

After God's Heart

Lesson 1

1 Samuel 16:1-23

January 6, 2019

A Nobody, Nobody Noticed

Introduction

Joseph Stowell in his book *Fan the Flame* writes, "Heart is used in Scripture as the most comprehensive term for the authentic person. It is the part of our being where we desire, deliberate, and decide. It has been described as 'the place of conscious and decisive spiritual activity,' 'the comprehensive term for a person as a whole; his feelings, desires, passions, thought, understanding and will,' and 'the center of a person. The place to which God turns.'

Before the story we'll study today, the reader learns how King Saul is not a man with the right heart as the King of God's chosen people, Israel. God has decided to move on from him and will find a new King, one with the right heart. The story looks at us, as if in a mirror, and asks the question, "What is the condition of your heart?"

Memory verse: "But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."—1 Samuel 16:7

Pray and read 1 Samuel 16:1-23. What questions or observations do you have about the passage?

What does the passage say?

1. For what was Samuel in mourning? What task does God give to Samuel? (1 Samuel 16:1-3)
2. What did Samuel think when he saw Jesse's seven other sons? (1 Samuel 16:6, 8-10)
3. What do people typically look at when evaluating others? What does God look at when doing the same? (1 Samuel 16:7)
4. What was David's primary responsibility for his family? (1 Samuel 16:11)
5. Who came upon David powerfully on the day he was anointed as the future King of Israel? (1 Samuel 16:13)
6. What was tormenting Saul? (1 Samuel 16:14)

7. What did David do for Saul to alleviate the torment Saul was enduring? What was the result?
(1 Samuel 16:15-23)

What does the passage mean?

1. Samuel is very discouraged about the demise of Saul, and maybe even fearful of what Saul will do when he discovers Samuel's search for a new King. How does Samuel respond despite his fear? (1 Samuel 16:4) What attribute does this display about Samuel? (Hebrews 11:1; 1 John 2:3-5)
2. David is called a man after God's heart (Acts 13:22). What do these verses say about what a person acts like when they too are after God's heart? (Psalm 24:3-4; 51:10; Matthew 6:21; Romans 12:2)
3. Many Biblical scholars believe that the spirit sent to Saul here is not a demon, but a spiritual being whose presence in Saul's life brought about torment because of his disobedience and his heart not being pleasing to God. How could Saul have avoided this torment in his life? (Genesis 4:6; Psalm 32:3-5)

4. Human beings have a strong tendency to value what is on the exterior rather than the interior. For those of us who are followers of Christ, how ought we to see other believers? (2 Corinthians 5:16-17) What about enemies we may have? (Matthew 5:43-48)

Applying the Passage

1. How would you categorize your heart before the Lord in your life right now? Is it like Saul's, tormented by personal struggles or sins? Or is it like David's, not perfect, but pleasing because of your faith in Christ? If you feel like Saul, but want to be like David, remember the Psalm 32:3-5 reference from above.

2. Do you tend to value people based on the outward appearance rather than their inner heart that God sees? How do you go about changing if you do?

3. Write out a prayer here asking the Lord to change your heart so that you also are a person, “after God’s heart.”