

The Life of David

Week 2: Spiritual Vision and Values

1 Samuel 16

Dr. Matt Cassidy ---- August 27, 2023

Well, good morning, Grace. Hey, if you want you can turn in your Bibles to 1 Samuel in the older Testament—1 Samuel 16. We're looking at the life of David together.

Some would say that the year 1934 would be a year without hope. January 1 starts like this: Nazi Germany passes a law called the Nazi Eugenics Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring. I wonder if Jews would be considered genetically diseased? They passed a law like that.

On January 15 there's an earthquake, the largest ever recorded in Nepal. Six thousand to ten thousand people were killed.

On August 2 Adolf Hitler becomes the Führer. Two weeks later they put to a national vote the idea of having a special referendum to cause him to be the supreme chancellor, the dictator, of Germany. And it passes with ninety percent of the popular vote saying he should be the dictator.

Meanwhile, Churchill is entering what is called "the wilderness years" where he is isolated and humiliated for some of his views.

Back here in the United States Bonnie and Clyde had killed two young highway patrol officers in north Texas. Baby Face Nelson and John Dillinger and the other wild boars are running wild through our country just destroying everything they touch.

It was during the Great Depression, and it was a great depression—not just economically, but the land itself. It was during the Dust Bowl. Everything everywhere you looked was dead.

In all four corners of the world there was serious unrest taking place: assassinations, coup attempts, civil wars. Even in major power countries like Russia and China it was a year of no hope. And the years that followed, nearly every single human life would be touched significantly. It would be affected.

And that same year in November a young boy walks up the aisle, repents of his sin, and surrenders his life to Christ. Later on, Billy Graham would come and preach to over 210 million

people in 185 countries. And because of the message and power of the Gospel that he brought, hundreds of thousands of men and women would have their life changed significantly for eternity.

And the point of that, somewhat, is to say that in hindsight we can look back and see how God is moving mysteriously. We don't always understand. But we can see that He works. And it's in the here and now that it seems especially difficult to trust God. Because when we're in the here and now and having to use our faith where we are, we're too close to it. We're so close to what's happening right in our midst that we lose our eternal perspective.

And when we look at 1 Samuel chapter 16 today, we're going to see God's view—what He sees—and how world history is going to pivot on the head of a pin. Human history will change. This is the day the universe changed. And the day that the universe changed is like a common day. That's the point—it just seems like any other day.

The Anointing of a New King

When we left the story last week we saw that the first king of Israel, King Saul, was the people's choice. And he loved the people more than he loved God. He put himself above Jehovah for the last time.

1 Samuel 15:35

Until the day Samuel died, he did not go to see Saul again, though Samuel mourned for him. And the Lord was grieved that He had made Saul king over Israel.

And at the end of chapter 15, giving us context, “Until the day Samuel died, he did not go and see Saul again, though Samuel mourned for him. And the Lord was grieved that He had made Saul king over Israel.”

Oh, what could have been done, what might have been done. This is a time when there's not a lot of hope in Israel. But in chapter 16 it's a new day. But it's a day like all the other days.

Samuel is overwhelmed with grief. He is living a year without hope. And hope makes us light. It gives us brightness. And without hope he feels like gravity is especially difficult on this day. He's weighted down with that. He feels like he weighs a thousand pounds. He's sunk into

his mattress and does not want to get up. He could go outside on a clear day at high noon and feel like a shadow is following him around. That's the power of that darkness that's around him.

It's because he's too close to what's happening. He doesn't have an eternal perspective. He's not backing up and seeing what God might be doing.

A few miles south of there, Saul, the king, is sitting under a pomegranate tree checking his approval ratings, seeing how the people like him. He's more afraid of being rejected by the people than of being rejected by God, that's clear. And his commitment to being popular over being obedient will be absolutely and completely destroy him slowly and painfully. That's the rest of his story.

There's a third character. He doesn't have a name. He's a shepherd boy about twelve years old. And he's waking up with his sheep, making sure they're all there. He knows them all by name. He picks up his sling, looks at a tree, aims at a branch ... no, a twig ... no, a leaf. *Bing* ... gets it. And the whole time he's singing. He's singing about the glory of God and the glory of His creation. He thinks it's going to be like any other day—a pretty quiet day. Not a care in the world. And the point is that this is the day that God invades His planet to make things right. It's a common day, it's like any other day. It could be like today if God chooses that to be true.

1 Samuel 16:1a

The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel?”

This day, chapter 16, verse 1, is the day God dries His own tears and says, *It's time to move forward*. Look what He says in verse 1: “Jehovah said to Samuel, ‘How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel?’” Have you ever heard that from the Lord? I have heard that: You have mourned sufficiently, you have mourned long enough. Now you're just dragging. It's time to stop thinking about the past and even the present. Let's move on to the future.

1 Samuel 16:1b

“Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, I **have chosen one of his sons to be king.”**

Let’s see what God is doing. God is at work. So He says, “ ‘Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.’ ” *I have picked my king.* A better translation, a perfect translation, would say this: *I have seen it to myself a king. I have made that king happen.* But the reason I’m saying “seen it” is because the idea of seeing and looking is a primary word of importance throughout the books of 1 and 2 Samuel. That’s why we have it in red letters there. It means that it’s what God sees.

Lesson One: Seeing Spiritually

But whatever you see, whatever you value, is, a lot of times, whatever you put your faith or hope in. The theme, the first lesson we’re going to learn here, is to see spiritually. That’ll be the giant contrast and the big punch today.

So, the story goes that Samuel hears this from the Lord, he goes to Bethlehem, he’s greeted on the outskirts of town. He’s bringing the heifer with him to offer as a sacrifice. Then it says that the town is trembling with fear. They send their mayor and their city council out there and they say, *Hey, you’re coming in peace, right? We heard about what you did to King Agag in that last chapter. You didn’t bring a sword, right?*

1 Samuel 16:5

Samuel replied, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

And he says, “ ‘I have come in peace. I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.’ Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.”

Consecrate—I want you to understand what that means. *Go get cleaned up, get on your church clothes. We're going to slaughter this heifer. We're going to cook this over an open fire. Then we're going to have a barbeque. Then I'm coming to give this anointing.* It's going to take time. Hours pass.

1 Samuel 16:6

When they arrived, Samuel *saw* Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord."

And then finally they're ready for this blessing of one of the members of Jesse's family. Verse 6 says, "And when they arrived, Samuel saw"—what he sees—"Eliab"—the oldest—"and thought, 'Surely Jehovah's anointed stands here before the Lord.'" *This is the one. This is what I see. This is what I value.*

1 Samuel 16:7

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."

Next verse: "But Jehovah said to Samuel, 'Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. Jehovah does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.'"

2 Chronicles 16:9

For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.

"Look"—that's what He sees. What you see, you value. What you value, you put your hope in. It's where you're putting your trust, where you're putting your faith. And it's saying here that man sees beauty and power and success. And Jehovah sees character. It says, "The

Lord's eyes are looking throughout all the world to and fro to strongly encourage those whose hearts"—their character—"is committed completely to Him."

1 Samuel 16:8

Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The Lord has not chosen this one either."

In verse 8 the next brother steps up. "Then Jesse calls Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, 'The Lord has not chosen this one either.'"

And then he brings the third boy, Shammah. Still "the Lord has not chosen him." And the rest of the brothers ... there are seven brothers, a complete number. Wow, everybody's here. And no one gets a blessing.

This is our first lesson. Samuel himself is spiritually blind. Samuel is seeing things like all mankind sees. All men see things differently than Jehovah God. Samuel hears the Lord's voice as a small child; he's been raised in a monastery since he was a young lad; he's got fifty years of nothing but ministry as a priest and a judge. And he has a worldly view? Yeah. You can bet we do. He sees as man sees. We value appearance, beauty, status, skills, success. And none of these reflect who we really are. None of these are talking about our character. All of these things are temporal. They're superficial. They can be lost in a moment. And we're spiritually blind to that. That's what we care so much about, but the spirit of the soul is what we're unable to see.

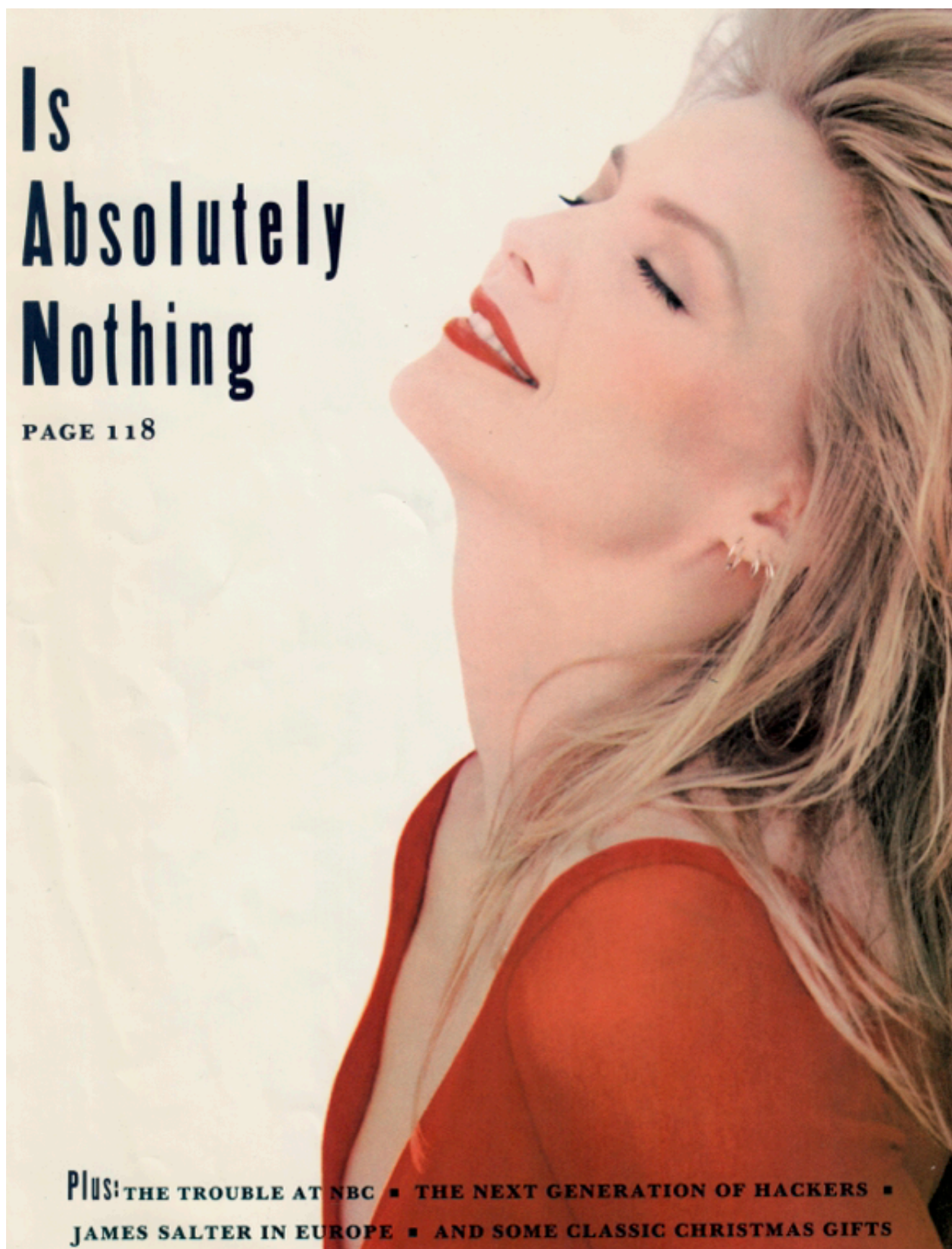
And God says, *Look, the heart, the character, is infinitely more valuable. Because it's the heart and the character that are the true self of who that person is.*

And if this is true for Samuel in those days, oh, how much more today? We are living in this culture in this place and at this time like no other time in all of human history, being absolutely inundated by this superficial value system of how man sees. I'm talking about like no other time—not a century ago for sure, but not even ten years ago, five years ago. It just keeps getting worse at an exponential rate--skin-deep values, how we keep score of what matters in our own lives and in the lives of the people with whom we interact.



Here's a great example. Here's a magazine cover that says "What Michelle Pfeiffer

Needs..." I mean, it's an open spread. It opens up. It says "Is Absolutely Nothing."



What's interesting about this particular magazine cover is that someone found an itemized list from the photo studio of all the airbrushing they had to do to make this cover. There were twenty-one itemized airbrushes to make Miss I-don't-need-anything look that good. And yeah, I know what you guys are thinking. I said "airbrush" on purpose—not "photoshop." Because that was the magazine cover that I used to explain this passage the first year I was here in 1990. And if that's true with a magazine cover (who gets magazines?), how much more now? Multiply the power of that lie and that value times a kazillion, with the internet and the omnipresent social media influence in our lives, the ever-present bombardment of think shallow, value the superficial. Let's not talk about the character.

This spiritual blindness is destroying everything it touches. It destroys us physically, trying to keep up with this sort of thing. Psychologically it's beating us down and making us judge other people. It's destroying things culturally; it's destroying the church. Everything it touches is being ruined by this vision, the way we look at life.

I was listening to an extensive interview between Mike Rowe of *Dirty Jobs* and Johnny Joey Jones, a combat veteran who lost both his legs in Afghanistan. He was mostly trying to tell his story and how that happened. But it actually was a master's class in how to be a man of character. And in a little segment talking about the power of social media being on our phones, Johnny Joey Jones says this: "We have lost our compass. We've lost our appreciation for the tangible things and the individual things because we are inundated by the intangible things. We have lost our ability to appreciate the smile." Listen—"We have lost our ability to appreciate the smile because every other body part on a person is available in a better form / photoshopped for perfection at a stroke of a thumb."

And when I was listening to that in my car I called my wife Melinda and I said, "I sure love your smile."

Sixty years ago tomorrow a preacher stood in Washington, D.C., and told the world about a dream. He said, "I have a dream. I have a dream where my four little children will grow up in a country where they are judged not by the color of their skin by on the content of their character. I have a dream."

Jehovah has a dream that we would judge ourselves and one another by the content of our character and not by beauty or success or power. Those values are not from heaven; they're from hell.

So, let me just summarize. Spiritual blindness destroys everything that is sacred to God. It destroys our own lives. It destroys the way we look at other human beings in the image of God. It destroys families. It is crushing and blowing up churches. And the reason is because when we look at other people and ourselves, we say, *Oh, well, they're tall and handsome and successful and talented, and look at all they can do. Let's make him or her king, or pastor. And we'll just hope upon hope that they have character.* It comes up last. And they don't. And look what happens. It's all around us.

Here's how I've applied this statement, this fact, in my own life. I come back to this regularly, because I think if Samuel can have these values, I have these values. When I walk around, when I think about how I evaluate other people, when I catch myself keeping score in this superficial, shallow way, I just say, *You are such a sucker, Matt.* I don't talk nicely to myself. *Look what you've done. You've taken someone in the image of God and you've valued them, you've seen them with the eyes of the superficial and the shallow, the petty, the temporal.* And I'll repent right then and there. I'll pray, *Oh, dear God. I did it again and again.*

He's working on that every day. Even in the mirror, am I asking myself if I'm becoming less vain, self-absorbed? Am I enjoying the simple pleasures of life? Do I envelope myself in the joy of the Lord and in the things that matter—character?

Well, that's the first lesson. It's the main idea of the passage. There's another part of the story we need to look at.

If you remember, Jesse brings his seven sons in. None of them are going to be anointed as king.

So, Samuel says, *You're Jesse, right?*

Yeah, I'm Jesse.

This is Bethlehem?

Yeah.

Are you the only Jesse in Bethlehem?

Yeah.

1 Samuel 16:11

**So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?”
“There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered. “He is tending the sheep.”**

So, I want you to listen. Watch this. This is the first introduction in the entire Bible to a man named David. And in Hebrew literature, especially in storytelling, the introduction is critical in knowing a person inside and out. The way the writer is writing this is so that you would know this the essence of David here. Verse 11: “So he asked Jesse, ‘Are these all the sons you have?’ ‘There is still the youngest,’ Jesse answered. ‘He is tending the sheep.’”

Lesson Two: The Forgotten Son

Let me summarize. The nation’s only priest and judge comes to your town. The whole town is afraid. And he comes to your house. And it takes all day to get ready for this anointment ceremony. And the father not one time even thinks of his youngest son. He doesn’t even come to mind. And nor does it with the brothers. This is David—he is the forgotten son. David is the forgotten son. Jesse does not say, “Oh, he’s the youngest.” Look at some other translations. The word in Hebrew is pejorative. It’s a dig. It would be like you and I saying, “Well, he’s the runt. And he’s tending sheep, so we didn’t even tell him.” That’s what the father is communicating here.

And this right here is the first description of King David. This is what you must understand to know this man for the rest of his life—that his family has forgotten him all day. And not only that, his father refers to him as the runt.

Did you know that his name, David, will not be used in this whole storyline in this introduction—not by anyone in it? And Jesse doesn’t say, “Oops, I forgot. I’ll go get him.” Oh, no. His response is “Yeah ... I’ve got one more—he’s the runt. And he’s doing chores.”

It’s Samuel who says, “Will you go get him? Nobody sits until he gets here.”

Here’s what you need to know about the way this was written so that we can understand the rest of his storyline. This family life for David cuts him deeply. And it will affect the rest of his life. David will never say to a living person that he loves them. He’ll say he loves Jonathan at

his funeral. The deepest injuries, the most soul-twisting experiences that David has are with his own children, because he doesn't know how to be a husband and he's had no experience with being a father except the injuries that his father caused him. And this part of the storyline calls us as readers to cry out, *David, deal with this evil truth, that you are not loved by the God-given father and family that was to teach you and show you what unconditional love is. Face this. David, do not run from this giant like you didn't run from the other one.*

This passage right here is one of the reasons that at Grace Covenant Church, our value and purpose is that we all become like Christ in all of life—in all of life. Because David is going to do what so many believers do. He's going to compartmentalize his faith. He's going to say, *Dear God, I'm going to trust You, the Lord of the universe of the armies, in these battles. I'm going to trust You to be a great leader. I'm going to trust You and put my faith in You. I'm going to depend upon You in acquisition of land. But in this area over here about these injuries that are caused to me and have defined me—they're too painful and maybe they'll just go away.* And so, he just doesn't. And it costs him so much to leave God out of the most important part of who he is. He will bury so many of his own children.

When I was taking one of my seminary classes in graduate school in the counseling division, we were at a section called "Family Therapy." And it was talking about the power of family and how it deeply affects the psyche of each individual, and how family therapy came about—because it was so necessary to cure the whole person. And the more the professor went through all the evidence, the more my fantasy that God's forgiveness and grace was just going to erase my past began to fade. And after the second lecture people left and I put my head down. And I said, in light of the kinds of things I experienced growing up in my family of origin, *Oh, dear God, I've got bills to pay, and I'm going to have to pay.*

And so, I prayed this prayer: "Please, dear God, not all at once! Not all at once. So, if You won't do it all at once, could You just give me the courage to handle it at a rate that I can take this revelation about how this has influenced me and changed me? And then, could You give me the wisdom to know how it's finding itself in my life with other people—the way I view myself and how I view You as a father? Could You give me courage and wisdom? And did I tell You, could You not do it all at once?"

You can't compartmentalize. And here at Grace we're so committed to becoming like Christ in all of life, we provide opportunities in our men's ministry. The first year of the Quest

curriculum talks about home of origin and how to bring that into the lordship of Jesus Christ. In the women's ministry, the Cultivate discipleship ministry has a lot of focus on courage.

But in this application, when you look at the fullness of David, be warned. You need to become like Christ in all of life. And when you pray the prayer that I was just mentioning, and you allow the Lord into that, you can find that if He's Lord of all, He'll be Lord of your past. And when you go to Him, He has a name. His name is Jehovah Rapha, the God who heals. He's waiting for you to bring him the thing you're afraid of. And He can heal you and make you well.

It's a key point in the introduction to David. We need to see the way God sees, looking at character. I tell you, the deepest wounds are not to be hidden and run from; they are to be brought to the throne of God.

Third Lesson: Building Character Hurts

The third thing we learn in this passage is that for God's favorites, character building is painful. Character hurts.

1 Samuel 16:12-13

So he sent for him and had him brought in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. Then the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one." ¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lords came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.

Watch what happens when David is found. Verse 12: "So he sent for him"—and look how there's no name there—"So he sent for him and had him brought in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. Then the Lord said, 'Rise and anoint him; this is the one.' So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel went back to Ramah."

The Spirit of the Lord came upon him powerfully. And now David's character will be powerfully forged by the very spirit of Jehovah. And what does the Spirit of Jehovah do with

David? He sends him into critical, dangerous, difficult situations—to forge his character. The next thing that happens in David’s life is that he is sent (it doesn’t matter if he has a choice) to serve crazy King Saul. And it will be his job to pacify his mood swings. And then David will fight a giant, because no one else will. And then he will be hunted, he’ll be betrayed. He’ll live a life of being sifted.

And if you look throughout the Bible—just read through—it’s as though virtually every time the Spirit of the Lord comes upon someone in a mighty way, then the next scene is persecution, jail time, hardship, wilderness, a war they have to become heroic in. And might I remind you that Jesus, the Christ, at the beginning of His ministry is baptized by John the Baptist. “... and the Spirit of the Lord comes upon Him.” And God himself, the Father, says, “This is my Son in whom I am well pleased.” *Therefore, off to the wilderness, where you will be sifted.* It’s a pattern.

And it’s because character—the things that God cares about—He looks upon and values the heart—that grows in the wilderness. It blossoms in the desert. It thrives during hardship. It’s just the way, I think, we’re made, maybe even before the fall.

There’s a nice book that’s been recently written by Michael Easter called *The Comfort Crisis*. And to sum it all up, it says that if you do hard things, the rest of life is pretty easy. But he has some insight here. He says we are living progressively sheltered, sterile, temperature-controlled, overfed, underchallenged, safety-netted lives. Most people today rarely, if ever, step out of their comfort zones. New research shows that depression, anxiety, feeling like you don’t belong, are all linked to people never being tested.

Character is doing the right thing and then not caring about your own personal happiness. But, ironically—it’s paradoxical—but that’s when you become happy. I mean, I’m not making this up—these are the words of Jesus. In His Beatitudes, He says, “Blessed are those” (blessed means happy)—Happy are those who hunger and thirst”—not for happiness—but “for righteousness.” If you’re a person of character and you hunger and thirst for righteousness, then you’re happy. If you pursue happiness, you don’t get happiness. If you pursue righteousness, you get righteousness. That’s how it works.

But know this: suffering doesn’t make a person a person of character. It doesn’t give you character. Suffering and difficulties and hardships are like the proverb that says that the same sun that melts the wax hardens the clay. And that’s the case in the storyline here. You’re going to see

that the same kind of difficulties Saul has to endure are going to harden his heart and make him crazy to get away from God and to up his pride; while David is experiencing difficulties and hardships and it will cause him to soften like wax and become humbler, more joyful, more caring and sweet. Because suffering surfaces our motives. It comes to our awareness, quite frankly, that we're not first and foremost seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; we're seeking something else. And that something else we might be losing, it might be slipping away from us—our beauty, our power, our influence, our wealth. And we're clinging to it in some way and it just shows us that we're living in our first point—a superficial viewing and valuing the simple life.

So, suffering brings that to our mind. We're forged by the Spirit of God in bringing difficulties in our lives, and it causes us to break these spiritual blinders off. Now we're no longer blind spiritually, I hope—if it worked—if you allow it to. And then you can confess. You can have a transparent prayer time when you say, "Lord, I have put my identity in things that do not matter. I see things the way the world sees things instead of the way You see things. And I want You to know, not only that, but I have made the temporal more important than the eternal. And when I say that, I mean You: I have made You second and these other things first. And I see that now. I will hunger and thirst for righteousness. That's my goal."

So, let me just conclude by saying this. This story is the hinge of history. From this passage on the focus will be on David. He won't be king until 2 Samuel. It'll be all about David. So, this is the pin, this is the hinge, of all of history. And what we're to learn from this is this is during a year of no hope. And yet God was working.

And maybe this year for you is that year of no hope, where it seems like the world has gone insane and we're inundated with constant messages to be afraid or angry. And we often submit to those messages. There seems to be little or no place for truth. And this passage comes to us and reminds us that God is up to something. Don't make conclusions in our near-sightedness. Because the Lord is seeking in all the earth, to and fro, and He is looking to heartily strengthen the man or the woman who is totally dedicated to Him. He's going to use common moments and common people. He's going to use that which the spiritually blind cast away and skip over and ignore. Those are the people He uses.

Robert Alter is a Hebrew scholar, particularly in the art of Old Testament narratives. He absolutely revolutionized our way of understanding. Listen to what he says about the storyline

and who God chooses to use. He said, “David is kind of a male Cinderella left to domestic chores instead of being invited to the party. He’s been excluded from consideration. But in the tending of the flock to which he has been relegated, it turns out that those are the exact skills that he’ll need in his battle with Goliath and to lead God’s people. David’s story is also heightened and stylized, playing itself out in the theme of the reversal of the prejudice promoting the older sons that dominated the Book of Genesis and the culture at that time. Instead of the older brother, it’s the younger brother, even after the seven. David is the eighth, and therefore, he’s not even there at all.”

Have I said in the introduction to the life of David his name is never spoken? God loves to use the people who are skipped over, who are ignored, who are victims of the shallow ways that we see the world. When I was meditating on this passage this week, I went back a few decades to when I was in high school. I used to listen to this song by Janis Ian, and she captures the passion of being one of the victims, one of the not-so-pretty, the not-so-poised, the not-so-popular. The name of the song is “At Seventeen.” I used to get choked up every time I heard it. Let me see if I can do that today without doing that. She sings:

I learned the truth at seventeen
That love was meant for beauty queens
And high school girls with clear skinned smiles
Who married young and then retired.
The valentines I never knew
The Friday night charades of youth
Were spent on one more beautiful
At seventeen I learned the truth.
And those of us with ravaged faces
Lacking in the social graces
Desperately remained at home
Inventing lovers on the phone
Who called to say, “Come dance with me.”

To those of us who know the pain
Of valentines that never came,
And those whose names were never called
When choosing sides for basketball.

Janis Ian says, *Yeah, it’s a shared pain*. But this passage comes to us and says that if you could put your ear on the Bible and hear the rhythm of the heartbeat of God, you would know

this: that this is just the type of person that Jehovah God loves to use—the ones who are forgotten, who don't get the valentines and don't get picked. Because He does not see as man sees. He doesn't care about our traditions and values of the firstborn or the most beautiful. He sees character. He almost makes a point, choosing the younger instead of the older. It's Abel instead of Cain, Isaac instead of Ishmael, and Jacob instead of Esau and Moses instead of Aaron. He's looking for the women who have a heart after him who are unwanted and they're old and they're barren. So, He chooses Sarah over Hagar and Leah over Rachel. And this whole story—1 Samuel starts with an older barren woman named Hannah whose soul is beaten down because she learned at seventeen that she was not going to count. But she counts in Jehovah's eyes. Jehovah loves to use the girl who no one wants. Jehovah will choose to use the son that is forgotten.

It is through the weak and the foolish that God exalts His glory. It makes for a better God story, doesn't it? It does. And so, this story about this nameless twelve-year-old shepherd boy, could be our story too—this Cinderella man. And this story ends as it pivots to chapter 17 when all the troops are wrestling and getting ready for a war with the Philistines. And you can almost hear God himself say, *Hey, Cinderella, your coach awaits.* We serve a great God.

Would you join me in a word of prayer?

Lord, we are cut to the quick if Samuel, who has never lived outside of a monastery, with all these years of experience, is still contaminated by the world's system and he looks at people that way, then how much more us? So, Lord, I would ask that You would bring to mind the thoughts and the values that we have and what we see and how we evaluate; maybe even how much it's destroying our own self and other people around us, that we don't look at them as souls in the very likeness of Your image and treat them that way. Help us to not be spiritually blind.

Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom or the strong man in his strength; let not the rich man boast in his wealth. But let the one who boasts, boast in this: that they know You and they love You.

And Lord, I love how Your Son is described prophetically by Isaiah. You are so committed to other values that Isaiah says that when the Christ comes "He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him, and nothing in His appearance that we would desire Him."

Lord, we are grateful for the clarity that You've made in this lesson today. I'd ask that we would be a church that is committed to following what You see and what You value, and that we would show that in our love and affection for one another and to those outside the church. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.