

SERIES: BRING IT!

SERMON: WHERE ARE 30?

2-4-18

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OPENER:

2 Samuel 23:8-39⁸ These are the names of David's mightiest warriors. The first was Jashobeam the Hacmonite, who was leader of the Three -the three mightiest warriors among David's men. He once used his spear to kill 800 enemy warriors in a single battle-

⁹ Next in rank among the Three was Eleazar son of Dodai, a descendant of Ahoah. Once Eleazar and David stood together against the Philistines when the entire Israelite army had fled. ¹⁰ He killed Philistines until his hand was too tired to lift his sword, and the LORD gave him a great victory that day. The rest of the army did not return until it was time to collect the plunder!

¹¹ Next in rank was Shammah son of Agee from Harar. One time the Philistines gathered at Lehi and attacked the Israelites in a field full of lentils. The Israelite army fled, ¹² but Shammah held his ground in the middle of the field and beat back the Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory.....

.....¹⁸ Abishai son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, was the leader of the Thirty-He once used his spear to kill 300 enemy warriors in a single battle. It was by such feats that he became as famous as the Three. ¹⁹ Abishai was the most famous of the Thirty and was their commander, though he was not one of the Three.

²⁰ There was also Benaiah son of Jehoiada, a valiant warrior from Kabzeel. He did many heroic deeds, which included killing two championsⁱ of Moab. Another time, on a snowy day, he chased a lion down into a pit and killed it. ²¹ Once, armed only with a club, he killed an imposing Egyptian warrior who was armed with a spear. Benaiah wrenched the spear from the Egyptian's hand and killed him with it. ²² Deeds like these made Benaiah as famous as the Three mightiest warriors. ²³ He was more honored than the other members of the Thirty, though he was not one of the Three. And David made him captain of his bodyguard.

God chose David to rule the nation Israel. David was a skilled warrior (remember Goliath) but he didn't do it alone. He had a band of very loyal, very powerful men who stood by him. They accomplished incredible things in combat. These 30 men supported David militarily and politically. Their loyalty and impressive combat skills gained them honor and fame.

The 3 Mightiest:

Joashobeam:

He was the leader of the 3 mightiest. He killed 800 men in one single battle with his spear.

Eleazar:

When the rest of the entire army of Israel fled in retreat in a battle against the Philistines, Eleazar stayed with David and fought. He and David fought alone and were victorious. He became so tired that at the end of the battle he couldn't raise his sword and he had fought so long and so hard that he could not remove his hand from his sword. When the rest of the army returned to enjoy the plunder they had to pry his hand from his sword.

Shammah:

He defended a field alone against an entire camp of Philistines and defeated them.

The 30:

Abishi:

Commander of the 30. He killed the son of a giant. He was known to have killed 300 men in one battle.

Benaiah:

He was in charge of David's body guard (much like the president's secret service). David was not the only giant slayer in this group of heroes. Benaiah killed a 7 foot Egyptian warrior. His spear was to have to said to have been as large as 3 inches thick and 7ft long and Benaiah only had a club to fight. He killed two Moabite heroes that were known to be fierce, ruthless warriors. He killed a lion on a snowy day. Also, after David's death he helped Solomon secure his throne and became the general of Solomon's army.

30 EXTRAORDINARY MEN.

WHAT DID THESE MEN POSSESS? WERE THEY SUPERHUMAN?

WERE THEY ON A SPECIAL DIET?

WERE MEN IN THOSE DAYS STRONGER BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT USED TO THE LUXURIES THAT WE HAVE NOW?

WERE THEY BLESSED WITH A SUPERNATURAL STRENGTH THAT MADE THEM STRONGER THAN OTHER MEN?

OR WERE THEY ON SOME SPECIAL WORKOUT ROUTINE?

WHAT WAS IT THAT CAUSED THESE MEN TO DO SOME OF THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY FEATS KNOWN THROUGHOUT ALL OF HISTORY?

WHAT THESE MIGHTY MEN POSSESSED WAS PASSION AND COMMITMENT!

STORY:

When David Livingstone, the famous Scottish missionary and physician was working in Africa in the mid -19th century, some friends wrote: "We would like to send other men to you. Have you found a good road into your area yet?" Livingstone wrote back: "If you have men who will only come if they know there is a good road, I don't want them. I want men who will come if there is no road at all."

A cartoon I saw recently, pictured a church building with a sign in front which read, "The LITE CHURCH: 24% fewer commitments, home of the 7.5% tithe, 15 minute sermons, 45 minute services; we have only 8 commandments--your choice. Everything you've wanted in a church ... and less!"

As one pastor put it, "Ninety per cent of our churches across America have less commitment than the local Starbucks."

Down through the ages, whenever God has done a GREAT work, He has done it through a group of committed people. God doesn't do great things through those who are lukewarm or half-committed, but through those who are fervent in their love for Christ and His kingdom.

I. DAVID DID NOT ACCOMPLISH GREAT THINGS ALONE

During David's reign, the name of the Lord the God of Israel was spread far and abroad. But great as he was, David did not stand alone. Surrounding him were a band of mighty men who accomplished great feats of valor. They were committed to David and his kingdom.

DAVID DID NOT ACCOMPLISH GREAT THINGS ALONE.
HE ACCOMPLISHED GREAT THINGS BECAUSE HE HAD PASSIONATE AND COMMITTED MEN
SURROUNDING HIM.

IF GOD IS GOING TO ACCOMPLISH A GREAT WORK AMONG US,
HE WANTS TO RAISE UP MIGHTY MEN AND WOMEN IN OUR MIDST WHO CAN DO GREAT THINGS
FOR GOD.

TLC NEEDS MIGHTY MEN AND WOMEN LIKE THOSE WHO SURROUNDED DAVID.

II. THE TWO MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN:

There were two outstanding characteristics of these mighty men:

1. They were drawn and united to David out of their love for him.
2. They were committed to his cause.

THE CHURCH NEEDS MIGHTY MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE PASSIONATE IN THEIR LOVE OF JESUS
AND ARE COMMITTED TO HIS CAUSE.

These two characteristics go together. It was their love for David that motivated these men to commit themselves to David's cause. It will be our love for Jesus that will motivate us to commit ourselves to His cause.

1. TLC NEEDS MIGHTY MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE PASSIONATE IN THEIR LOVE OF JESUS

David's men were not unwilling recruits who grimly fulfilled their duty. They were willing volunteers who served out of their deep devotion to David.

The love these men had for David can be seen in an incident described in in this same chapter vs. 13-17.....

David was hiding from Saul in the cave of Adullam. The Philistines were in Bethlehem, David's home town. David thought back to the cool, clear water which he used to drink from the well in Bethlehem as a boy. So, perhaps without thinking, he exclaimed, "*Oh that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate!*" (23:15).

It was certainly not a command. Probably David would not even have verbalized his desire if he had known that these men would risk their lives to fulfill it. But he mentioned his craving, and these three mightiest men slipped away and brought the precious gift of water from the well back to David.

David was so touched that he could not drink the water, but poured it out to the Lord (23:16-17). He acknowledged the sacredness of the devotion of these men and his own deep appreciation for their love. David knew that these rugged warriors loved him enough to die for him.

ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE A RISK? DO YOU LOVE THE LORD WITH SUCH DEVOTION AND PASSION THAT YOU WOULD RISK YOUR LIFE?

God doesn't ask you to give up your life unto death, but.....

Would you be willing to risk your reputation?

Would you be willing to risk being persecuted for your faith?

Would you be willing to risk losing a friend?

Would you risk losing even some time?

ARE YOU WILLING TO LAY DOWN YOUR LIFE OUT OF YOUR LOVE FOR JESUS?

1 John 3:16 We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us.

John 15:13 There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command.

A. THE MEN WHO WERE ATTRACTED TO DAVID

➤ **They were men of diverse backgrounds.**

As you skim over this list, you will find a variety of obscure places from which these men originated. None of them seem to have anything noteworthy regarding their families or home towns. There are a lot of hick towns mentioned. But there was one thing which united these men--they were all attracted to David. He was their hero and rallying point.

2 Sam. 21:15-22 Once again the Philistines were at war with Israel. And when David and his men were in the thick of battle, David became weak and exhausted. ¹⁶ Ishbi-benob was a descendant of the giants^[d]; his bronze spearhead weighed more than seven pounds,^[e] and he was armed with a new sword. He had cornered David and was about to kill him. ¹⁷ But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to

David's rescue and killed the Philistine. Then David's men declared, "You are not going out to battle with us again! Why risk snuffing out the light of Israel?"

David, who was getting older by this time, grew weary in battle and was almost killed. But Abishai, one of the mighty men, slew the giant who almost killed David. David's men then told him that he would not go out to battle with them again, "*that you may not extinguish the light of Israel.*" They were men of diverse backgrounds, but they were all drawn together because of their attraction for the lamp of Israel.

THOUGH WE MAY BE FROM VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL, ECONOMIC, GEOGRAPHIC, VARIOUS FAMILY AND EVEN DIFFERENT RACIAL BACKGROUNDS, WE CAN BE A BAND OF UNIFIED POWERFUL WARRIORS BECAUSE WE ARE ALL ATTRACTED TO THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

➤ **They were men of difficult backgrounds.**

They were men who were distressed under the reign of Saul. They were men with problems, with things in their pasts to overcome.

In the same way, the Lord does not require that you solve all your problems before you come to Him. He accepts those in distress, debt, and discontent and molds them into mighty men and women for His cause. In fact, those who are self-sufficient and self-satisfied will not be attracted to the Lord Jesus. But like these men, those who out of their need and love for what the Lord will join themselves to Him in passionate devotion.

2. THE CHURCH NEEDS MIGHTY MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST
In David's day, there were enemies to be overthrown and kingdoms to be conquered so that the people of God could dwell in safety, and the name of God would be exalted among all the nations.

In our day, the powers of darkness must be conquered, and the name of God must be proclaimed to every tribe and tongue and nation.

**THE LORD HAS NOT SIMPLY CALLED US TO SIT AROUND IN A HOLY HUDDLE.
THERE IS A CAUSE – THERE IS A FIGHT – THE GREAT CAUSE OF CHRIST – THE CAUSE OF SEEING OUR
ENEMY CONQUERED AND MEN, WOMEN, SET FREE!**

(1) It is a great cause.

The cause of God's kingdom - there is no greater cause! God's kingdom is a kingdom which *spans the ages*. God promised Abraham that He would establish a great nation from his descendants. He promised David that his house and kingdom would endure forever (*2 Sam. 7:16*). The kingdom of God goes back in history and extends forward in history. And we have the privilege of advancing His kingdom now – in our day! There is simply no greater cause than the cause of Christ!

(2) It is a team cause.

David, as great as he was, anointed of God, could not have accomplished God's purpose alone. He needed his mighty men and the rest of his faithful troops to pull it off.

The Lord has not called us to be a group of isolated individuals. It is a team effort. We are part of the Body, and every part is essential. We all are on the team, and we all must take our place in the battle.

HOW MANY WILL MAKE A COMMITMENT TODAY? ARE THERE 30 MEN AND WOMEN WHO WILL HAVE THE FAITH AND PASSTION TO DO MIGHTY THINGS FOR GOD?

THE COMMITMENT:

(1) A commitment which overcomes the odds with faith .

Let's face it: the odds are against us! The world has us outnumbered. We face situations which seem overwhelming! And there are always plenty of people sitting on the sidelines pointing out the size of the giants in the land. Are there mighty men and women whose commitment to the cause overcomes the odds with faith in the living God?

(2) A commitment which goes against the crowd.

2 Samuel 23:9-12. Next in rank among the Three was Eleazar son of Dodai, a descendant of Ahoah. Once Eleazar and David stood together against the Philistines when the entire Israelite army had fled.¹⁰ He killed Philistines until his hand was too tired to lift his sword, and the LORD gave him a great victory that day. The rest of the army did not return until it was time to collect the plunder!

The Israelite warriors had fled. The people of God were in retreat. If you had taken a vote, it would have been a landslide in favor of surrender. But Eeleazar ignored the majority and stood alone with David. The cowards returned to gather the spoils. They benefited from the courage of these men whom they would have called fools a few hours earlier.

Will you make a commitment for God that stands for him when no one else does? Will you make a commitment that even though you may stand alone and fight you still fight the fight of faith?

3) A commitment that requires courage.

These mighty men were not passive. They were not just on the defensive--they were on the offensive as well. They went against their enemies!

How many here today will join together to go against the gates of hell?

Story:

During the early years of the Africa Inland Mission, more of their missionaries died from the harsh jungle conditions than Africans became Christians. The area became known as the white man's graveyard. But still the missionaries came. But they began arriving with their belongings packed in coffins. The Africans were amazed with this determination. They said, "Surely only a message of great importance would inspire such actions!"

As a comfortable American Christian, it's hard to relate to that kind of dedication. I don't know whether you or I will ever have to face the possibility of giving up our lives for the cause of Christ.

THE CHURCH TODAY IS COMMITTED OUT OF CONVENIENCE.

**I KNOW THIS, IF YOU HAVE BEEN A CONVIENT CHRISTIAN.
ONE WHO ATTENDS CHURCH WHEN IT'S CONVENIENT,
ONE WHO SUPPORTS THE CAUSE OF CHRIST WHEN IT IS CONVENIENT,
ONE WHO IS WILLING TO SERVE WHEN IT IS CONVENIENT, THEN YOU WILL NEVER RISK YOUR LIFE
FOR THE CAUSE OF CHRIST.**

AND YOU'LL NEVER DO ANYTHING GREAT FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

CLOSING:

Maybe you're thinking, "Where do I start?" If your heart has grown cold and complacent toward Christ, then start there. The Lord told the church at Ephesus which had lost its first love to "*Look how far you have fallen! Turn back to me and do the works you did at first*" (Rev. 2:5). Remember what the Lord has done for you. Take the time to spend alone with Him in His Word and prayer and worship each day. Rekindle your relationship with Him. Ignite the fire of your heart that has gone out.

Then get off your chair and commit yourself to His cause in this church. You are called to do more than warm a chair. Commit your time, your effort and money to the great cause of Christ as we seek to make Him known in this community. Let's not be "the Lite Church, home of fewer commitments." I don't want TLC to be the average church.

**I WANT US TO BE A COURAGEOUS CHURCH – FULL OF PASSION AND VISION DOING GREAT THINGS
FOR GOD!**

**MIGHTY MEN AND WOMEN OF VALOR GOING TO BATTLE FOR OUR FAMILIES AND FOR THIS
COMMUNITY!**