

1 Samuel: Saul Rejected, David Anointed

1 Samuel 16:1-23

Saul has been rejected as king by God, so God instructs Samuel to go to Bethlehem to anoint the next king that God has chosen. An unlikely selection, David is chosen from the field, revealing that God does not evaluate by appearance or status but by the heart. Can we learn to follow God without all the information like Samuel? Can we grow to evaluate and cultivate the heart rather than appearance? Let's take a look at some key points and questions from 1 Samuel 16.

Application

1. God tells Samuel to go to Bethlehem to find Israel's new king, one of Jesse's sons, and Samuel "did as the Lord instructed" (vs 4). What would you have asked God before obeying if he gave you that direction? Is it hard for you to submit to authority without all the information? How does that creep into your relationships with earthly authority and with God?
2. When you think of what makes a good leader, what do you picture? How would you describe that person?
How is your image or ideal of a leader different from God's?
3. When you evaluate someone, do you tend to feel superior or inferior to them? Why? What does that say about you? What does it look like practically for you to reserve judgment and wait on God to reveal someone's character?
4. How might you be trying to impress people and cultivate the outside of yourself rather than the inside—your own soul? What can you do more of to cultivate the inside?

Key Points

- Even though God's direction to Samuel does not give him all the information, Samuel humbly obeys. He has learned to master his intellect, reason, and emotion and subject those to God even when he doesn't know the outcome.

- We have to teach our children to obey without knowing all the reasons why because one day they will have to transfer their response to authority from parents to God, and God doesn't always explain himself.
- We judge and evaluate by appearance, but God looks at the heart.
- Appearance is the first thing we see, but it is wise for us to learn to suspend judgment and wait on God to show through a person's life, behavior, and how they handle themselves who they truly are..
- We should be doing the hard work to cultivate the inside of our own souls rather than spending our time, money, and energy trying to impress people with the outside.
- Throughout the events in this passage, we see that God is still King. He is the one who orchestrates it all. He is in control, and he is still going to be victorious.