

Last Words

by C.T. Spear

C.T. Spear's sermon explores the significance of last words through the lens of David's final reflections and their implications for our own lives and legacies.

Duration: 1:11:50

Scripture: 2 Samuel 23:1-7, Psalm 23:1, Mark 16:15, John 3:16, Ephesians 6:10-18

Topics: "Eternal Legacy", "Salvation Witness"

Description

This sermon reflects on the importance of planning ahead for our last words, focusing on self-reflection, surrender to God, and the impact we leave behind. It emphasizes the need for salvation, acknowledging our shortcomings, and the significance of sharing the gospel with others. The story of Dr. Dennis Brown's final moments serves as a poignant example of leaving a legacy of love and faith.

Transcript

Well, I don't know what you're going to hear, but it sounds like you're going to hear more than I thought you were going to hear a minute ago. Take your Bible and turn with me to 2 Samuel chapter 23, if you will. I'm just a little country boy that ain't so very smart, and when I get mixed up, when I talk, I get mixed up, my gears are hard to start, it seems I don't have many brains like other folks I know, and when it comes to society, my ignorance there I show.

I went down to the jailhouse once to witness for my Lord, I told him how the Lord saved me, they sure looked mighty bored, they poked each other and they grinned, they laughed and said, he's dumb, but they stayed in and I walked out on leaving, time was coming. I don't know if you could hear that, thank you, thanks so much. Second Samuel 23, I want to speak to you if I can about last words, last words, if it is too painful, I will quit, I promise, okay, I mean, too painful for you, I can put up with it, I think the Lord is teaching me something.

Many times in my life I've said that I'm very uncoordinated, everybody that ever looked at me when I was a kid growing up said that they thought I'd be a basketball player, that was until they saw me play basketball, then they never thought that anymore, because I was just too uncoordinated, but, so I have not been very good at being able to do things with my hands, I'm not a craftsman, and I've often said that if I have to make a living I'll probably have to do it with my voice, I think maybe the Lord's teaching me something, because thank God he has given me a voice for many years, but it is his to give or his to take away. Look with me at Second Samuel 21, 23, and if you'll hold your finger there, I'd like to look at another passage in

Mark 16 for just a moment, we'll be right back to the other passage in a moment, Mark 16, the last part of the chapter, these are, this is one recorded instance of Jesus' last words, in verses 14 and 15, afterward he appeared under the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen, and he said unto them, here's his last words, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, amen, I know you know there's more to the passage, but that's probably sufficient to get the message across, Jesus' last words to us was, get the gospel to people, wherever they are, go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, now I'd like you to go back to Second Samuel 23, where I'd like to show you a passage that says that these are David's last words, Second Samuel 23, verse 1, now these be the last words of David, David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel said, the spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue, the God of Israel said, the rock of Israel spake to me, he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God, and he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain, although my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow. But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands, but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear, and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place, these be the names of the mighty men whom David had.

I'm going to stop the reading right there and simply say that from that verse, verse eight, through the end of the chapter is a list, a list of David's mighty men. Some we have more information about, some we have only their names, perhaps where they are from. Now I'd like you to go back to that first verse and please don't throw me out until you hear me out.

All right? I'm worried about some of you who haven't smiled yet. If you're happy, notify your face, okay? Second Samuel 23 in verse one, it says this, now these be the last words of David. As I said, don't throw me out until you hear me out.

These are not David's last words. You say, you don't believe the Bible? Yeah, I believe the Bible. I believe the Bible, but I believe if you want to find David's last utterance, the last actual words he spoke, you'd find those in first Kings two, verse nine, right before he died, he was speaking to his son, Samuel Solomon, who was about to become king.

And in that passage, David said to him, now, son, when you become king, there's some business you'll have to take care of right away. There are three fellows that you're going to have to kill. You'll have to kill that guy and that guy and that guy.

And if you read the passage, you'll find that the very last word that that David spoke was this word, blood, blood. Now, I suppose that you know that David was not allowed by the Lord to build the temple because God told him, I won't let you build it because you are a bloody man. David had killed many people.

He had been a man of war. And so the Lord told him, your son Solomon can build the temple, but all I'll let you do is to gather up the materials, prepare, make the preparations for the building of the temple, and, uh, but you cannot build it because you're a bloody man. Now, I think that David knew himself, at least I hope that we all have some acquaintance with ourselves.

I don't know about you, but many times I don't like what I see when I get to looking at myself. And I think that David was like that. I think that David knew that he was a bloody man.

And I think that David knew that perhaps he could not trust himself to say the right thing in his final moments. And so you don't have to follow my line of thinking, but I present to you what I really believe this is. I believe that what we have here is David thinking ahead and realizing, I want, I want to set forth what I would have remembered as my last words.

1 and 2 Samuel were written by Samuel, as you know. And yet, we know that not all of 2 Samuel could have been written by Samuel because it tells about Samuel's funeral, and I'm pretty sure he didn't stay around afterwards to write up his funeral. So, who was it, who would it have been that would have written up about Solomon's funeral? Don't know, but can't help but think that perhaps David has the most eminent writer, the eminent psalmist, the sweet psalmist of Israel.

So, the man in this passage, he says, God spake by me. Who else but David to complete the writings of Solomon to write down these things? And in the process, I think that perhaps David called upon a scribe to come over and sit down and said, now, I want you to take down my last words. And he begins to talk about these last words.

Let me illustrate it for you, if I may. Some years ago, about 15 years ago, I suppose, a man named Curtis Hudson, who had pastored a large church in Atlanta, Georgia, oh, maybe 20 years ago or 25 years ago, became the editor of a magazine called The Sword of the Lord. And in his latter years, he was stricken with cancer and he was dying.

He kept saying that he believed the Lord was going to return before he died. One day, I do not know which of his daughters, he had three daughters, but I do not know which one it was, but one of his daughters was sitting by his bedside and she said, Daddy, I know you do not want to talk about this. None of us do.

But suppose Jesus does not come before you die. We need to know what you would like to have put on your tombstone. And Curtis Hudson said, that is right, honey, I have been thinking about that too.

And he said, I am going to write out on a card what I would like to have on my tombstone. He said, I want the plan of salvation with certain specific verses on the front of my tombstone. On the back, I would like to have engraved the second verse of the song, There is a Fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins.

The words of that second verse read something like this. The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day. And there may I wash all my sins away.

He said, that is what I want on my tombstone. Now Curtis Hudson did pass on to heaven, I guess about 1994 or 1995, I do not remember. My daughter was attending Bible college and at the college where she was, they made available pictures, a photograph of that tombstone and she bought one and sent it to me.

I have in my possession somewhere in my things a picture of Curtis Hudson's tombstone. Now I am sure we all are hoping, the name of this church is Maranatha and that means the Lord cometh, amen. I am sure that we are all hoping that the Lord will return very quickly.

But I will tell you this, that in 1932, my granddad, who was a murderer, got saved in a meeting, a revival meeting preached by a preacher who only preached on prophecy themes and on the second coming of

Christ. And it was the message of the second coming of Christ that struck my granddad's heart and brought conviction upon him and in 1932 he knelt at an altar at a church in Mitchell, Nebraska and got saved. That same night my dad, who was a 16-year-old boy, surrendered his heart to Christ and he too got saved that night.

That was in 1932, a long time ago. They thought that Jesus would surely come before 1940. Surely Jesus would be here before 1950.

When I was a boy I can remember them saying, it can't be much longer, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000. Now here we are at 2010 and Jesus still has not returned. Curtis Hudson's body has been lying in the grave now for what, 15 years, 16 years? And it won't take many more years before Curtis Hudson's name will be forgotten.

There will arise, should the Lord continue to tarry his coming, there will arise a generation of Christians who will not remember the name of Curtis Hudson. Oh, there will be a few who will still read his writings and will still remember him. But there will arise a whole generation of people who do not remember Curtis Hudson.

They will not remember the Forest Hills Baptist Church of Decatur, Georgia. They will not remember that he edited the Sword of the Lord magazine. They will not remember the big revival meetings that he preached.

And I suppose that someone may be walking through a cemetery somewhere and they'll be looking at a tombstone and they'll read the name Curtis Hudson. They'll read the dates of his birth and his death. They'll read there the plan of salvation and they'll walk around to the back side and they'll see the second verse of that old hymn.

And though they do not know much about Curtis Hudson, they will know what he wanted them to know about himself. Let me speak to you about last words. David.

David said, these be the last words. As a young preacher, I began preaching messages on obscure characters of the Bible. I suppose I did it because I was insecure.

I thought everybody's preached sermons on David and Goliath. What can I say that nobody, that everybody hasn't already heard about David and Goliath? And I suppose that my reasoning was that if I could find something to preach about some obscure character that nobody else has heard about or thought about, that maybe I can make some unique contribution. And so through the years, I have tried to study and find out what it was that God wanted us to know about these obscure people in the Bible.

I probably never will meet Reynolds. I probably never will shake hands with most of the famous people. I never ever take time to look at the people magazine or the US magazine or any of those people type magazines that tell about all the celebrities.

I never have wasted any time on those things. I figure I'll probably never meet them anyway. But there are many of these obscure characters in the Bible.

One day, I hope to reach out and shake their hand in heaven. I don't want a man to walk up to me and say, hello, I'm Othniel. I don't want that to happen and stand there dumbfounded wondering who in the world Othniel might be.

So I studied very thoroughly the life of Othniel and his wife, Aksah, two of my favorite people in the Bible. Well, as I said, as a young preacher, I began preaching on these obscure characters in the Bible. And among them, I found these men who are listed in verses 8 through 39 of this chapter, these mighty men of David.

So I had a sermon on Shammah, and I had a sermon on Benaiah, and I had a sermon on Eliezer, the son of Dodo. He was just a dodo. And you know, I began to, I had studied many of these people.

But to be honest with you, I usually wondered why there was not a chapter break at the beginning of verse 8. I don't know whether your Bible is marked with paragraph markings, and don't ask me whether the paragraph markings are inspired, I do not know. Don't ask me whether the chapter markings are inspired, I do not know. Don't ask me whether the verse markings are inspired, I don't know that, but I know the Bible is inspired word of God.

And I just can't help but believe that God has not only preserved his word for us, but even probably these divisions are kept for us in some unique way. We need to have them like they are. And so I began to thoroughly look at this passage one day, because see, I thought that verse 8, these be the names of the mighty men whom David had, I thought that that was a new topic.

I thought that now he's going to talk about his mighty men. So it's really like a different subject than he's been talking about up till then. And then one day I saw that all of this chapter gives us David's last words.

Let me quickly tell you what I'm trying to say. Number one, here we find David's last words about himself. Look with me at verses one and two.

These were the last words of David. David, the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob and the sweet psalmist of Israel said, the spirit of the Lord spake by me and his word was in my tongue. It'd be a wonderful thing to take this section and have an entire lesson or an entire sermon on just those two verses.

And I believe there is a great deal of truth to be found in these verses in David's last words about himself. Look at what he said about himself. First of all, in spite of all of his flaws, in spite of all of his sins, in spite of the fact that he was a bloody man, in spite of all of that, David says of himself that he was raised up.

Isn't that great? You know, it's a wonderful day when you realize that you don't have to lift yourself up. It's a wonderful thing when you realize that promotion cometh from the Lord. David was raised up, he said.

Then it says that he was anointed of God. Do you know that you are anointed of God? If you don't know that, you need to find out. David was able to say, as a part of his last words that he wanted us to remember, he was able to say, I was anointed of God.

Young people and boys and girls, listen to me. If you don't get anything else, I hope that you will remember that God wants to in a special way anoint your life, the oil of the Holy Spirit of God, to make you what he wants you to be. And that's more important than anything else.

It's more important than your education, it's more important than what your mom and dad wants you to do with your life. When you know that you're anointed of God. Why did I get up here to preach with half of a voice? Because if I know anything about what God's done in my life, I know that with my dying breath I want to preach the Word of God.

And if I have lived for any purpose, it is that I might preach the Word of God. Thank you for bearing with me in my nasty voice today. He was anointed of God.

There's much more. He says he was the sweet psalmist of Israel, was a songwriter. You know that the Psalms, many of the Psalms, most of the Psalms probably were written by David.

He was a songwriter. They sang these. This was the Hebrew hymnal.

They sang these songs. If I had a singing voice, I'd sing one of them right now, but I don't want to torture you any worse than it is. He was the sweet psalmist of Israel.

Notice he says, the Spirit spake by me. Verse two. He knew the Holy Spirit of God spoke by him, excuse me.

So these are David's last words about himself. Isn't it interesting that he didn't say a lot about his accomplishments? He didn't say a lot about the great palace that he lived in. He didn't say a lot about his, about a lot of other things that he could have mentioned about himself.

The main things he talked about was God raised me up. I was anointed of God. God gave me songs that I wrote and the Spirit of God spake by me.

Listen, those are the main things in life. That's it. Well, let me move on to the second part of David's words, his last words.

In verses three and four, I think we find David's last words about Jesus. Look at verse three. The God of Israel said, the rock of Israel spake to me.

He that ruleth over men must be just. Did you notice back in verse two, he said, the Spirit of the Lord spake by me. But in verse three, he says, the rock of Israel spake to me.

He that ruleth over men must be just ruling in the fear of God, and he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun rises, even the morning without clouds as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. I believe these are David's last words about Jesus. And again, we could spend a lot of time talking about this, but the most important things are these.

He knew that the rock of Israel, if you studied the Old Testament, you remember the rock, how that Moses struck the rock, the water came forth. Later, Moses was told to speak to the rock and the water would come forth again. We know that that rock is a type of Christ, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So when David was talking about this rock, the rock of Israel, notice he says, he spake, he spoke to me, listen, has the Lord Jesus spoken to you? I want you to know that he wants to. He wants to speak to you. If you will take the time to pause and listen to him, he'll speak to you.

I think that David found that true as a child, as a boy, when he was a shepherd out with a flock, when he was playing his stringed instrument and waiting upon God and worshiping God and writing, the Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.

I think that in that setting, David, as a young lad, knew the Lord spoke to him. He spoke to him. The second thing I see here is that he points out that this rock of Israel rules perfectly.

You see that he that ruleth over men must be just ruling in the fear of God. And notice, do you notice in your Bible, the word he is capitalized. The King James translators wanted us to know he is talking about the Lord.

He that ruleth over men must be just ruling in the fear of God. And so he rules perfectly, goes on to say he is the light, goes on to say that he is the source of growth. You notice that when it says as the tender grass, last part of verse four, tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain, that that he the Lord is the source of growth.

He is the light. God is light and in him is no darkness at all. I must move on.

But these are David's last words about Jesus. He had learned a lot of things about the Lord. So he says some last words about himself.

He says some last words about Jesus. Now I hear a little sob in David's voice. I hear him almost break down and weep.

As he begins to say the words in verse five, he says, although my house be not so with God. And in verse five, we find David's last words about his family. And here David, David tells us he that ruleth in the ruleth over men must be just ruling in the fear of God.

And I'm sure that for a moment, David's mind flitted back to those moments when he had Uriah the Hittite killed to cover up his own sin and he knew that he didn't qualify. He had not ruled justly. He had not ruled in the fear of God.

He had usurped his, his place as the king of Israel. He had used his position to lord it over other people, and thus he had disqualified himself from being the just and perfect ruler over men. And as his voice breaks and as he says, although my house be not so with God, I'm sure that David is just overwhelmed with sorrow as he thinks about his own children, how that his, his sons, one after another became murderers and guilty of incest and all manner of sin.

And his own son, Absalom, tried to usurp the throne and take, take away the kingdom from him. And so David said, the last thing I have to say about my family is to tell you about their failures and their shortcomings. The last thing I have to say about my family is that in spite of the fact that we failed and in spite of the fact that we have had such shortcomings and sinfulness before God, God has given us an everlasting covenant.

Think about that. Look at it. Verse five, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant.

My, my, my, that is the grace of God. Folks, listen. Not one of us can brag about how good our families are.

Not one of us can really brag about how good we are. If we open the closet, there's surely going to be some skeletons in there. We're going to have to confess.

Yeah, we didn't do so well after all. A lot of people think I'm pretty good guy, but if you really have to know, I'll tell you, there's a lot of things I don't want to tell you. And that's what David was saying.

He was saying, my family, my family didn't measure up. My family didn't do it. We didn't do it right, but thank God, God in heaven gave me an everlasting covenant.

I want to say to you that salvation is of the Lord and it's an everlasting covenant. And if I have to live good enough to keep it, I'll fail. I'll never make it.

And David knew that. David knew that left to himself, he would, he'd blow it. He knew that his family left to themselves would destroy any good that he had left in his, in his name.

But he also knew that God in heaven had given him an everlasting covenant. Hey, the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. And it is a gift.

It's a gift. You can never earn it. You can never deserve it.

You can never, you can never qualify to keep it. It's only by the grace of God that you receive it and walk in it. Thank God for his grace.

It's an everlasting covenant. What David say about his family, he had to talk about their shortcomings and their failures, but thank God he was able to tell them about an everlasting covenant. And by the way, if we had time, we could follow that everlasting covenant down to the fact that ultimately that everlasting covenant ended with the Lord Jesus Christ being the son of David heir to the throne of Israel.

And he will one day sit on that throne for ever. So David's last words about his family and best of all, their salvation and what was their salvation. It was based on God's promise.

God's covenant. Oh, listen, the only way that you can ever be sure of your salvation is to claim the promises of God, to know what God has promised, to know the covenants of God, that God, God wants to make a deal with you that doesn't require you to participate. When Jesus went to the cross, he didn't invite you to come up and be nailed there with him.

He went to the cross by the, by himself and he paid it all, all to him I owe. Well, let me come on to the last words of David about the lost. I, I pondered this passage for a long time before I began to make sense to me.

Verses six and seven, I think, are David's last words about lost people, his last words about the lost. Listen to what he says, but the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away because they cannot be taken with hands. We don't have time to really talk about it, but he see what he's saying here is a contrast between the everlasting covenant that he has claimed for himself and his family.

And by contrast, he points out the sons of Belial, those who worship for all practical purposes, they worship the devil. They may not realize it, but their lives revolve around the things that, that Satan pushes on to men's lives, men or women, children, the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away because they cannot be taken with hands, but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear, and they shall be utterly burned with fire in that same place. Let me explain to you how I began to realize and understand that David was talking about the lost here.

It's more than just the fact that he mentions the sons of Belial. As I studied this passage, I remember that there was a time when I was working through verses eight through 39, which is the list of David's mighty men. And I took a highlighter in my Bible and I highlighted the names of each of the mighty men.

And when I got done, I read verse 39, it said Uriah the Hittite, 37 in all, 37. So I began to count, I counted each one of those that I'd highlighted, but I came up with only 36. I said, I must've missed one.

So I started at verse eight again, and I started going through and I took a green, a green ink pen with green ink. And I began to put a little box, a little green box around the name of each of those mighty men. And when I got done, I went back through and I counted again.

And sure enough, I only had 36. I said, oh, there must be a mistake in the Bible. Oh, I could have fallen back on what they taught sometimes in Bible college.

Well, it was probably a copyist's error or something like that. But I didn't think that, and I didn't say that because I don't believe that. I believe we have the word of God right here.

So when it said 37 and there were only 36, I knew that there must be some other explanation other than God making a mistake and putting the wrong number in the last verse. Are you with me? I'm so sorry about this voice. I do have a beautiful voice, honest, I do.

You don't believe a word of it, do you? Well, anyway, listen, 37, but there were only 36. And I pondered on it. I pondered on it for several days.

In fact, it may have been several weeks that I was actually preaching a series on the life of David in my church in Denver, Colorado. And I preached every Sunday night. First, well, actually, when I started out, I thought, I'll preach a series on David that will last maybe, oh, six, eight months.

And six years later, I finished the series. Six years. And I did not nearly cover everything I could have covered about the life of David.

When I came down to the end of the series, I came to this passage. And as I told you, I had preached sermons over the years about some of these mighty men. So I thought maybe I should just skip these.

My people have already heard me preach about these guys. Maybe I should just skip over this passage. But as I began to study and meditate upon this passage, I began to see that there was much more here than I had imagined.

And so, as I told you, I was counting mighty men. But I could only come up with 36. And I pondered on it a good while.

And then one day, it dawned upon me. I think the Holy Spirit just opened the eyes of my understanding. The most prominent, the most well-known of David's mighty men, the man who is mentioned in the Bible more than any of these other men, the man who is mentioned, the one mighty man who is mentioned 149 times in the Bible, far more than any of these other mighty men are mentioned.

He was named, but he is not listed as a mighty man in this passage. His name is Joab. And Joab, no doubt, during the reign of King David, Joab was front-page news in the Jerusalem Post every day.

I mean, Joab was a famous man, and Joab was well-respected and honored by the people because he was a mighty warrior. As a matter of fact, Joab was the one who managed to overtake the city of Jerusalem and they established the city of Jerusalem as the city of David. So this man, Joab, how could it possibly be that David, when he's writing a list of his mighty men, how could he possibly leave out Joab? Well, I am convinced that Joab is one of the mighty men that I will never shake hands with because I do not expect to see him in heaven.

As a matter of fact, I believe that Joab is, as David is a type of Christ, I believe that Joab is a type of Judas. The Bible says of Judas that when he died, they buried him in his own, it says he went to his own place. He went to his own place.

That's the exact quote in the New Testament about Judas. And when Joab died, it says they buried him in his own house. It's almost an identical quote.

Joab turned against David. Though he had been so loyal and so faithful, he turned against David in the latter days just as Judas turned against Jesus. And so, I think with a broken heart, David writes here the last words about a lost man, maybe many lost men, but especially that one lost man.

Do you realize that Joab was David's nephew? And I think that David loved Joab dearly, but Joab never was converted. He never, in his heart, acknowledged God and the Redeemer. I think that's why he's referred to here as a son of Belial.

Quickly, let me summarize. Joab is not included in the list. He is a type of Judas.

This verse in verses six and seven say that he's untouchable. If you please, I think that it's talking about compassion doesn't reach this guy. He was hard-hearted.

He was a guy that he did not weep. He was mean. He was cruel.

He was a very cruel man. As a matter of fact, David often refers to Joab, Asahel, and Abishai, three brothers, and he always refers to them as you sons of Zeruah. It almost sounds like he's cursing them.

You sons of Zeruah. What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruah? And I saw that and read that so many times, I began to ask myself, what does that mean? Sons of Zeruah. And then I became really shocked when I found out that Zeruah was not their father.

Why would David repeatedly call them sons of Zeruah when Zeruah was not their father? Because Zeruah was their mother. I got you, didn't I? Are you with me? Zeruah was their mother, and they were sons of Zeruah. But why were they always referred to by their mother's name? I cannot prove it, but I believe that Zeruah was a woman who never married.

And I believe that she had three children out of wedlock. She was David's older sister. Again, I cannot prove it, but I believe that she may have had a cleft palate or something.

Her name means cleft. And she was a sad lady. A woman who searched in all the wrong places for love and wrecked her life and produced three boys who were as bitter and cruel as she was.

What a lesson in the life of this woman, Zeruah. David's last words about the lost, untouchable. Notice the necessity of armor when you deal with them.

Boy, we could take a whole sermon about Ephesians 6 right there, couldn't we? If you're going to deal with the sons of Belial, if you're going to deal with lost people, you better have your armor on, amen? Ephesians 6. Put on the whole armor of God that you may stand against the wiles of the devil. And notice that finally he says, they will be utterly burned with fire. What a sad ending about David's views of the lost.

Well, let me then finally come to this. The fifth thing that I see in this passage is David's last words about his mighty men. And those last words are given to us in verses 8 through 39, and I'm not going to try to

take every verse.

I'm not even going to read the entire passage. But if you wanted to, you could take time to examine each of these mighty men. But let me just give you three thoughts about these mighty men and what David had to say about them.

First of all, let me say this. Do you realize where David's mighty men came from? Do you realize where they came from? The Bible tells us in 1 Samuel chapter 22, 1 Samuel 22, that David was hiding in the cave of Adullam. And while David was hiding there from King Saul, who was out to kill him, while David was a fugitive from justice and a hunted man, and while King Saul's soldiers marched up and down in front of that cave, David was hiding back in a cavern of the cave.

The Bible tells us that at times there were as many as 400 men who were gathered unto David in that cave. 400, think about that, 400 men. They were all men who were in debt, who were distressed, the Bible says.

It doesn't use the word depressed, but they probably were. There's a bunch of D words there, in debt, distressed, and so on. And these men, excuse me, these men came to David in that cave.

They were losers. They were men who were running from the law. Not exactly the material you would want to start with if you're trying to build a great kingdom.

Not exactly the kind of recruits you need to build a solid kingdom for God. While David was back in that cave, the Bible says that as many as 400, and in another place it says as many as 600 men. Think about that, folks.

Think about it. Stop and think about it. I mean, sometimes we read the Bible and we don't pay attention to what it says.

Can you imagine if we had 600 men here in this room today, 600? That's a lot of folks. And these 400 or 600 men came into that cave. Now the Bible doesn't tell us this, and please grant me a little bit of license if you will.

I believe that David back in that cave, weeping and crying out to God, oh God, when will you deliver me? Oh God, my life is not worth anything. Oh God, have you forgotten me? Why art thou cast down, oh my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? You've read it all. You've read what David said back in that cave.

So brokenhearted, so confused because he did not know what God was doing with his life. And sometimes we go through those phases in our lives where we do not see God withholds from us what he is doing. It may last for several years.

And for David, it was several years that he hid and fled from one place to the other. God was protecting me all the time, but he didn't know for sure. He didn't know, but that he was going to be killed at any moment.

And meanwhile, these men, these losers, these jailbirds were gathering themselves unto him. And I cannot help but believe that as David was back in that cavern, perhaps with his little harp, singing the Lord is my shepherd or whatever he sang to God, I can see those men as they said, I wish I could get as close

to God as David. I wish I could know God like David does.

I wish I could be a man of God like David. And folks, little by little, God moved in their lives. And he decided that you're just going to get up as close to him as you can get.

And you're going to spend as much time with him as you can, so that maybe a little bit of his godliness and his knowledge of God will transfer and affect your lives and the lives of your children. I commend you for that. I'm not trying to build your pastor up or give him a big head or anything like that, but I'm just saying to you, it is true that all of us are looking for somebody that can influence our lives for good and for godliness.

If we're really saved, we don't want to stay the same as we are, do we? We want to grow. We want to become more like, more like the master I would ever be. You know, we want to be like him.

And so the first thing I would say about these mighty men is where did they come from? They came from a batch of losers that nobody wanted. I mean, the other, no, nobody else wanted them. They were castoffs.

They were ready to be run out of the kingdom. They were fugitives from justice. But listen, our God loves the least of us.

Praise God. Where they came from, they were in distress. They were in debt.

They were discontented. And then let me quickly say this. David, as I said, these are David's last words.

And isn't it interesting that David talks about himself? He talks about Jesus. He talks about his family. He talks about the lost.

And he covers all of those subjects in the first seven verses. And then he takes from verse eight to verse 39 to tell us about his mighty men. Why? I believe because David recognized that no man can be all that God wants him to be by himself.

I know that you know that Don Corville has been my friend a long time. But I hope that you will hear me in spite of the fact that he has been my friend a long time. I believe that God has great things in mind for this pastor.

But I also believe that he will never be able to accomplish what God wants him to accomplish. Without mighty men and mighty women. Godly people who will join hands with him to accomplish the work of God.

And David, as an old man ready to die, did not want to go to his grave without letting people know. I could have never done it by myself. I could have never accomplished this.

You realize that David's kingdom was the mightiest kingdom on the face of the earth. You realize that David had come from being a shepherd boy to being the most powerful man on the face of the earth at that time. And yet David, as an old man says, I couldn't have done it without my mighty men.

You know, we all need those who will join hands together with us. There's at least two more things that I'd like to mention about these mighty men. One is that some of these men were converted.

They were heathen men. They were not Jewish men. Verse 37 tells us that one of these men was an Ammonite.

That means he was a descendant of Lot. Whoever expected anything good from the descendants of Lot. Well, God in heaven expects to transform lives of people.

I went to the prison ministry for several years. And during the time that I worked in prison, I saw God work mighty works in the lives of men. Today, I have some of those young men that are out preparing for the ministry.

Some of them are already involved in ministries. They were men who were headed for the worst. They had the worst in view.

They had no hope. But they got saved. And their lives began to be transformed by the word of God.

Today, they're going on for the Lord. They were converted. The last verse of the chapter, verse 39, talks about Uriah the Hittite.

Do you remember who Uriah was? He was Bathsheba's husband. He was the husband of the woman that David committed adultery with. The man whose wife David stole.

He was the man that, in order to cover up the sin of adultery, David decided to have him killed and had him killed. And, by the way, he appointed Joab to have him killed. And so, David, before he finished, had to admit and acknowledge that Uriah was one of those mighty men.

He was a man who had been converted out of the heathen ways of the Hittites. Apparently, he was one of those guys that came to the cave and saw the godliness of David and drew nigh to God and became one of David's mighty men. It would have been very easy, I suppose, for David to leave him off the list because David had so injured him and so maligned him.

But, by the leading of God's Holy Spirit, David lists Uriah as one of those mighty men. And in that is a message, another message we don't have time for, but you remember what Jesus said about it, don't you? The last shall be first and the first last. Poor Joab, he made the front page of the Jerusalem Post all through his lifetime.

Poor Joab, he was famous and well known and highly respected during his lifetime. They gave him a wide berth when he walked downtown. He was first among the mighty men, but the first shall be last.

And the last, that man Uriah, he's first. I wish I had time to take you to a passage that I think shows why Uriah deserves to be first. I believe he does.

I believe he is the most honorable of all these men. Isn't that amazing? God loves to take the guy who's on the tail end and do something miraculous with his life. Well, David's last words, we started by reading Jesus' last words.

And Jesus' last words were the great commission to go into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature. His last words were, you shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and unto the outermost part of the earth. So Jesus' last words were about this generation and the next.

And David's last words were about this generation and the next. And can I say to you today that that's really about all that you and I can do. We can hope that God will use our lives in this generation and perhaps even into the next.

Well, I need to quit. So let me tell you a quick story, if I can. And thank you so much for your graciousness to listen to my scratchy old voice.

Some years ago, I attended a home missions conference that was held in Greeley, Colorado. The old preacher who had started the conference was a preacher named Dennis Brown. They conducted the conference every year and preachers would come and they would raise money to help preachers who were trying to start new churches.

This particular year, we went and by this time, Dr. Brown was, I think, 87. He was up in years. He was in his late 80s.

Dr. Brown, the first night of the meeting, by the way, his grandson was his assistant pastor. And that first night, his grandson stood up and said, Now, pastors, preachers, listen, we're so glad that you've come to the conference. But we want to let you know that Dr. Brown is probably in his last moments.

He may not live through the night tonight. He's in the hospital right here in Greeley. But please, now, pastors, listen to me.

Do not go and visit Dr. Brown. We do not want you. We can't have all you preachers going up to the hospital.

Only his family members can go in and visit him. Please honor that request. Will you honor that request? And of course, the preachers said, Amen.

And so Monday night, they made that announcement. And on Tuesday, they told us about Dr. Brown, that he was still hanging on. And on Wednesday, they told us the same.

And on Thursday, they said that they knew Dr. Brown would not last but a few hours more. And as he lay there on the hospital bed, he was surrounded by his children and grandchildren who were all waiting for him to pass over. Some of them had pads of paper, pencils, pens, hoping to catch his last words.

They said that during those final hours that Dr. Brown made ten last statements. I do not remember all of them. Forgive me.

I do not remember all the things. But when he would kind of rouse up, he was sort of sleepy. And he would be sleeping.

And he'd wake up. He'd open his eyes and look around. And he'd make some statement.

So they'd write it down. They thought maybe this is the last thing he'd ever say. So they wrote it down.

A little bit later, he'd wake up again. He'd make another statement. They wrote it down again.

That happened ten times. Now, Dr. Brown had started that church in Greeley, Colorado, way back in the 30s. He had pastored the church for a number of years.

And then he left discouraged about some things in his family life. He left. And he went to Riverside, California and started a church there.

But only stayed two years and left there. And went to Yakima, Washington and started another church in Yakima. He remained as pastor of the church in Yakima for the rest of his life.

In the latter years, his son became his assistant in Yakima. The church in Greeley went through one pastor after another. It seemed they couldn't keep a pastor more than a year.

Maybe two years. Some maybe stayed three years. But always there was some problem and the pastors went on.

And so finally, in the early 80s, Dr. Brown heard that they were going to have a meeting about closing the church. They were going to close it down. So Dr. Brown bought a plane ticket and flew to Denver from Washington.

Got a rental car and drove to the meeting. Showed up unannounced. And they said, oh, we're shocked to see you here.

Yeah, I heard you're having a church meeting, if you don't mind. He said, I'd just like to observe what's happening tonight. So they had their business meeting and their discussion about how they were going to dispose of the church property and how they were going to close the church.

They only had a handful of people left. After they'd had some discussion, Dr. Brown spoke up and said, I'd like to say something, if I may. They said, sure.

Dr. Brown said, if you'll call me to come back as your pastor again, I'll come back. And we'll rebuild the church by the grace of God. They said, would you really? He's in his 80s.

He said, well, I will, but he said, I won't come alone. He said, I'll get a younger man to come and help me. If you'll let me come and not close the church, I'll come back.

So Dr. Brown came and pastored that church again. And the church took off and grew. His grandson came as his assistant.

And he said, I'm not going to give up my church in Yakima. And so for the latter years, probably about 10 years of his life, he was pastor of a church in Yakima, Washington, and pastor of a church in Greeley, Colorado, of all things. And so as he was dying, in those 10 statements that he made, two of them, he woke up and said, tell my people that I love them.

A few minutes later, he woke up again and said, tell my people that I love them. Twice he said it, for two different churches, I suppose. But the best part of the story is this, the very last words of Dr. Dennis Brown.

They said that he aroused for a moment and he looked up, he looked around, he looked real excited like he thought, like he thought something special was about to happen. He looked around and then when he saw his family, his face sort of fell and he just closed his eyes and never said anything. Like he was disappointed to see them still sitting there.

And a few moments later, he opened his eyes again, but this time he did not look at the family. This time he looked up and these were his final words. It's just like I always preached it.

And he was gone. I don't know what your last words will be. I don't know what mine will be.

But I wanted to speak to you a few moments this morning about, wouldn't you like to do like David and plan ahead and leave a message with your loved ones that tells what you really feel about life and about

eternity. Let's bow our heads for a moment if we can. I'd like to ask you a couple of questions, would you say? I wonder if you could say to me, Brother Spear.

As we've thought about David's last words, I realize that I have some planning to do in my life. None of us know that we'll live out this week. None of us know that we'll live out this day.

Do you realize that there's some planning that you need to put in place? Maybe your life has been full of disappointments and sins and mistakes. Maybe you don't have much to be very proud of in your life. You don't feel like when you pass over that there will be much honor left about you.

Could I challenge you today to decide that you can leave a legacy. Maybe it ought to be written inside your Bible somewhere where you could write. These are the most important things that I want to have remembered by my family and my loved ones.

Maybe today you've realized that what David said about those lost people that they're going to burn. Maybe he said about you. The truth is nobody gets saved because their daddy or their mother is saved.

Nobody goes to heaven because their grandmother or their grandfather was going to heaven. Every one of us have to do business with God one-on-one. So I'm wondering right now if you could say, Brother Spear, I do believe that it is settled for me and I have claimed that everlasting covenant that David had.

I've claimed that promise of eternal life. I'm thankful that I do not have to earn or deserve it because Jesus paid it all. I know that I've got it settled.

If you could say to me, I know that it is settled for me. Would you lift up your hand there where you are right now? I know that it's settled for me. God bless you.

There's no way that I could look around and examine everyone but God in heaven knows the true response of your heart. So let me just ask you this. If you've been thinking about it and you've come to realize that right now it's time for you to make that most important decision of your life.

You need to receive Jesus as your Savior. You need to repent of your sins and trust in him. And allow him to translate you out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light.

If you'd say, I know that it's time for me to do it. I've put it off. I've thought about it.

But it's time. While our heads are bowed, just honor the privacy of others. I'd like to ask you, would you lift up your hand and indicate, yes, it's time for me to receive the Lord Jesus as my Savior.

I know it's time for me today. Would you lift up your hand? Right there where you are. It's time for me.

Right now. Anyone at all? Now then, let me ask you this. We started by reading Jesus' last words.

Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Those were Jesus' last words. If there's anything that Jesus wants us to be focused upon, it is taking the good news that Jesus died on the cross, paid for our sins, and that we can be saved.

We need to take that message to everyone we can. And if the Lord is speaking to you about taking a stronger stand, giving out some more gospel tracts, taking the opportunity to speak to people about the Lord Jesus more than you have, would you lift your hand? Right there where you are. It was Jesus' last

request.

It was Jesus' last commission. Go ye into all the world. Would you lift your hand? Right there where you are.

God's spoken to my heart about it. Pastor, would you come? God is speaking to you. Would you stand here and sing to the Lord? Sing to the Lord.

Let's sing number 266.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/drFALKS4Sw0.mp4>
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