

Message #35**I Samuel 16:1-13**

When Jesus Christ was on earth standing before Pilate, He said to him, “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above” (John 19:11). Imagine that. Jesus Christ, who is God, knew it was God who gave political leaders their office.

The Apostle Paul had the exact same inspired view of government officials. He said, “Let every person be in subjection to the governing authority for there is no authority except from God and those which exist are established by God” (Rom. 13:1).

Like it or not, believe it or not God’s word does say that He is the One who sovereignly controls who is in political power and who is not in political power. In fact, He says the one who is the king is to be honored (I Peter 2:17).

Now we are living in a world that does not believe this and we are living in a world where most people don’t like this. In fact, we have those who want to overthrow an election and remove a President. God has a very serious warning for those who want to do this: “My son, fear the LORD and the king; do not associate with those who are given to change; for their calamity will rise suddenly and who knows the ruin that comes from both of them” (Proverbs 24:21-22).

Now God, Himself, had decided Saul would no longer be king. This was not some uprising of disgruntled, non-submissive people who decided this; it was God. Samuel was the prophet who had the job of telling Saul that he was being replaced. Samuel was struggling with this. He was “shell-shocked.” He was deeply saddened by this. So God comes to Samuel and says it is time to get going. It is time to move forward. What we see here is this:

GOD IS IN SOVEREIGN CHARGE OF LEADERS AND HE REMOVES AND RAISES LEADERS IN HIS TIME ACCORDING TO HIS WILL.

Chapter 15 is sad in that God rejects and removes Saul. Chapter 16 is exciting in that God chooses and anoints David. Now this is a key turning point in the program of God because this is the beginning process of making David the King of Israel. There are seven key narrative observations we want to see:

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #1 – God speaks to Samuel. 16:1

This matter of replacing Saul with David is not done by democratic election, but by God’s revelation. God actually spoke to Samuel and He gives him three messages:

Message #1 - Stop grieving.

Samuel was deeply hurt because of Saul’s rebellion. It is the same kind of hurt that fathers and mothers and husbands and wives have when someone they love is in rebellion and throwing their life away. Samuel could not stop Saul’s rebellion any more than we can stop it.

It does break your heart, but there is nothing you can do. God is the one who can stop it. There was no point in Samuel moping and grieving anymore. God had made the decision; Saul was no longer going to be king.

Message #2 - Get going.

God says it is time to get going. The grieving was long enough. One of the best things to do when low is to serve God and get going. When you are disappointed and depressed over a loved one, keep ministering.

It was time for Samuel to fill his horn with oil and leave his home in Ramah and head south 5-7 miles to Bethlehem.

Message #3 - I have picked the replacement.

God makes it clear that his selection of a king would be in the family of a man named Jesse. Now Jesse was the grandson of Ruth the Moabitess (Ruth 4:13, 17-22).

Clearly God's choice of king indicates that you do not have to come from the right side of the tracks to be greatly used by God.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #2 – Samuel is afraid Saul will kill him. **16:2a**

In order for Samuel to get to Bethlehem, he had to travel through Gibeah, which was Saul's home and capital city.

Samuel was well aware of the paranoia of Saul and he knew he had a violent temper. His fear was well-founded as will become evident when Saul gets so mad he throws a spear at David (I Sam. 18:11). Samuel was afraid that Saul would actually kill him.

When God calls you to do something, He will protect you so you may do what He calls you to do. If God gives you a job, you can trust Him that you will be able to do the job. If God gives you a ministry, you can trust Him that He will enable you to do the ministry.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #3 – God reveals His plan to protect Samuel. **16:2b-3**

Samuel was known to travel and he was also known to participate in various worship services and offer various sacrifices. So if Saul saw Samuel traveling to a city with a heifer, he would think nothing of it and assume that he was just going about his priestly ministry.

However, since he had already told Saul his reign was over, Saul could assume that this move of Samuel was somehow connected to his removal. So God told Samuel to say, "I have come to sacrifice to the LORD."

Now this has caused a great deal of controversy for some because it appears as though Samuel is shading the truth in conformity with the word and will of God. Certainly we know that truth telling is extremely important in the mind of God. One of the commandments is not to bear false witness (Ex. 20:16; 23:1, 7). Paul stresses the same thing in saying we are not to lie (Eph. 4:25; Col. 3:9).

This is perfectly consistent and right:

- 1) Taking the heifer is for a sacrifice so it is the truth. He would offer it in Bethlehem.
- 2) God does not reveal every detail to everyone. People at different levels of understanding.
- 3) Sometimes the wise thing to do is to conceal some of the truth and not reveal everything.

There are times when people in various professions cannot reveal everything at once. This is true in the business world, medical world, legal world, church leadership world, political world and certainly in God's world.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #4 – Samuel goes to Bethlehem as the Lord commands.
16:4-5

Samuel was known as a powerful man of God and when the elders of the city knew he was there, they wanted to know whether or not he came in peace or not. This was more than just his attitude toward the city; it also had to do with whether or not he was bringing the peace of God.

Samuel asked the people to consecrate themselves to prepare for the sacrifice and he specifically made certain that Jesse and his sons were there. The consecration ceremony typically involved some purification ceremony which washed the body and clothing as a symbolic act of purity (Ex. 19:10). In other words, the people did not go to this worship service wearing dirty work clothes.

Samuel must have been excited because God had already told him that one of Jesse's sons would be king.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #5 – Samuel specifically looks at Jesse's sons. **16:6-10**

As soon as Jesse and his sons entered the place where Samuel was, he immediately started looking them over. Jesse's first son was Eliab. He was a good-looking, tall man (16:6-7a). Saul had been a tall, handsome man (I Sam. 9:2) so Samuel probably thought this will be an excellent replacement.

But in **verse 7** God says I have rejected him from being king because I analyze the heart. Do you see that? God looks at the heart of a person. He is not looking at external things; He is looking straight into the heart of Eliab and God says I have rejected him because he does not have the right heart.

It is interesting that God says not to look specifically at his height. The implication is His choice is not going to be a man who is real tall.

One may be strong and impressive and have all of the external qualities you could want. He may be skilled as an orator and have just the right look about him. He may impress leaders, but God looks at the heart. **External actions and look do not always demonstrate the real worth of the heart in the sight of God.**

According to **verse 8**, next came Abinadab and God says no this is not the one.

According to **verse 9**, next came Shammah and God said no that isn't him either.

According to **verse 10**, Jesse paraded seven sons before Samuel and God said no, these are not the ones I have chosen to be king.

Men's judgment of candidates and God's judgment of candidates are often two different things. Churches without a minister get stacks and stacks of resumes and yet God may say no to every one of them. God analyzes the heart. He checks the interior to see whether or not the heart is right with Him.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #6 – Samuel asks Jesse if these are all his sons. **16:11**

Jesse says well there is my youngest son, probably 15-16 years old who is out tending the sheep. He apparently wasn't real impressive to the rest of the family because they did not even invite him to this gathering.

David had spent no time in any college or special military camp. He had spent no time in royal courts hob knobbing with the political elite. He was a young man following sheep around the outskirts of Bethlehem.

I cannot help but think of the story of Cinderella. The prince takes the slipper and tries it on one woman after another all throughout his kingdom. When he comes to Cinderella's house, he tries it on all the sisters and then he says is there anyone else here. Well there is this servant girl Cinderella. He says get her and he puts the slipper on her foot and the slipper fits.

Samuel says go get him.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #7 – David appears before Samuel and is anointed King.
16:12-13

David is brought in from the field and he is described in three ways:

1) **David was ruddy**. The word means he was reddish and manly looking. He did not look like some effeminate wimp; he had the look of a young man.

2) **David had beautiful eyes**.

3) David had a handsome appearance.

God's choice of king was not based on the physical, but David was a good-looking man.

There is nothing wrong with displaying beauty. There is nothing wrong with being a good-looking man or being a good-looking woman who turns heads. Frankly, beauty can and does display the glory of God.

But God's focus was not just on the external, but also the heart.

Verse 12 says when David came in, the slipper fit. God said, anoint him, this is My choice.

According to **verse 13**, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of all of his brothers and the Spirit of God came mightily upon David.

This is the first of three anointings for David:

Anointing #1 - Anointed first at his selection by God as King. **I Sam. 16:13**

Anointing #2 - Anointed second when he becomes King of Judah. **II Sam. 2:4**

Anointing #3 - Anointed third when he becomes King of all Israel. **II Sam. 5:3**

PRACTICAL LESSONS:

- 1. If you recently suffered some setback that did not go your way, forget it and get up and get going again. There is nothing you can do about the past, but you can have the blessings of God in the future.**
- 2. If you find you are afraid of someone who could hurt you, stop being afraid by starting to trust God. God protects His people.**
- 3. Be very careful about what you say and to whom you say it.**
- 4. God always looks at the heart and not just the external action.**
- 5. God's greatest work will often be accomplished by the most unlikely people. This was true for David and it is also true for us.**