their champion was dead, they fled. The men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines as far as the valley into the gates of Ekron. And the slain Philistines lay along the way to Shurim, even to Gath and Ekron. And the sons of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines and plundered their camps. Then David took the Philistines head and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his weapons in his tent. Now when Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, Abner, whose son is this young man? And Abner said, by your life, O king, I do not know. The king said, you inquire whose son the youth is. So when

David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the Philistine's head in his hand. And Saul said to him, whose son are you, young man? And David answered, I am the son of your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite. 1 Samuel 17, verses 17 through 58, an account which we have heard so often. We learned it as children. We've read of it so often. We've seen it depicted.

But yet in it, I believe there's some great truths in which we can learn of character reveal those whom God uses. The first 16 verses show us those who fail, those who see only the enemy that

opposes them, those who are willing for anyone else to do that which they are called to do. Because if you remember correctly, the very first time we are introduced to the person of Saul, Samuel is told that God will use Saul to deliver his people from the hand of the Philistines. Yet Saul, when given the opportunity, could only see the size of the man Goliath and therefore shunned his responsibility and asked and even bribed anyone else to do it. We've seen that they delayed. They waited for over 40 days, both morning and evening as these things came about and they heard the taunting and no one did a thing.

That's those who fail. But here we begin to see those whom God uses. Because the character that is revealed is not just the character that is revealed in this battle of David and Goliath. Sure, it shows us why God chose David. But it's also why he will choose us if these character qualities are found in us as well to fight his battles for his glory and not our recognition. The first thing we see is those whom God use understand or have a proper understanding of the conflict. David understood the conflict.

It says that David's father, Jesse, looks at him and says, I want you to go check on your brothers. And David does what his father asked him to do. Later on, he'll get mocked and he'll get ridiculed because he walked in obedience by his own brothers. We'll see that. We'll get there later.

[11:05] But yet he goes to the battle. He goes to the camp. It says he reached the encirclement of the camp. And when he reached the encirclement of the camp, the battle cry was sounding. They were forming up in battle array and everyone was shouting a battle cry. I find it humorous that they're still putting on a good show. Even though everyone knows they're not going to fight because people at least like to look the part, right? They, they, they form in battle array. They give a great war cry, but nobody's going to go to go fight the man. They've had 40 days morning and evening to do it. And all they've done is put on a good show. It's much like when the church gathers together and we can form in battle formation and give a good war cry, but we don't ever go out to push out the darkness. They gathered together and they're doing this right. And David goes with him. He walks out there with them and he assumes that the battle is about to begin. And then we're told that Goliath, the same man that we're given such a detailed description of in the first half of the chapter, no longer is there any description. We don't need to know how tall he is. We don't need to know what kind of armor he has. We don't need to know his weaponry, even though David will refer to that. We don't even have a mention of the, of the shield bearer who's going before him, the second man that is with him. We don't need to know about all the battles he's won. We're just told that this same man comes out and says the same thing he's been saying for 40 days. The same individual with the same taunt that's happened for 40 days. It's a people of God have all witnessed that everybody has seen and nobody's done anything, but trembled and fear. The only difference is now there's another man introduced into the equation because it says, but David was there. It tells us that David heard them. See, everything changes when the people of God, that God is going to use men and women, both of them, when they are in the position to finally hear, it says these same words and David heard them. When all the men of Israel saw this, they fell back. And it is here that we learn of the price that Saul is willing to pay. But it's what David says really that opens our eyes to the understanding he has of the conflict. What everyone else is saying is, have you seen this man?

Have you seen this man coming? Look at him, David. Look at how big he is. Look at the weapons he is. Have you seen this man? See, in the eyes of everyone else, the conflict was with this man. But David's declaration is different. David said, what will be done? No telling. He says, for who is, here it is, it's in the latter part of the 26th verse, for who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should taunt the armies of the living God? Do you know this is the first time God is entered into the equation of the battle? We have to get to the 26th verse before anyone even mentions the name of God. The reason those at the beginning are failing so much is because they're looking with their own eyes. They know who they are. Remember the taunt of Goliath? Are you not the servants of Saul? And am I not a Philistine? Well, Goliath had it wrong, but no one in the camp corrected Goliath because Goliath saw them as the servants of Saul. So when David comes, the first declaration David makes, he reminds the people of who they are and he reminds them of who God is. You are not the armies of the living Saul. You are the armies of the living God. So it is important that we be reminded of who we are and who God is. Because if we think we're the servants of Saul, well, as far as Saul goes, we go. But when we understand we're the army of God, where God goes, we go. See, we limit ourselves with how we see ourselves. And David expanded their horizons. He said, it doesn't matter if Saul is not willing to go. We're not the armies of Saul. Saul may be the

leader of the army, but we're the armies of the living God. And I'll go wherever God goes. And he's a living God, a God who is able, a God who is willing, and a God who can defeat any who would resist him. This is the first introduction of God into the conflict because what David saw was not the man. What David saw was the taunt that man was making to God. And what we understand is when we realize the battle that confronts us, the enemy that stands opposite us is not really against us. This is what Paul was getting at when he says, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the powers and principalities of the air and the spiritual forces of darkness. And we're reminded that greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world. Because though we may have to go hand to hand with the enemy, the battle is really not ours. Too often we misunderstand the conflict because we think it's a battle we are fighting rather than a battle that God is fighting using us in. When we go to push against darkness, we need to understand the conflict. What a difference one man's perspective made. So the people tell him, which leads us to the second quality we see of those whom God use. Not only do they have a good understanding of the conflict, number two, they have to ignore criticism. They have to ignore criticism. Mark my word, anytime we begin to truly fight the fights of God, anytime we begin to really push against those which oppose the things of God, someone will always criticize. God always has his man, but unfortunately, or woman, when I say man,

I don't just necessarily mean men. God always has his men and women, but unfortunately, so too does our enemy. Our enemy always has someone or something willing and able and really welcoming the opportunity to throw a fiery dart. He always has the arrows to throw that would hinder us and too often those arrows come from those we think that were there to encourage us because it says now Eliab, his oldest brother. Now remember in the anointing of David, we called attention to the reality that Eliab is passed over and I said pay attention to this because when David is anointed, he's anointed among his brothers and this is going to cause a problem and we see here. Now Eliab, his oldest brother, heard when he spoke to the men. The enemy is always listening. Now Eliab is not the enemy, but he's going to be one used by the enemy. He says in Eliab's anger began to burn against David. Oh, how powerful is an uncontrolled anger? His anger began to burn of jealousy because David's here and no one else is willing to do anything. Eliab has had his opportunity for 40 days. He's had his opportunity for 40 days. He's given up that opportunity for 40 days. He's found that it is not within him to go fight this man. And yet here's little brother who comes along and is just asking these questions and it begins to really reveal who Eliab is to himself. That's what causes this anger, right? The thing that upsets us is we begin to see who we are on the inside because conflict is a revealing element and we begin to see ourselves as we truly are. That's why we get upset. That's why we get mad. You know, one thing I have found that creates the greatest amount of anger inside of me is when I begin to see my own shortcomings and my own weaknesses and the things that really where I fall short, I begin to get mad and I begin to lose control of that.

[19 : 27] And I understand that the hot tempered man, it tells us in scripture, really becomes a fool because he loses control. This is what's going on in Eliab's life.

And he begins to criticize David. Why have you come down with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart for you have come down in order to see the battle. Here's the criticism. But I pay more attention not just to the criticism, but I pay attention to David's response to the criticism because I love it. But David said, what have I done? Was it not just a question? David answered the critic, the critic, not just the criticism. David answered the critic honestly, simply, and then moved on. Because the very next thing we say is then he turned away from him to another. Ignoring criticism. One of the hardest things I ever had to come up, had to get over, and I still wrestle with it, is ignoring criticism. Thinking we always have to defend ourselves. You know, the word of God tells us, David did not defend himself to his brother. Because when God has called us to a work, it is not always our place to defend what it is we're about to do. Read the book of Nehemiah. Nehemiah is being mocked, and he's being ridiculed, and he's being asked to come down and meet the valley, and Nehemiah says, we're doing a great work. I can't come down. Now this wall, if a fox jumps up on it, the wall will fall down. What does he do? He just ignores it. He prays to the Lord and keeps building the wall, right? He ignores the criticism, because the best response to criticism is turning away. And we have to develop that character before the conflict, because I promise you the moment we get in the conflict, the moment we get in the battle, the moment we begin to do what it

is God asks us to do individually, and as a church corporately, and we begin to push forward, and we be on the offensive, there's going to be someone behind us criticizing. But when we know who God is, and we know who we are, we just move forward. Ignored criticism. The third thing we see that is revealed here is that there had been a developed character. There was an understood conflict, ignored criticism, and developed character. David asked again, what's going to be done? We see the reward that is being offered for the man who would do such a thing. So eventually someone tells Saul about it, so Saul asked David to come. David shows up. Saul and David know each other. Remember, they have this kind of, David has an itinerant ministry with Saul. Every time Saul's spirit is upset, David comes and plays the harp, and then he goes back home. Saul's spirit is upset, David plays the harp, and he goes back home. He's going back and forth at this time. We don't know how often he does it, but we do know that he does it. It is an itinerant. It's not an ongoing ministry. This would be why he did not know David's father's name. We know that at the end of the passage.

But what we do see is that David comes up, and Saul looks at him and says, David says, don't worry about it. Everything's going to be fine. I mean, we have probably this young teenage boy. He says, don't worry about it. Everything's going to be fine. I'll go kill the man. And Saul says, that's not possible.

Because from eyesight, it doesn't look right. I mean, Saul is head and shoulders taller than everyone else, and he's not willing to go out there. We've looked at the reality, depending upon which manuscript you use. Goliath is either nine foot nine or six foot nine. Either way, he's a big guy.

[ 23 : 25 ] Saul is probably somewhere between six three and six five. If you take what would have been the average height of a man of Israel, and Saul is literally head and shoulders taller than everyone else. He is probably between six three and six five. He is one with the armor, probably the only one with the armor. He and his son, we're told earlier, pastors are the only ones with swords. And yet here comes the shepherd boy, David, and Saul says, there's no way you can do it. But David doesn't really spend a whole lot of time describing his own personal features. David describes his developed character, because David says, well, Saul, I've got something to tell you. Because Saul's argument was, is you are but a youth, but Goliath has been a champion since his youth. That is, Goliath has battle tested, battle proven. He has fought the fights. He's got all the scars to show it. Goliath can win the battle because of the battles he has fought. But David says, but let me tell you about what I've learned. Let me tell you about the things that I know. Goliath may have fought some battles with men, but I've seen God fight my battles for me while I was tending my father's sheep. See, we understand his character is developed in our day-to-day operations. Who we are is developed in our daily activities. You know, those few sheep Eliab was mocking him about. That was what

God used him, used to prepare him to fight that great giant that Eliab was scared of. While I was tending my father's sheep, a lion or a bear would come. Do you remember Saul had a father who had livestock as well. Saul, his father had donkeys that got lost and Saul did not want to try too hard to go find them. David was watching his father's sheep and when the sheep got taken, David pursued them. There's a character trait we need to pay attention to, right?

Jesus says the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. And the reason he said that even in the times of Israel, it was just kind of known that a hireling will not do that because a hireling, when the enemy comes to steal the sheep away, he just lets it go because he's just a hireling.

That's not his sheep. I'm not invested in that. That's not my animal, but the good shepherd, he'll fight that fight. David shows us as when I was there, I would go get that. I would take it out of that lion or that bear's mouth and if they turned them on, I'd grab them out of their beard and I would strike and kill them. That sounds like great war stories, but what are you saying? But God was using that to develop me for this moment, right? These things which should not have happened were being done. And he makes this great declaration. He says, the Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, he will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine. What is he saying?

The things which God has done in my life and the way he has developed me in the past is going to ensure that he does it in the future. This, this same principle we saw when the nation of Israel went into the promised land. You love the consistency of scripture, right? When they would raise up these piles of rocks, these stones of memorial, these memorial stones or these Ebenezers that are

later called by Samuel. Here we raise our Ebenezer. These piles of rocks would be to, to dictate or depict for us past victories because past victories encourage us in present battles.

[ 26 : 48 ] We saw it all through the book of Joshua. Why every time God did something, every time God did an amazing thing, they would pile up these rocks. The reason they would pile up these rocks is because when they were getting ready to fight another battle, they could just look back, not to stay there.

They didn't go back to that pile of rocks just to be reminded God did it then. He can do it now. And David's doing the same thing in his own life, right? What God has done in the past proves to me that he can, he, not me, he can do it today. Here's the development of character. When we realize that in our day-to-day lives, our, our operations, and too often man gives himself too much credit, I'm afraid of that, and too often men and women give themselves too much credit because we take too much, we don't take enough blame for our failures and we take too much praise for our successes. But when, instead of David saying, you know what, I killed a bear, I killed a lion, he says, no, the Lord killed the bear and the Lord killed the lion. He just let me be the one that he was using to do it. And when we rightly understand those things and we see what God is doing in our life and we be sure to give him the glory for what he has done, it develops our character because there will be a day when the battle in front of us seems impossible if we're not reminded of the God behind us and with us. I don't want to say behind, he goes before us. The God who goes before us. We look at what he has done in the past, it has developed our character for the present and David stood with a developed character.

Fourth and finally, those whom God use, understands the conflicts, ignores the criticism, sees how their character has been developed. And number four, they have an unwavering confidence. An unwavering confidence.

David did not say God can deliver. He said God will deliver. He put on the armor of Saul, we know the story, right? Didn't fit, so he took it off. He had not tested it. David went into the battle with those things that God had always used in his life, the things he was comfortable with. He had a stick and a sling and he took five smooth stones. When we read historically, David and his men will kill all of Goliath's brothers. There was Goliath and four brothers, that's five. We don't know if that's why he picked up five stones, but it seems like a pretty good illustration, right? David and his men, because David did not kill all of them. His mighty men did some of them. David killed Goliath, we understand that. Killed Goliath and his four brothers, all the family of giants there. Maybe he was just picking up five in case he missed because he understood the opportunity that, hey, I'm going to be prepared. There's nothing wrong. We are to be as wise as doves, right? We are to be prepared. He says, well, God's going to win the battle, but I may have to sling more than one stone. Now, it's not a normal sling shot. We understand that. They could throw those things well over a hundred miles an hour and they were very accurate with them. So here's something he had used before, but he was allowing God to use that which he was comfortable with, that which he was equipped with to fight the battles, which means God doesn't have to rewire and rewrite you to use you in a conflict. What he has already developed in you, what he's already made you good at, is what he's going to more often than not use to win the battle, right?

We don't have to do something new. We just have to give him what we have. How he's equipped us, how he has prepared us in the past is often what he's going to use to enable us to win the battle.

[ 30 : 45 ] So David goes and Goliath, of course, he mocks him. I told you to pay attention to the mockery and I'll show you why here. David is coming out and Goliath says, oh, you've come out to me with sticks. Am I a dog? You've come out to me with sticks. The shield that Goliath's shield bearer carries is probably larger than David. Just the shield. More than likely his armor weighs more than David because his armor weighs 125 pounds. So it seems from appearance sake that Goliath has a right to mock.

But here's what I wanted you to pay attention to because this is where we begin to see the confidence. And if we're not careful, we miss it. Goliath says, you're going to come to me and I will kill you and I will feed you to the birds. Singular, right? David, I'm about to, I know this sounds real pleasant, right? Good Bible story. This is why we're all often, I wonder why we depict these in children's books, but it's okay. It says, I'm going to, David, I'm going to kill you and I'm going to feed you to the birds. David says, I'm going to kill you and I'm going to feed the whole army of the Philistines to the birds. David's confidence isn't just about you, Goliath. It's about that whole army behind you. Even though he had been mocked, even though it seemed like he was outsized and he

was, even though it seems his confidence was so certain. It was why he says, and I'm going to do this. This day, the Lord will deliver you into my hands and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies in the armies to this day, to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth. This is why, here's his confidence, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not deliver by sword or by spear for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into my hands. The declaration and the confidence is that God, I'm basing my actions upon God's character. And what I do will put on display who God is. He has surrendered. Notice, when Goliath came, everyone ran from the battle line.

It says, then Goliath arose and began to move forward and David ran to the battle line. The confidence, not just to fight the battle, but to run head on into it. You know the story, you know how it goes, but I want you to see what happens next. Verse 52 says, the men of Israel, you remember all those men who for 40 days were trembling and terrified and scared. All those men who never would move. All those men who heard the same words morning and evening and did nothing. The men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines. What a difference one person makes. When there's one person who has the character that God could use them to fight the battle.

Everyone else responded. Then all of them got up and went. The grand question we ask is not, will there be a battle?

[ 34 : 22 ] The question, and we go back to what Goliath's first taunt said. Goliath's first taunt was, give me a man. God had his man. It took 40 days for him to get there, but when he got there, everything changed. The world looks at us as give me a man or a woman that will fight the battle. And too often the church has remained silent, but God has his people. But what a difference it makes when that man or that woman stands up and says, I am the one whom God will use. And then their victories become the motivation for all the other people of God. They all rise up and pursue.

We know the accounts, right? He takes the sword. He takes the head. He goes back. Sure, Saul gives all these rewards to him that he had promised. But is there any wonder why this is the man that God has chosen?

The grand question we ask ourselves is, will we be the people that God chooses to fight his battles as well? Or will we be content waiting for that one to show up? We're going to pray. We're going to be dismissed. We're a little bit early. I know we made our way through it. It's a long text, but we'll be a little bit early. Is there anything that needs to be shared before I pray and I close this out?

Oh, thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Okay. Right.

Thank you. Thank you.