

David's Mighty Men (presented at Cornerstone Christian High 12-18-02)

Most of you know that the whole Bible is about Jesus. You can't find one story that isn't in some type or shadow or connection ending up about Jesus. That is because everything is about Jesus. I hope most of you know your life is about Jesus. The reason the Bible is about Jesus, from cover to cover, is that the Spirit of God moved men to write the Bible. And what is the Spirit's job? To reveal Jesus to the world! So the whole Bible is a revelation of Jesus.

When we talk about David, the greatest King of Israel, we are looking at the man who in many ways was a shadow of Jesus. He was a shepherd. He was a king. He was the greatest king of Israel. His name means 'beloved', and that is what God called His Son. "This is my beloved Son." In prophecy, God calls Jesus by the name of David. (Hosea 3:5) That is why David Koresh and some other cult leaders refer to themselves as David. It is a false claim to divinity. (David Koresh was a cult leader who died in a fire in Waco, Texas) Jesus is God's beloved, His David. God has been pleased with His Son throughout eternity.

So now that we see that Jesus is foreshadowed by King David, let's look back on some of the men that followed David. That will give us some insight to followers of Jesus. 1 Sam 22:2 (NIV) *2 All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him, and he became their leader. About four hundred men were with him.*

Not what you'd call the pick of the litter. These guys were the ones who had problems, complainers, guys in debt. David didn't fit into his world at the time so all the rest of the men that didn't fit came to him for leadership. Reminds me of what Paul said about the Corinthian disciples. 1 Cor 1:26-29 (NIV)

26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things--and the things that are not--to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him.

Can any of you relate to that? Has any good thing come out of Cottonwood? But hanging around David changed these guys because David was a man after God's heart. David wanted God, and just God. Yes, he got side-tracked and he paid the rest of his life for that time when he thought something else would satisfy him. But for the most part, and in God's eyes of grace, David was a man after God's heart. He wanted to love the things God loved, and hate the things God hates. Is your heart after God's heart?

Because David was humble, because he loved God, people liked him. They gravitated to him because of his godly qualities. They learned from his example. Some, about 10%, of those misfits that gathered around him went on to become famous men of renown. At the end of the story of David there is a list of some of these wild men.

2 Sam 23:8 (NIV) *8 These are the names of David's mighty men: Josheb-Basshebeth, a Tahkemonite, was chief of the Three; he raised his spear against eight hundred men, whom he killed in one encounter.*

One guy takes down 800 men in one day with a spear. Talk about being out numbered. This guy had the guts to go into a battle like that. I don't know if you've ever looked at death. I was passing out tracts one time and a guy stuck a gun in my face. It makes your heart pound. Try 800!

What gave him the guts to do that? Maybe he had been there when little David took on Goliath. He would have heard this kid with a slingshot looking at an armored giant say, *"You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. 47 All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands."* (1 Sam 17:45-47 (NIV))

If you know the battle is Almighty God's then it really doesn't matter how big you are or what the odds are. God and you outnumber and outsize them all. Maybe that is where Josheb got his faith and courage. He saw it modeled and made it his own.

Then there was another wild man. 2 Sam 23:9-10 (NIV)

9 Next to him was Eleazar son of Dodai the Ahohite. As one of the three mighty men, he was with David when they taunted the Philistines gathered [at Pas Dammim] for battle. Then the men of Israel retreated, 10 but he stood his ground and struck down the Philistines till his hand grew tired and froze to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day. The troops returned to Eleazar, but only to strip the dead.

Do you get the picture? A bunch of men get in shouting range of the enemy and yell put downs to them. Then they all leave, but one guy stays behind. What a crazy! He's just challenged a bunch of armed men, made them really mad, and then when all his protection leaves, he hangs out all alone so they will have the courage to come and kill him. He whoops on them instead! He was whacking away for so long his muscles cramped shut on his sword. His friends came back but just to collect the goods off the dead soldiers.

Shammah did the same thing: 2 Sam 23:11-12 (NIV) *11 Next to him was Shammah son of Agee the Hararite. When the Philistines banded together at a place where there was a field full of lentils, Israel's troops fled from them. 12 But Shammah took his stand in the middle of the field. He defended it and struck the Philistines down, and the LORD brought about a great victory.*

Just Shammah and God against an army. Fearless men of faith! These three crazy guys heard David say he'd love to have a drink from the well at Bethlehem. So they take off, bust through enemy lines, get some water, break back through the enemy lines, probably chased and attacked the whole way.

You think maybe they kind of liked David? What did David do that made them want to risk their lives to satisfy his request? Well, Scripture doesn't exactly say. But I would venture to guess that he loved them. He genuinely cared about each of those guys. He modeled a life of total faith in God. He sang to God. He sought God's direction. He was honorable in all he did. He was their role model.

We could go on and read about the guy that took on two of Moab's best fighters. Another time he jumped into a snowy pit with lion and killed it. Do you know how many Mighty Men of David there were? 37! How many students are here at Cornerstone? Hmmmm?

Now I want to ask you something. Have you been watching Jesus? Have you seen how He laid down His life for you? Not only did He leave heaven and become a man so He could die for you, but every day He died to Himself so that He could show you how to live a life pleasing to God, His Father. Have you been watching what He's doing lately, how He meets your needs, how he speaks to your heart? He loves you! Have you seen it like those mighty men saw it in David?

He went into a pit with a lion too! A big ugly lying lion who beat Him to an ugly pulp. But He came back for more, only this time He dished it out. He took the keys of death and hell so you would not be bound there. He faced the giant in faith. As a man He faced the giant of Rome, fearless, more than a conqueror. Does that inspire faith in you like it did in those mighty men that watched David? Will you respond by imitating His faith, by trusting that God can do great things through you?

How many of you are going to get swallowed up by the world when you leave Cornerstone. The enemy will come and you'll take off your armor and just blend in. It happens too often! I'm ticked at my generation for being such poor examples for you, but you can look past us and look at Jesus! You can't use us as an excuse. You've got the record. You've got Him working in your life every day. What are you gonna do about it? I've seen Cornerstone kids come to the altar and say their gonna live for Jesus, give him their all and six months out in the world and they're playing with death. You've got to see the world for what it is and become a person of faith. Some of you need to chuck your worldly sin sick music that is dragging you down. Some need to quit entertaining thoughts planted by worldly TV shows. Chuck your TV! And forget your stupid ideas of cool. These guys were cool. Compromise is stupid and ugly and wimpy. Everyone looked up to them because they were different, not because they fit in.

I wish I could open your eyes to the spiritual battle raging over your lives. Some of you are losing your influence for God in the world by your lazy, compromising, self-justifying, excuses. "I don't have to do my best, I get by." Jesus gave His all for you! Even now there is no good thing He would hold back from you and you want to give him some little fraction of your life. Keep it! He'd either have you hot or cold. He'd either you were a mighty man whose couldn't let go of his sword from wacking on the enemy – I'm talking about the Word of God that you don't bother to memorize – OR just stay home and veg in front of the tube.

I wish I could do for you what Elisha did for Gehezi. He prayed that God would open his eyes and he could see the armies of God all over the hills – flaming chariots ready for battle. If your eyes were open you'd see the sleepy demons, the just get by demon, the you can't do it demon, and the fit in and be accepted demon with their hands over some of your eyes – and angels of God fighting them off. But you know why the angels of God can't win. Because you like some of the demons that are blinding you. Wake up! They want your influence in this world to be next to 0! They know God has great plans for you and they want to make sure you never walk in them. The moment you grab hold of the faith to commit to a life that pleases God, a life empowered by God, honoring God, those demons lose their foothold! Whoosh the angelic swords slice and dice and you start to see things as they are.

David is look for some mighty men. He's looking for some women of faith. While I was working on this sermon, a couple of women came to the church and prayed half the day! Mighty women of God! Their eyes are open and they are making a difference. They might not be known here but they are known in heaven and in hell. The demons knew Paul the Apostle. Gabriel knew Daniel and said heaven knew Daniel. Forget famous here. That is temporary. Get your name on the halls of heaven. I can get you all riled up and emotional but it's gonna take a lot more than that. It's gonna take you getting real about your relationship with God. He gave it all up for you, are you gonna give it all up for Him? What are you going to make your life about?

You have to get alone with God and answer that. Look at Him on the cross and see if you can tell him you want Him but you want the world too. Or tell Him you just want to slide by and enjoy. Come on close your eyes and do it right now. How does He want to change your life? Then why won't you start right now? What's stopping you? Haven't seen enough of His example? Then look if you dare but decide!

I don't want an altar call cuz I've seen too many come and cry and turn around and next week be right back at. Makes me sick. It breaks God's heart. Come on! What are you gonna do about it? Are you gonna be a mighty man or woman of David –or a worldly wus! Decide! Change! Live it every minute of every day. It takes no guts at all to conform to the world and be like them. Nobodies on their way to nothing of any eternal significance. But it takes people willing to be filled with Spirit of God to the point that nothing else matters, willing to have a broken heart, to be mighty men and women of David. Your choice! Save your life and lose it or lose your life in God and find what life was meant to be. That is spiritual reality whether you like it or not. Save your life and a hurting dying world sees you. Lose your life and a hurting dying world sees Jesus in you. Do you care?

There is a big superhighway leading to mediocrity, but the trail to being all out for God is a steep one-person trail. Who among you will choose that trail?