

GOD CHOSE A MAN AFTER HIS OWN HEART TO BE KING

Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart.



THE STORY: 1 SAMUEL 15:24-28

MONDAY

After hearing Samuel's judgment against him, Saul expressed regret.

After hearing Samuel's judgment against him, Saul expressed regret. But it was too late for him to retain his kingship. Saul's repentance was slow and incomplete. He didn't even see his sin when first confronted by Samuel. Now he is asking Samuel to pardon his sin, but it is too late. Saul had a history of doing what looked good on the outside, but not loving God in his heart. He seemed to go quickly from an arrogant posture to what appears to be a shallow repentance. Samuel brought Saul a prophetic word saying that his kingdom had been torn from him and would be given to a neighbor. That neighbor, of course, was David.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why does Samuel say he will not pardon Saul? (*Samuel told Saul that he has rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected him as king. Furthermore, in verse 29 we read that the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent. In other words, God does not need to change his heart or mind because He is not a man, but God, who does not sin.*)

Do you ever quickly confess your sin once consequences are announced to you, like Saul? (*Parents help your children to identify with Saul. Then, help them see the grace of God available to them through the cross.*)

PRAY:

Thank God that, even though we are very much like Saul, the Lord extends mercy and forgiveness to us through the Savior.





Samuel was afraid

Samuel was afraid – The chapter opens with Samuel grieving Saul’s sin and God’s rejection of Saul. God called out to Samuel and sent him with a horn of anointing oil to the house of Jesse. He wanted Samuel to anoint a new king. Samuel was reluctant to go, but he did not rebel against the Lord’s command. He simply wanted to know how he could go, knowing that “if Saul hear it, he will kill me.” This was a legitimate concern given the fact that Saul, the current king, was still alive. God, of course, had a plan and told Samuel to invite Jesse to a sacrifice. God was not interested in a public coronation, just a private anointing. God would show Samuel the next king at the appointed time.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why was Samuel afraid? *(He was afraid that Saul would try to kill him for anointing a new king.)*

When Samuel prayed to God about his fear, did God hear his prayer? How do you know? *(Yes. God understood Samuel’s fear of Saul. God didn’t release Samuel from the job, but he gave Samuel a way to meet with Jesse so that Saul would not suspect anything.)*

PRAY:

Thank God that He understands our fears, calms our hearts, and gives us a plan.



Where is Jesus?

God did not choose David because of his outward appearance, but because David had a heart for God. David was a handsome young boy, but he was not tall.

Isaiah tells us of another king who had “no majesty to attract us to him, nothing in appearance that we should desire him” (Isaiah 53:2b). The choice of David points to the choice of this other king, King Jesus. Jesus would have a perfect heart and die on the cross so that He could extend to us His righteousness.

Through Christ, God takes our heart of stone and gives us a heart of flesh. Then God does something truly remarkable. He moves us to obey Him by His Spirit (Ezekiel 36:27).

TALK ABOUT IT:

Though we are all like Saul and need our hearts to be changed, what does Ezekiel say God is going to do? *(God is going to gather His people from the nations, give them new hearts, and place His Spirit in them.)*

Read verse 25-26 again. Who will make us clean and give us a new heart? (Jesus) How does that happen? *(It is through Jesus' sacrifice that we can be washed clean from our sin and receive forgiveness.)*

PRAY:

Have each person pray that God will change his/her heart, place His Spirit inside, and cause him/her to follow His way.



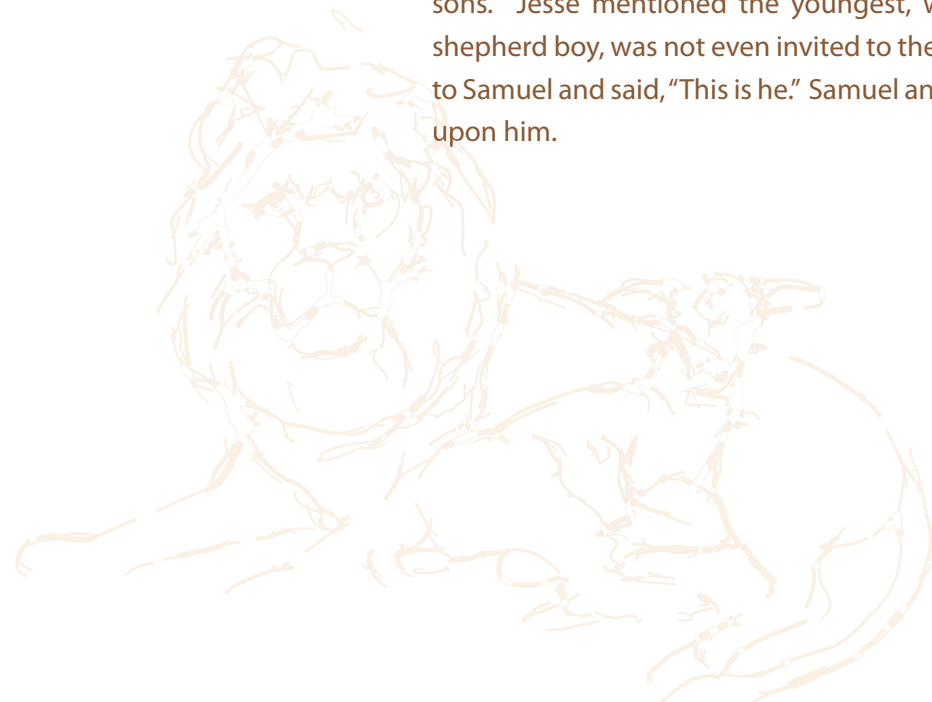
THE STORY: 1 SAMUEL 16:6-13

THURSDAY

Samuel looked at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart

Samuel looked at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart – When Samuel thought about a king, he thought of a man who would have a large forceful appearance, like Saul. Eliab, the firstborn of Jesse's sons, was such a man. Samuel took one look and settled it in his mind that he was looking at the next king. But the Lord corrected Samuel and instructed him not to look for height or appearance.

God told Samuel that the most important characteristic of a king was his heart. After looking to the outward appearance of Eliab, Samuel made an adjustment and kept looking. He passed up all of Eli's sons saying, "The Lord has not chosen these" (1 Samuel 16:10). Samuel asked if Jesse had any other sons. Jesse mentioned the youngest, who was tending the sheep. David, the shepherd boy, was not even invited to the sacrifice! When David arrived, God spoke to Samuel and said, "This is he." Samuel anointed David, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him.



TALK ABOUT IT:

Why do you think Samuel was looking at the outward appearance? *(God answered that one. It is the common mistake of all of us to look at the outward appearance. If there are two gifts wrapped on a table and one is large and wrapped nicely while the other is a smaller less attractive package, most people would take the larger, given the choice - even if they don't know what is inside.)*

After reading this passage, how do you think God looks at you? *(God is interested in what is in our hearts, not our appearance or even our outward works. Since we can't change our hearts without His help, we need to call out to God.)*

PRAY:

Call out to God and ask Him to work on your heart because you can not change it yourself.



THE STORY: PSALM 95:1-3

FRIDAY

On the road to Emmaus.

1 Peter 2:6-9 tells us that Jesus is the stone we can trust for our salvation. Jesus is God's plan of salvation for His people. We could not come into the presence of God apart from the work of Jesus. But now, having received the forgiveness of God, the writer of Hebrews tells us that we can enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, with confidence.

TALK ABOUT IT:

When this psalm tells us to make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation, what does it mean? *(For us, it means that we should celebrate and praise God's name and work.)*

In reading this passage, what should our worship look like? Should it be serious and quiet or loud and excited? *(There is nothing wrong with quiet reflective worship, but clearly there are times when we should be loud and energized in our worship.)*

Why do we worship? *(The work of Christ on the cross in saving us should move us to great celebration!)*

PRAY:

Sing a song that is loud and joyful, one that celebrates the finished work of Jesus upon the cross.

