

The scene is now set in Israel for God to reveal His choice for Israel's king. Saul failed miserably as the political and spiritual leader of Israel. 1 Samuel last left off with God's rejection of Saul as Israel's king. Samuel's final rebuke of Saul well summed up the situation:

Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
As in obeying the voice of the Lord?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
And to heed than the fat of rams.
For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,
And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,
He also has rejected you from being king.
(1 Samuel 15:22-23 NKJV)

Samuel and Saul then parted, and that sad section of the story concludes, "And Samuel went no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul, and the Lord regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel" (1 Samuel 15:35 NKJV). What God had in store would be a surprise to many, and we can learn much from our first encounter with the life of David.

DAY 1

God Provides Himself A King **1 SAMUEL 16:1-5**

Please Read 1 Samuel 16:1-5 and answer the following questions

[1] The failure of Saul weighed heavily upon Samuel. How did he struggle emotionally over this? What then did God instruct him to do (v. 1)?

[2] What further direction did God give Samuel, since he was afraid of carrying this out (v.v. 2-3)?

[3] Samuel obeyed and went to Bethlehem. What was the reaction of the townspeople, and how did Samuel instruct them to get ready (vv. 4-5)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] Samuel's grief was understandable. His own sons failed to amount to anything, and now Saul was a miserable failure. Perhaps Samuel looked on it as though it was partly his own failure. The Hebrew word used to describe Samuel's mourning means to bewail and lament.¹ This implies that Samuel felt like someone had died, feeling like a miserable failure.² Yet Samuel was out of God's will in this, because he grieved over that which God rejected, found useless, and even found loathsome!³ Sadly, as Joe Lewis pointed out, "The word *rejected* echoes through the Saul story like the slow drumbeat of a funeral procession."⁴

We can't let grief and mourning over sin or failure stumble us from the calling God has for us. We need to get up and get going again. We need to carry out what He wants for our lives.

After Israel's sin and failure, how did Joshua experience a similar redirection from the Lord (Joshua 7:10-13)? How did Elijah, when he ran like a coward from Jezebel, experience a similar redirection (1 Kings 19:13-18)?

[2] We learn from this story that when we are unclear or fearful in direction, we must proceed by faith, one step at a time in what God has shown. God had already seen, perceived, chosen, and provided⁵ the new king. All Samuel had to do was go by faith.

Charles Swindoll well pointed out that we can have confidence when we don't know what tomorrow holds, because God is already at work behind the scene, preparing everything ahead of time!⁶ How do the following passages encourage us when things are unclear to us, and allow us to more confidently trust in His calling for us?

Psalms 139:1-6, 17-18, 23-24

Isaiah 43:1-2; Jeremiah 29:11

Daily Life Point: An important application for us in this passage is that we must be sanctified for the calling and service that God has for us. It is an important concept in the Old Testament, and even for us today. "Sanctifying" something means to dedicate and set it apart as holy and consecrated. "It is the sphere of what is considered sacred."⁷ It has to do with the concept of holiness: "the essential nature of that which belongs to the sphere of sacred and which is thus distinct from the common or profane."⁸

From the beginning of our studies this year, let's make sure that our hearts are set apart for God. Let's make a commitment to live godly lives before Him, so we can become people after His own heart. Ponder the two following verses, and then write out a couple of things you can do to set Him apart as Lord in your heart over this course of study.

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it. (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)

Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. (Hebrews 13:12-15)

MEMORY PASSAGE

Please make every effort to commit this and the rest of this year's verses to memory. Review the passage several times throughout each day, and by the end of the week, you should have it memorized.

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart".
(1 Samuel 16:7 NKJV)

DAY 2

Seeing As God Sees
1 SAMUEL 16:6-9

Please Read 1 Samuel 16:6-9 and answer the following questions

[1] Jesse was the grandson of Boaz and Ruth (see Ruth 4:21-22). He was probably one of the "elders of the town" who trembled before the presence of Samuel. Evidently, he was told that Samuel wanted to inspect his sons for some purpose, so he presented his first-born, Eliab ("My God is Father"⁹) to him. What was Samuel's reaction toward this striking young man (v. 6)?

[2] Eliab was not God's selection. What did God say about this, and about the type of person He sought to lead His people (v. 7)?

Note: "I have refused him", in the Hebrew, is the same word used for Saul when he was rejected as king.¹⁰

[3] What about the next two siblings presented in their order of birth (vv. 8-9)?

Note: The name *Abinadab* means "my father is noble," while *Shammah* means, "Yahweh hears."¹¹

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] What an important passage! We, as human beings, must learn to pursue after God and look beyond the external. Yet that is what our culture deems as important, beautiful, and acceptable. Gene Getz pointed out that God isn't as interested in the size of a person, but in the size of their soul!¹²

God had a different person in mind than these brothers who seemingly had it all together and looked good on the outside. God chose Saul as king on the basis of his appearance to the people (1 Samuel 9:2), yet in the end, his heart was totally corrupt. As the late Alan Redpath well said, "The basis of God's choice is contrary to all this-when He would build a 'man of God' He looks for different timber."¹³

The "timber" that Redpath is talking about is who we are inside our hearts, minds, and souls-and also in our motives. A person's heart determines his or her life. Only God can see into the heart of man ultimately.¹⁴ Paul pointed out how important having God's viewpoint is, especially when appointing church leaders (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1). We too must have God's insight in our dealings and learn to see as God sees.

What do the following passages warn about the need to look to the heart of the matter and see as God sees, instead of being swayed by the externals?

2 Chronicles 16:9

Proverbs 16:2

Hebrews 4:13

[2] What are some things that are true about the people whom God chooses?

Micah 6:8

Hebrews 11:6; 1 Peter 5:5-6

Daily Life Point: Have you begun seeing others as God sees them? Physical appearances can truly sway us if we aren't careful. We don't want to end up like Israel did with Saul, offering that which is of the flesh and is unacceptable in His sight.

Since you know that God sees you as you are, what are some important things that build up the inner person of your heart? How does knowing that God sees you as you really are, yet has forgiven, accepted, and even wants to use you despite it, encourage and comfort you today? Record some thoughts to share with your group.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his _____ or at the height of his stature, because I have _____ him. For the Lord does not _____ as man sees; for man looks at the _____ appearance, but the Lord looks at the _____." (1 Samuel 16:7 NKJV)

DAY 3

David the Anointed
1 SAMUEL 16:10-13

Please Read 1 Samuel 16:10-13 and answer the following questions

[1] Six of the seven sons passed before Samuel, and a divine "thumbs down" was on them all. What did Samuel ask Jesse, and how did he respond (v. 11)?

Note: "Youngest" in Hebrew means diminutive or smallest, but can probably be better translated as "least."¹⁵

[2] How does verse 12 describe this "least" son, and what did the Spirit prompt Samuel to do (v. 12)?

Note: The Amplified Bible describes David as having "reddish hair and fair skin, beautiful eyes, and was fine looking."

[3] In whose presence was David anointed, and what happened to him that day (v. 13)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] Talk about the shock to Jesse and his sons, and probably to Samuel! This shows us that what people may think is not of value is of great value to God. God exalted David in due time because of his humility and the heart God saw within him. God followed a common pattern we saw in our studies in Genesis, rejecting the first-born, seeming to take the least likely candidate, and doing a significant work through them.¹⁶ God can take us as well, and despite ourselves, use us for His kingdom and His glory.

What are some things that the following passages teach us about whom God chooses?

Psalm 24:3-5

Matthew 23:11-12; 25:21

1 Corinthians 1:26-29

[2] The Bible tells us that God sought out, then found (Psalm 89:20) and chose David (Psalm 78:70). When God anointed him for the calling he was to fulfill, He equipped him as well. For the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. All God needs from you is your availability and a surrendered heart to His will. God's calling may be sudden and surprising, but we can rest assured that it is also sovereign and sure.¹⁷ God's calling is also our enabling. How does He enable us for the service He has called us to (Matthew 28:20; Acts 1:8; Philippians 2:12-13)?

Daily Life Point: An important lesson from Jesse cannot escape our attention. Our children are equally deserving of our attention and time. We must give them a sense of importance and value.

Jesse was guilty of favoritism and neglecting the son of whom he thought the least. He probably considered David as not able to amount to anything, always out there watching the sheep with a harp in his hand and his head in a cloud. Yet, Jesse was wrong just as we saw how guilty Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were of favoritism. You never know, the child who seems to be the least likely could become the next person to reach his or her generation for God in a unique and powerful way, just like the ruddy young man David!

What efforts can you take in avoiding (or preventing if you don't have children yet) the dangerous sin of favoritism within child rearing? What are some practical ways you can show your children how important they are to both you and to God? Record some thoughts here.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his _____ or at the height of his stature, because I have _____ him. For the Lord does not _____ as man sees; for man looks at the _____ appearance, but the Lord looks at the _____." (1 Samuel 16:7 NKJV)

DAY 4

David the Witness
1 SAMUEL 16:14-18

Please Read 1 Samuel 16:14-18 and answer the following questions

[1] As David was anointed, what strange thing happened to Saul (vv. 14-15)?

Note: Other translations state that this "being" tormented and terrorized him. The Hebrew word means to be frightened, overtaken by, and struck with fear. "It is the strongest form of intimidation."¹⁸

[2] What did Saul's servants suggest to do about this, and how did Saul respond (vv. 16-17)?

[3] One of the servants suggested David as this man. What amazing testimony of David's character and spirituality occurred between his anointing and this recommendation (v. 18)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] God allows the misery that some bring upon themselves so that they come to full fruition, as did so here in the life of Saul. Whether this was actually a demon of Satan that God allowed to torment Saul, or an angel executing judgment on Saul, we can't say for sure.¹⁹ Whatever it was, God was using it for Saul's best to try and bring him to a place of repentance, but he never really did. Instead, he tried to use worldly methods to cure the problem, which offered some temporary comfort. Such affliction will either drive them away from God or embrace God.

We as Christians must be sure that the Holy Spirit is not just a temporary guest, as in the days prior to the death and resurrection of Christ. When David prayed in Psalm 51:11, "take not your Holy Spirit from me", we must remember that the Spirit in those days usually only came upon a person temporarily. It was impossible at that time to have the same experiences we now have through God's grace.

What are some things that the following passages teach us about our relationship with the Holy Spirit?

John 14:16-17

1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14

[2] David had quite an incredible testimony that gave God glory. What did Jesus say about being a living testimony for Him (Matthew 6:13-16)? What does the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11 have to say about being a testimony for God (vv. 2, 5-6, 39-40)?

Daily Life Point: How do you see yourself currently reflecting the kind of testimony for Christ that David did with his young life? Of course none of us are perfect, but we certainly should aim to reflect Christ with our lives. Rate yourself below by writing "Always", "Most of the Time", "Some of the Time", or "Never" next to the characteristic mentioned. List one or two things you might do to improve in the weaker areas of your testimony for Christ:

[1] Being skillful in what we do for a living?

[2] Being a person of valor, strong in character before others?

[3] Being a "man of war." In other words, being successful in the spiritual battles you face, especially in front of others?

[4] Being prudent and careful in what you say around others?

[5] Letting your light, faith, and joy shine forth, attracting others to Christ in you?²⁰

[6] Can it be seen in you that the Lord is with you?

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his _____ or at the _____ of his _____, because I have _____ him. For the Lord does not _____ as man _____; for man _____ at the _____ appearance, but the Lord _____ at the _____." (1 Samuel 16:7 NKJV)

DAY 5

David the Minister
1 SAMUEL 16:19-23

Please Read 1 Samuel 16:19-23 and answer the following questions

[1] Saul agrees to the plan and wants to hire David. Where did David go after his anointing (v. 19)?

[2] David's father then sent him to the king along with a gift. What was the result of his meeting and talking with Saul (vv. 20-22)?

[3] How did David effectively minister to the needs of the king, all the while knowing that Saul was the one he would replace as king (v. 23)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] David set an amazing example of humility for us all. After being anointed as Israel's next king, what did he do? He went back to the sheep! David knew he needed more preparation time, and time alone with God. He needed to go through the experiences of the shepherding business. It was the ideal preparation for what lay ahead of him.

Charles Swindoll well said, God's training ground for us all is solitude, monotony, obscurity, and the realities of daily life: "It's in the little things and in the lonely places that we prove ourselves capable of big things. If you want to be a person with a large vision, you must cultivate the habit of doing the little things well."²¹ How do the following passages address this process in our lives that God uses?

Jeremiah 45:5

Mark 10:43-44

Hebrews 12:9-13

[2] David made his gifts and abilities available to serve this tormented man. His method was not some religious ritual. It was praise and worship of the living God! What do the following passages tell us about the power of music to minister in praise to God?

Exodus 15:1-2

Psalms 40:3; 119:54; 150:3-6

Colossians 3:16

Daily Life Point: As we make ourselves available to serve the Lord, His training process is not always what we expect. He uses unique, difficult, and odd situations to draw us out of our "comfort zone." Sometimes we must take time out of our plans to minister to others in need. But through all that we face, we have the great gift of praise and worship to see us through, bringing renewed strength and joy as we wait upon the Lord.

What are some things that God has done in your life to use praise and worship to strengthen or use you in the lives of others? What are some things you would like to see change in your worship life, and how can you bring about that change? Write out some thoughts here.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

I Samuel 16:7

DAY 6

Pursuing God's Heart

[1] There are many important truths reflected in this chapter. Hopefully, one of those things that encouraged you was that you don't have to be a superstar to be valuable in God's kingdom. God is looking for someone who is available, ready to learn, and wants to follow after Him with everything.

Read the following quote, and then record some things you gleaned about being a man after God's own heart:

It becomes obvious then, as it is now, that God's answer to human need does not always come from expected sources. The Lord loves to surprise His people, and sometimes when our carefully made plans are apparently overlooked or rejected, we fail to see that help is only a prayer away. God has his own special way of supplying our needs. There have been times when He did far more with an insignificant David than He ever could have with a magnificent Eliab!²²

[2] God will find you and use you if you choose to be used-just like David did. We can certainly make a big impact on the world through Christ. Perhaps you have faced some struggles in dealing with the training process that God uses. Maybe you even feel like giving up. Read F.B. Meyer's thoughts about David and others, and then share with your group how this week's study helped you better deal with these things in your life: Nature was his [David's] nurse, his companion, and his teacher It may be that in the obscurity of your life, shut away from the presence of great matters, you are being prepared for a similar experience. Be careful to obey God's smallest prompting so that you may be prepared for the golden moment when your meek head shall be suddenly bathed in the descending anointing.²³

[3] One fascinating thing we have not touched on yet is the parallel we find between Christ's life and David's life. Jesus is called the Root of David, yet is paradoxically viewed as both the Son and the Lord of David (Mark 12:35-37).²⁴ Warren Wiersbe points out several other parallels: both were born in Bethlehem; both were misunderstood by their family members; both were obedient sons; both became conquering heroes; David's name means "beloved", while Jesus' name is the "beloved Son"; both were anointed long before they took their throne; and both had to suffer rejection before reigning.²⁶ We'll see more of these parallels as we examine David's life.

How does this show you the importance of emulating the positive things in David's life, as our goal in the Christian life is to become more like Christ? What is at least one thing that God spoke to your heart about doing, stopping, or doing differently in view of all these things? Please share this with your group members so you can all pray for each other as you seek to make God's Word real in your life.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory, and then review the passage several times.

I Samuel 16:7

PARTING THOUGHTS

This year, our desire is to close our studies in meditating on one of the psalms that David wrote that fits in with the circumstances he faced in our study. Philip Yancey well said of the Psalms,

Psalms gives examples of 'ordinary' people struggling mightily to align what they believe about God with what they actually experience I come to the psalms not primarily as a student wanting to acquire knowledge, but rather as a fellow pilgrim wanting to acquire relationship.²⁶

Psalms 23 is one of David's most famous psalms. He wrote it as he sought the Lord and learned what it meant to shepherd the people he would one day lead as king. As James Boice said, millions have memorized this psalm, found tremendous comfort in it, and many have had its words be the last to ever slip from their lips in this life.²⁷ C. H. Spurgeon said of this of Psalm 23:

[It is] a surpassing ode, which none of the daughters of music can excel This is the pearl of the Psalms whose soft and pure radiance delights every eye Oh that we may enter into the spirit of the Psalm as we read it, and then we shall experience the days of heaven upon the earth!²⁸

Psalms 23
A Psalm of David.

The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever

NOTES

- 1 James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1890 Reprint), p. 7.
- 2 Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Successful* (Colorado Springs: Victor, 2001), p. 85.
- 3 Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Old Testament* (Chattanooga, Tenn.: AMG, 1994), p. 2318.
- 4 Joe O. Lewis, *Layman's Bible Book Commentary*, 1 and 2 Samuel; 1 Chronicles, vol. 5 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1980), p. 45.
- 5 Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study*, p. 2363.
- 6 Charles R. Swindoll, *David... A Man After God's Own Heart* (Fullerton, Calif.: Insight for Living, 1988), p. 10.
- 7 Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study*, p. 2360.
- 8 R.L. Harris, G.L. Archer, and B.K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (Chicago: Moody, 1980), p. 787.
- 9 John MacArthur, ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word, 1997), p. 401.
- 10 Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study*, p. 2318.
- 11 MacArthur, ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, p. 401.
- 12 Gene A. Getz, *David, Seeking God Faithfully* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995), p. 10.
- 13 Alan Redpath, *The Making of a Man of God* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1962), p. 13.
- 14 Warren W. Wiersbe, *With the Word Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Nelson, 1993), p. 360.
- 15 Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, p. 103.
- 16 Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel in The New American Commentary*, E. Ray Clenden, ed., vol. 7 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996), p. 180.
- 17 Charles R. Swindoll, *David, A Man of Passion and Destiny* (Dallas: Word, 1997), p. 24.
- 18 Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study*, p. 2306.
- 19 Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, p. 182.
- 20 MacArthur, ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, p. 401.
- 21 Swindoll, *David, A Man of Passion*, pp. 10, 12.
- 22 Powell, *David, His Life and Times*, p. 23.
- 23 F.B. Meyer, *The Life of David* (Lynwood, Wash.: Emerald, 1995), pp. 13, 18.
- 24 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 25 Wiersbe, *With the Word*, p. 361.
- 26 Philip D. Yancey, *The Bible Jesus Read* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1999), pp. 112-113, 115.
- 27 James M. Boice, *Psalms*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1994), p. 207.
- 28 Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*, vol. 1 (Nashville: Nelson), p. 353.

