



Series: 1 Samuel

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Text: 1 Samuel 16

Title: God Looks at the Heart

EASTER PLUG

Good morning. Quick Heads up! EASTER is 4 Sundays from RIGHT NOW. Isn't that insane? Couple of things that means. It means you need to start inviting people now. Not the day of. Start praying now. We say all the time around here. Who is someone far from God but close to you? Pray for them man! We are fasting every Wednesday & praying for God to MOVE right? Well let's pray he brings prodigals home!

Now Easter Weekend is pretty packed & fun around here. You'll hear more details at the end of service. We've got good Friday, Egg Hunt extravaganza on Saturday, and we are adding extra service times at both campuses for Easter Sunday because that opens up room for you to bring friends & family. Also, ya'll we are going to baptize people on Easter Sunday. And I know some of you need to take that step. You've been putting it off. Well, here's what I'm going to tell you. THE BEST DAY of the whole year to follow Jesus in baptism...is today. Because you should never wait to obey Jesus. BUT...Ya'll easter Sunday we celebrate the resurrection of Christ. And baptism is you saying you identify with his resurrection. Just as he got out of the grave, we PULL YOU OUT OF THE WATER. And it is a celebration! What better way to celebrate Easter than through baptism? So, if you've never been baptized by immersion man, please come talk to ME, or to one of our pastors, TODAY. And let's have that conversation and get you ready for easter. And you invite your friends and family to your baptism, and I PROMISE you they will hear the gospel and I've seen God save people through the testimony of someone close to them being baptized. ANYWAY, I'm excited for Easter. You can tell. Ok now to 1 Samuel. Head over to Chapter 16 of 1 Samuel. Don't have a bible, no worries. We've got you covered. I'll have the scripture on the screen and then please pick up a bible for free on your way out. Our gift!



INTRO

Today we meet the largest figure in the Old Testament and arguably the most important figure in the bible outside of Jesus. Abraham gets 14 chapters; Elijah gets 10 chapters; David...who we meet today...gets 66 chapters; mentioned 600 times in OT, 60 times in the New. The Jewish National Flag STILL carries his star. He was a gifted musician, a formidable warrior, a savage who could take down a lion & a bear, a poet, a skilled statesman, and the greatest leader Israel ever had. The rest of our time in 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel will begin to focus on David of Bethlehem. And I give you that quick bio to say to all of you achievers out there - Even the kingdoms of Jeff Bezos, Beyoncé, Elon Musk, and Joanna Gaines don't come CLOSE to the achievements of King David of Bethlehem.

And here's the thing...in introducing us to David...God is going to say none of that really matters to him. God is going to tell us above all else he cares about the heart.

Today is very much a part 2 of last week's sermon. Which pastor Scott did a wonderful job on. Last week we saw what brought King Saul down was half-hearted obedience. God wanted Saul's heart and he wanted all of it. And today he's going to say it loud and clear.

I cannot overstate how important this passage is in your understanding of GOD and how empowering it is to you

living your life in his world. Today you are going to see the very heart of God.

Subject matter today is what God wants from you. I'm so excited. Because I know some of you have been wondering ok God 'what do you want from me?' maybe in a space of frustration or weariness in your struggle in figuring God out. Today is the day. So, I'll walk us through the chapter & just kind of help you see what is going on. THEN, I'll show you 3 things God wants from you.

WALK THROUGH

1The Lord said to Samuel, "How long are you going to mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel?"

Gotta remember Samuel's past. When Samuel was a little boy, his mom Hannah had a vision of a king. 1 Samuel 2. And in that vision God's anointed one would be lifted up as king. He would be the physical embodiment of God's love for his people. He would use power the way God uses power. He would lead by serving. He would lift up the poor from the ashes. An anointed king, in Hebrew...a messiah...in Greek...a Christ... that puts God's heart on display! Well, Samuel anointed the king God told him to anoint. And you gotta imagine the joyous feeling of being involved in the fulfillment of the vision God gave his mom. And this



king... has turned out awful. **Saul's rise to power was tainted** by the corrupt desires of Israel and then the evil desires of his own heart. So, Samuel is mourning. His now dead mother's vision came to fruition only to turn out to be spoiled fruit. God says you gotta stop mourning. There's more to the story. Oh man. There's more to the story. You just knew God had answered a prayer, and then life went sideways on you, and you are in mourning. And God's just getting started. You are STUCK in chapter 15 mourning Saul and God is trying to lift your eyes to chapter 16 because King David is coming. Some of you simply need to hear today that what feels like the final chapter...is not God's final work in your life. My goodness I'm not discrediting what you've been through. But for us here as God's people now...he's not done. There's more to the story.

Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem because I have selected for myself a king from his sons."

Just a big ole heads up guys. Whenever you see Bethlehem...your antennae should go up. Yes, this is THAT Bethlehem. Oh, little town of. Something big is going down.

2 Samuel asked, "How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me!" The Lord answered, "Take a young cow with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.'

Because Samuel has just told Saul that he will NOT remain king. Saul is of course suspicious of Samuel now. He hears Samuel is on the move in a way outside his normal beaten path and he's going to start asking questions. Gonna try and protect his throne. So, the Lord gives him cover - He's just going to do his normal things. Sacrificing to the Lord in this town. Being the spiritual leader of Israel and paying a visit to Bethlehem in that capacity.

3 Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will let you know what you are to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate to you."

Love this. It has to sound familiar to Samuel because last time, with Saul, God is going to show him who he is to anoint. I hope you see here once again...something we talked about a couple of weeks ago. Not going to be a main point here but man it's a main point THROUGHOUT scripture - **God is not far away, he's actively involved.**

4 Samuel did what the Lord directed and went to Bethlehem. When the elders of the town met him, they trembled and asked, "Do you come in peace?"

If you are wondering why they are trembling...You must have missed last weekend's message. So, scan your way a few verses back to the end of chapter 15 and you will see where Samuel **HACKED KING AGAG TO**



PIECES! In the name of the Lord. So yeah, fair question.

5 “In peace,” he replied. “I’ve come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. **6** When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and said, “Certainly the Lord’s anointed one is here before him.” **7** But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or his stature because I have rejected him.”

What this tells us is that **Eliab must have resembled Saul** in physical appearance. Probably a head taller than his brothers and everybody else. **Probably all conference Center Mid for the Bethlehem High School soccer team.** Never skipped Leg Day.

And the Lord says NO. Don’t look at his appearance or his stature because I have rejected him. **Don’t look for a second Saul. The purpose of Saul was to show Israel how futile THEIR kind of king would be.** And then the Lord says to Samuel what I believe to be the **most important verse of ALL of 1 and 2 Samuel.**

Humans do not see what the Lord sees, for humans see what is visible, but the Lord sees the heart.”

The Lord sees the heart. My hope for today is for you to memorize this verse. To **receive it like God’s antidote to one of the worst infections sin causes in your soul.** One of the worst things that sin does in us is make us look outward at our world and judge others by what

we see AND in reverse it causes us to be **CONSTANTLY** concerned with how we are judged by others. And our big takeaway today is that the **Lord’s concern is NOT with the things that are visible.** His concern is with what **ONLY HE** can see. And that’s your heart. And in scripture the heart is not the blood pumping organ. It’s more than that. It’s your inner self. It’s what drives you to do what you do. And the Lord says...that’s what I see. That’s where I want to focus. That’s what matters.

Samuel, **DON’T FALL VICTIM** to the **TALL SAUL Syndrome of Israel.** That isn’t MY choice. That’s Israel’s choice. I’m looking internal not external. I’m looking at the heart.

8 Jesse called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel. “The Lord hasn’t chosen this one either,” Samuel said. **9** Then Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, “The Lord hasn’t chosen this one either.” **10** After Jesse presented seven of his sons to him, Samuel told Jesse, “The Lord hasn’t chosen any of these.” **11** Samuel asked him, “Are these all the sons you have?”

The lord told me he’s chosen a king from among your sons. And he’s given me a **NO** on all of these. I just assumed you brought your whole crew. Is there any chance somebody is missing?

“There is still the youngest,” he answered, “but right now he’s tending the sheep.”



Youngest: In Hebrew, carries the connotation of “runt. And he’s keeping the sheep, which was the lowest job in Israel. But he does it well. He’s a protector. In fact, he kills big time predators. Lions and Bears. But he’s not physically imposing.

And that’s the point. He’s not a head taller than the rest like Saul was. He’s forgettable. Well, Samuel had JUST BEEN TOLD BY GOD that the Lord doesn’t look at outward appearances. So, Samuel hears ‘runt’ and thinks JACKPOT!

Samuel told Jesse, “Send for him. We won’t sit down to eat until he gets here.” **12** So Jesse sent for him. He had beautiful eyes and a healthy, handsome appearance.

Btw handsome actually is the word ruddy. He’s ruddy in appearance. This means he looks like Paul Rudd. Now the irony is how irrelevant that last sentence right there is. Because we know the Lord doesn’t put priority on that appearance. But you need to be thinking of a small fit singer songwriter type.

Then the Lord said, “Anoint him, for he is the one.” **13** So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully on David from that day forward. Then Samuel set out and went to Ramah.

¹ Judges 9.23; 2 Kings 19.7, 22.20-23;

The spirit of the Lord coming on David is the divine anointing that accompanies the symbolic anointing Samuel gave him with the oil. BTW THIS right here is **the only reason David succeeds at anything he does. It’s because he is filled with the spirit of the Lord.** Now, God deems him worthy of being filled with the Spirit because he is not full of himself. If you are full of yourself there’s no room for the spirit. God wants your heart.

God’s very spirit is now with David, the unlikely younger brother God has chosen. Because God has a habit of choosing the unlikely one to accomplish his mission so he will get glory. We’ll get back to that.

14 Now the Spirit of the Lord had left Saul, and an evil spirit sent from the Lord began to torment him,

Ok, as best I can tell after months of study on this here’s what I know. I know it’s not the only time God does this in the Old Testament.¹ I know evil (‘ra-a’) can mean anything from ‘misery’ to ‘moral perverseness.’ So, it could be an angel judging or an evil spirit.

What I know is that it was a supernatural assault led at God’s direction and it was brought on by Saul’s disobedience documented in chapter 15.

I also know that God’s spirit will NOT leave Christians today. because God promised that we are...according to Ephesians 1 & Ephesians 4 “sealed” by the promised



holy spirit until the day of our redemption. The Spirit has taken up permanent residence in us, so you don't have to fear God's spirit leaving You. That's a promise from Christ. Does God send evil spirits to torment us? Well, we have no certainty from the New Testament, only circumstances. Paul says he has a thorn in his flesh, a messenger from Satan. Peter accuses Ananias & Saphira of being filled with Satan when they lied to the church. What I will tell you is that IF it happens, it's no match for the power of the Holy Spirit, it's under God's command, and it's for the purpose of calling you back to himself. **Romans 8**

Well Saul's servants suggest they get a musician to play the lyre. Like a hand-held harp. And it will soothe Saul when the spirit torments him. Saul gives the thumbs up.

18 One of the young men answered, "I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the lyre. He is also a valiant man, a warrior, eloquent, handsome, and the Lord is with him."

That's going to be a theme for David. The Lord is with him. That's how he defeats Goliath, wins battles, escapes capture...the Lord is with him.

19 Then Saul dispatched messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep." **20** So Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a wineskin, and one young goat and sent them by his son David to Saul.

Can you imagine Saul's reaction when a donkey comes walking up? Donkeys were at the start of this whole journey for Saul. **"It had to be a donkey."** **Serious note - what does Jesus ride into Jerusalem on? A donkey.** And my point is - David's whole life will be pointing us to Jesus. The greater David. And the reason Jesus of Bethlehem rides in on a donkey is because his ancestor David of Bethlehem first rode in on the same unimpressive animal.

21 When David came to Saul and entered his service, Saul loved him very much, and David became his armor-bearer. **22** Then Saul sent word to Jesse: "Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor with me." **23** Whenever the spirit from God came on Saul, David would pick up his lyre and play, and Saul would then be relieved, feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him.

This is the dynamic that makes David so valuable to Saul. Of course, it does. David...under the spirit of God...provides relief to the very one who sits on the throne HE is anointed to sit on. And you don't see David try to throw a coup. Just because he is anointed doesn't mean his time has come. HE WAITS ON THE LORD.

Oh, some of you super talented young warriors need to hear this one. Just because God has anointed you doesn't mean your time has come. If there's one thing, I could encourage you with it is WAIT on THE LORD. He had a work to do in David as he waited. There is a



powerful work the Lord does in you in the waiting.
Another sermon for another time.

I told you I'd show you 3 things from this chapter that God wants from you. Here they are.

WHAT GOD WANTS FROM YOU

God wants your heart.

Humans do not see what the Lord sees, for humans see what is visible, but the Lord sees the heart."

He wants your heart. He's going to call David a man after God's own heart. He's going to say in Romans 10 if you believe in your HEART that God raised him from the dead you will be saved. Remember that your 'heart' in scripture is your motivational center. Your belief center. Some of you are thinkers not feelers. And you hear heart and think "feelings, yuck." I understand. I was like you and still drift that way. Maybe this will help. Think of yourself as a car. The "heart" is both the engine & steering wheel of YOU. It powers & it steers all of your thoughts, words, & actions. Proverbs is going to say, 'out of the overflow of the heart that the mouth speaks.' And that thing...that powers & steers everything else...that's what God wants. He wants your heart. He looks at your heart. He doesn't want your performance or your resume. THIS IS THE HEART OF CHRISTIANITY. God wants your heart. Please please hear me. Memorize this. Because it

is the antidote to the pride that the enemy will use to drive a wedge between you and God. God wants the deep-down CORE. That's what he wants. So, listen - some of you have been faking it here. You've been putting on a show. And in your heart, you are angry. You are bitter. You are filled with lust. You are bored. You are PHYSICALLY present, but your heart is absent. And you've managed to fool everyone. Guys I don't know you may be an elder in our church you've done such a good job performing. What I know is that GOD SEES the heart. He already knows! That thing you haven't even voiced yet. He says I SEE YOU. And I want you to give that heart to me. And he says you can be free from what is weighing your heart down.

See religion says you need to perform FOR God. and God will reward your obedience. He'll reward your resume. And that creates what the bible calls pharisees. People who feel entitled & better than the rest of the community who doesn't perform for God. Listen to the gospel and PREACH IT DOWN IN YOUR HEART TODAY.

YOU DO NOT PERFORM to EARN GOD'S ACCEPTANCE. YOU RECEIVE God's acceptance JUST AS YOU ARE. RIGHT THERE. Not because of your work but because of Christ's work! And then you obey God as an act of thankful worship to the one who loved you right where you were!

Religion - I obey therefore I am accepted.

Gospel - I am accepted therefore I obey.



And oh, what great news to the unreligious person. it means God is concerned with the real authentic you. He's not bothered that your life is a mess right now. That's not his scorecard. So, you can come to him with nothing & receive grace. Because he wants your heart. You can come to him broken and receive love. God welcomed prostitutes, adulterers, extortioners, and many more into his kingdom. When they gave their hearts to him. You don't go and change in order to be accepted by God. You experience God's acceptance of you in your heart and then he changes you. He wants your heart. Second thing God wants:

God wants your weakness.

Listen David's story this is the story of scripture. God chooses the unlikely, the weak to carry out his greatest feats. Because then he gets more glory.

God has chosen what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen what is weak in the world to shame the strong. 28 God has chosen what is insignificant and despised in the world — what is viewed as nothing — to bring to nothing what is viewed as something, 29 so that no one may boast in his presence. -- 1 Corinthians 1:27-29

- God chooses unlikely old Abraham & Sarah to be the parents of Israel.

- God chooses a “slow of speech” orphan slave child Moses to topple mighty Egypt.
- God chooses Rahab the prostitute to provide the key to victory for his people in Jericho.
- God chooses Noah, who was overcome by drunkenness, to preserve the human race.
- God chooses Abraham, who lied and was really old, to become "the father of many nations."
- God chose Jacob, neither the firstborn and nor honest, to continue his covenant bloodline.
- God chose Leah, rejected & unloved, as an ancestor to King David
- God chooses Naomi, an untrusting bitter widow.
- God chooses Gideon, who hid in fear of the Midianites and was the youngest in the weakest family in Manasseh, to become a "valiant warrior."
- God chooses a womanizer Samson to help free the Israelites from the Philistines
- God chooses Elijah, who was fearful and asked God to end his life, to be a mighty prophet.
- God chooses a young Jewish girl Esther to become queen and save the Jewish people.
- God chooses Jonah, who literally ran away from God, to minister to the people of Nineveh.



- God chose A DONKEY to warn Baalam against danger (Had to put this one in here...)
- God chooses young virgin Mary to bear his son.
- God chooses a lowly carpenter to be the father.
- God chooses small remote Bethlehem to be the setting.
- Jesus chooses disciples who were blue collar nobodies to carry out his ministry.
- Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey, not a noble steed
- God chooses Saul, his very enemy, who was killing Christians, to become his greatest evangelist & church planter.
- If I had the time, I'd tell you about how Church history is filled with nobodies like Polycarp, Ignatius, Augustine, Luther, Annie Armstrong, Lottie Moon, Jeremiah Lamphier, Charles Octavius Boothe, George Liele that God used to advance his kingdom.
- My favorite story out of the recent revival at Asbury in Kentucky is the story of the text sent by the young preacher who finishes his sermon. Wraps up chapel. And leaves. He texts his wife and says, "latest stinker, be home soon." And boy did God use that stinker.

And I belabor this point to show you how little God is concerned with your status or stature or achievements. If anything, they threaten to take glory from God when he works in your ministry in his world. Your weakness...Your unlikeliness...offering that to him and saying well God you know I'm nervous talking to people. God, you know I'm not a leader. God, you know I have no idea how to parent a teen. I have no idea how to mentor an engaged couple. God I've never been on a mission trip. I've never tithed before. I've never shared the gospel before. I don't know how, I don't have experience, strength, resume...GOD you know my past. God I've messed up. I've hurt others. I've hurt myself. GOD, I'm GIVING YOU, MY WEAKNESS. USE IT FOR YOUR GLORY! And he will! Because HE gets more glory that way. GIVE IT ALL TO HIM! That's who he chooses. Unlikely people who give him their whole hearts. And their weakness becomes the stage for his work. **Your weakness is the stage for God's next work.** That's frightening. But it's how he gets glory.

God anoints you in Christ, and he wants your 'yes'.

See Samuel anoints David for God's purpose. Sends him with a mission. To be the new king. Likewise, Jesus is anointed by God with a mission to save the world from sin and death. 2 Corinthians 1.22 says in Christ we are anointed.



We're given promises. We are given the Spirit of the Lord. He rushed on the disciples and Pentecost, and he comes onto every believer. And we are sent out.

And this is deeply comforting. Pretty much as soon as the spirit comes on David, he encounters difficulty. Multiple times we'll see he winds up in the wilderness. And I'm telling you difficulty and wilderness are not the signs of his absence, they are the scenes of his presence.² God anoints you with his spirit, for his mission. And all he asks for is your yes. Put your yes on the table and watch God go to work.

That's why we use next step language around here. Because God has anointed you for his mission. You really are SENT by God. Anointed. Set apart. To proclaim the excellencies...Does he have your yes? What is the next step God has put in front of you?

Give him your heart, give him your weakness, give him your yes. This is how you flourish in his world.

Introduce Communion

² Dale Ralph Davis, [1 Samuel: Looking on the Heart](#), Focus on the Bible Commentary (Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2000), 174.