

# David

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Date: 02 September 1990

Preacher: Harry Robinson

[ 0 : 00 ] The passage that we're looking at this morning is 1 Samuel, chapter 16, and it's found in your pew Bible, if you care to follow there, on page 253.

We're starting a series which will run through the whole of September, with the exception of next Sunday when we're having a special sermon for Count Me In Sunday, but for the whole of September on the subject of David.

And the verse that I want you to look at is that which Mark has read for us in the lesson today, and which is so much to the point, from 1 Samuel, chapter 16.

Do not look upon his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees.

Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. The topic for today's sermon is the future king, that David is to be the future king.

[ 1 : 13 ] And the story of how Samuel went to Bethlehem, and there he gathered the elders, and he gathered Jesse and his family, and they had a sacrifice to the Lord.

But all this was, in a sense, a cover-up, because the Lord had sent Samuel to anoint the future king from among the sons of Jesse.

And so you can see them gathered around this feast and this sacrifice and this religious celebration, and the people of Bethlehem watching. And Samuel calls to Jesse and says that his sons are to be brought in so that he may see which one is the one who is to be anointed king.

And so Samuel, at Bethlehem, has Eliab, the eldest son, brought before him.

And when Samuel sees him, he says, surely the Lord's anointed. And the Lord says, no. And then Abinadab, the next brother, is brought.

[ 2 : 27 ] And the Lord says, no. And Shema, the next brother, is brought. And the Lord says, no. And four other sons are brought. And the Lord says, no.

You see, the one whom they all thought were most likely to be the one whom God would appoint, they were utterly mistaken about. The one his father thought, the one the brothers thought, the one the community thought.

But the Lord didn't think so. The Lord had someone else in mind. And the Lord explains this to Samuel by saying, the Lord sees not as men see.

Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. And so he asked Jesse if there isn't another son.

And Jesse says, there is one more. He's the youngest. And he's out looking after the sheep. And Samuel says, send for him.

[ 3 : 33 ] So they all wait. And they wait until David is brought in from looking after the sheep. And they think about the whole situation.

Well, David was the one whom God had appointed. The one whom God had chosen. God the Lord was, by our contemporary standards, very guilty of what we would call unfair employment practices. Everybody whom we would have thought was the suitable person for the job, the logical person for the job, the rightful person for the job, the Lord chose somebody else.

And if you have the sense of the Lord having chosen you, those are your qualifications too. Nobody else sees eye to eye.

And you probably don't understand yourself why the Lord would choose you. But the Lord exercises his sovereign choice in choosing you to belong to him.

[ 4 : 45 ] He has exercised his choice of you as the Lord exercised his choice of David. And then when you stop, think about it, you think of the wonderful schooling that David had been given.

Not by his father and his brothers, for whom he was just the eighth in a row of sons, and perhaps countless daughters as well. But the Lord had prepared him.

And he had prepared him by teaching him in the loneliness of looking after the sheep to play the harp. And he was very skilled in playing the harp.

Nobody had taught him how to do it, except the long days, all by himself, alone and out with the sheep. He became very skilled in extracting music out of his guitar, his lyre.

Not only that, but he had with him, and if you've ever been there in Israel, a great abundance of stones. And he learned to use a slingshot.

[ 5 : 53 ] And he learned with, he developed such skill at it, as you will know, stood him in very good stead later on in life. So you see a boy with endless hours learning to play the harp, learning to use the sling, and then you find out that he is a great soldier.

And you know that because later on in life, they're gathered around David, and I'd like to do, I'd like you to do this perhaps sometime, the great, what is called in the Bible, the mighty men of David. Great men from his generation rallied around such a leader. Politically in this country, we need a great leader, a man who can attract the best men to be the mighty men who stand with him in giving leadership to our country.

Who is that one to be? Well, David was a soldier who gathered mighty men around him. And David was the one who looked up at the night sky and asked the ultimate human question.

When I look at the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast established, what is man that thou art mindful of him and the son of man that thou dost care for him?

[ 7 : 23 ] And that is the question that is right at the heart of every human being. Who am I that God should be mindful of me?

Who is that person that God should be mindful of him or her? Who is the son of man that thou dost care for him? Why has God done that?

Why did Rachel tell us this morning that which contradicts all the experience and all the training of our culture and our society? Because we say, you are nobody.

But the scriptures come along and say, you are created in the likeness of God. And so it's a wonderful thing on this Lord's day to turn from our society which counts humanity as almost meaningless, which is totally absorbed with the outward appearance and doesn't know anything about the hearts of people.

I have been in an agony all week as I'm sure most of you had watching and watching and watching and reading the newspaper and looking at the television and all of them concentrating on the outward appearance and hoping that somehow we could penetrate through what we see with our eyes to know what's going on where we can't see, to know what's going on in the hearts of men, to be forced to look at our own hearts and see what is going on there, to look at the loyalties accumulated during a lifetime and to see those loyalties crumble and you don't know what to do with them or where to turn because we look on the outside and we don't have that kind of understanding.

[ 9 : 12 ] And the society in which this event took place was a society which was crumbling under the leadership of Saul. He didn't understand.

He himself was in deep depression. He didn't know how to lead his men in battle. He didn't know how to lead his men in their relationship to the Lord. The whole country was falling apart because of the leadership of Saul.

And Samuel was told, go out and anoint a king. So long before anybody in the country knew about it, the Lord had already begun to create the answer which was to be the answer for that generation and which was to be a sign for us of the answer for all the ages including our own.

That God has appointed a Messiah, an anointed one, a Christ. And one day he will be recognized and every tongue confess and every knee bow to acknowledge him as Lord.

But we don't see that now. We see the things that discourage and dishearten and defeat us as a people because our eyes are on the wrong thing.

[ 10 : 25 ] And what a glorious privilege it is for you and me this morning that we have perhaps by some, for some motivation that we don't even understand.

Come to hear the word of God. Come to read the Psalms of David because everybody understands David. I am often asked to take the funeral of people who have spent a long time outside of the

church and I say what scripture would you like read?

And they often are dumbfounded and don't know what to answer to that. And I said what about the Lord is my shepherd? Ah yes, that's it.

And who spoke those words? But David? And would you like to sing a psalm? They said yes, there's one I remember which always meant a lot to me.

Under the hills around do I lift up my longing eyes. That was written by David. And then they, people when they gather to worship they like nothing better than to sing praise my soul the king of heaven.

[ 11 : 38 ] And that was written by David. David. You see, David somehow understood. David is a man that every people of every nation on the whole of the earth can understand and they can relate to him.

I would say almost the most pagan people in our society can relate to the writer of the Lord's, of the shepherd's song. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

In the hearts of almost all men, that is there. And that comes from the heart of David. And the Lord knew that that was in the heart of David.

And the Lord drew out of David all these wonderful expressions of his heart that people could understand who the Lord was through the heart of a man like David as he opened his heart in the Psalms to all of us.

It's wonderful. When I was young, which was a long time ago, there was a man came to talk to our Bible class in the parish I belonged to back in Toronto called St. John's.

[ 12 : 53 ] And his name was Dr. Overton Stevens. And he was a wonderful man because he could open his heart to people. He could tell you what went on in his heart.

And when he shared that, he just, it was so thrilling. He described his conversion how as a successful, very busy, young, general practitioner making lots of money, he and his wife went off to New York for a sort of binge weekend.

And just before he left, somebody gave him an address and said, look up my friend while you're there. So they had some time to spare, Overton Stevens says, and they went in to visit this fellow at his office.

And the fellow talked to him and made good friends with him and said, won't you come around to our house tonight? He said, well, as a matter of fact, we planned to go to the theater.

We were going to do this. We were going to do that. Well, do come. And Overton Stevens felt the trap closing in upon him and described it very graphically. And I tell you this because it meant a lot to me at the time.

[ 14 : 01 ] this successful young doctor telling of how he got invited to come to the house. Then he found out what was happening at the house. There was a Bible study and he hadn't come to New York for a Bible study.

That wasn't why he was there. And then right there in the office door as they left, the man said, should we pray before you go? And Overton Stevens wanted to drop right through the floor.

He didn't like that either. And he felt he'd really been trapped and had to go to that meeting that night with these people because of his friends back in Toronto.

He felt this kind of obligation. And it was at that meeting that in the course of the evening everybody prayed and it came his turn to pray. All this happened to him in a day and he just agonized with all this because he didn't know what to do with it.

But that was the point of his conversion to faith in Jesus Christ. And he went on and lived out his life as a medical practitioner and constantly helped people.

[ 15 : 06 ] He says, I've broken up more healing meetings than anybody else I know because as a medical practitioner he was very sensitive to what the practical issues were.

But he was very honest and always spoke from the heart. And when he contracted cancer, he opened up all that to everybody too so that we could share that with him. He opened up his heart to us.

And how we need to be able to open up our hearts to one another. How we need to be able. You see, because David in the whole of 150 Psalms you can very rarely if anywhere find any direct reference to him.

He's talking about the Lord. His focus is entirely on the Lord and his heart reflects the Lord so that when you see into his heart in the Psalms what you see there is the reflection of the God whom he worships and there it is.

And that's the way our lives need to be like David. You see, we've been the victims all this week of seeing on the outside. I'd love to see the heart of a Mohawk warrior up on a big screen.

[16:16] I'd love to see the heart of the Mohawk people. I'd love to see the heart of a Canadian soldier who stands on duty there. I'd love to see the hearts of those that are negotiating but we can't.

All we can see is the outward appearance and the whole thing is outward appearance. And God wants to raise up a people who know each other from the heart.

And that's why when we begin this service we say, Almighty God unto whom all hearts are open, you're not deceived by the outward appearance.

that doesn't count for anything with you. When the Lord looks at this congregation he doesn't see this fine, distinguished, educated, sophisticated people that I see row on row.

But I won't go into what he does see. But he does. And that's what really the joy of being here is. Is that the Lord looks on the heart.

[17:18] So here you can do business with the Lord who knows your heart. There was an amazing conference recorded in the Globe and Mail on Friday morning that was run by Elie Weissel in Stockholm and it was mostly Nobel Prize winners.

And they gathered leaders and writers to say, why does man hate? And they spent this whole conference. Some of the best writers in the world, the Nobel Prize winning writers including political leaders and people from Tiananmen Square and say, where does hate come from?

And why is it so prevalent? And that was a conference which was designed to see into the hearts of people. The article says they were no further along at the end of the conference than they were at the beginning to try and understand the hearts of people.

It's very difficult. And you see, the thing about David was that God could see his heart. And the reason people, all sorts of people relate to David is because he opens his heart to us.

And we somehow find in that some awareness of our own hearts. But even more we find the awareness of the heart of God.

[18:45] And it was this man whom God chose and Samuel anointed to be king. One last question. How do we move from David to the Lord Jesus?

Because if David was such a supreme, such a great man in the eyes of God, he's only a pale reflection of the one whose heart is revealed to us on the cross, the person of Jesus Christ.

You get that funny, there's a funny statement, you know. I mean, it's funny in a way, but it's typical of the Old Testament. And I read it this week from 1 Kings 15, and it talked about King Abijah and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God as the heart of David his father.

Nevertheless, for David's sake, the Lord his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, setting up his son after him, and established Jerusalem because David did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life.

And then in brackets, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite, end of brackets. Most of us can identify with David because he failed.

[20:17] And we fail, and his heart and our hearts draw closer when we accept our failure. You see, the difference between Jesus and David is in the point of his trial.

David, or Jesus obeyed, even unto death, death on a cross. And so you see in David, in a sense, the heart of God reflected, and you see in Jesus the heart of God perfected in the death of Christ on the cross.

This was the one who was to be king, and God has already begun the work of redemption in our midst, hidden though it may be. And God will work out that purpose through the one whom he has chosen.

And that purpose will be a purpose which touches your heart and mine. And that's why we've come to this service this morning, and why each of you has been invited to do what that first collect asked us to do.

to come and kneel before the Lord and say, Almighty God unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, from whom no secrets are hid.

[21:44] That we might deal heart to heart with God as he has made himself known to us in Jesus Christ.

Christ. And as we remember Christ's death, his body broken and his blood shed on the cross. It's a great moment, isn't it?

A moment which is so filled, in a week which is so filled with outward appearances, which fill us with fear and apprehension. But at this moment, all the outward appearances are to be taken out of our minds, and we open our hearts collectively to the Lord who deals with us out of love and mercy and grace.  
Amen.