

I and II Samuel

David, The Anointed

I Samuel 16

I invite you all if you would stand for the reading of God's Word.

Stephen said, we're studying the book of First Samuel. You know that. We've been doing that for a few weeks back. All land. We come now to the life of David, but I'm going to do one more bit of review because it's to a long book. And we hit chapters 8, 12 and 15 a little bit, even if we focus on chapter 16 and read it to you now.

For those of you who like to know what's coming, I'm going to focus on verse one. Samuel grieving over Saul's kingship, ruined and wrecked even as he foretold, and explained how we get to that point. And then about a midpoint of the sermon, we'll get back to chapter 16, verse two. And following this is God's Word the Lord said to Samuel, how long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehem. Eat. For I have provided for myself a king among his sons. And Samuel said, how? How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me. And the Lord said, take a heifer with you, and say, I have come to sacrifice to the Lord, and invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me him whom I declare to you. Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, do you come peaceably? He said, peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice. When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said to Samuel, do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, for I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as a man sees. Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. And Jesse called upon Adam and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, neither has the Lord chosen this one. Then Jesse made Shammah pass by, and he said, neither has the Lord chosen this one. And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, the Lord has not chosen these. Then Samuel said to Jesse, are all your sons here? And he said, That is Jesse, said the remains, yet the youngest. But behold, he is keeping the sheep. And Samuel said to Jesse, send and give him, for we will not sit down till he comes here. I think we're supposed to assume that ours passed. And then he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. And the Lord said, arise, anoint him, for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. In the spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah. Now the spirit of the Lord departed from soul, and a harmful spirit from the Lord tormented him. And

Saul servant said to him, behold, now a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our Lord now command your servants who are before you, to seek out a man who is skillful in playing the lyre.

And when the harmful spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well. So Saul said to his servants, provide for me a man who can play well, and bring him to me. One of the young men answered, behold, I have seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehem night, who was skillful in playing a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence. And the Lord is with him thus far.

The reading of God's Word. Let's pray together.

Heavenly father, I pray that you give us right meditation. There's so very much in your word. We could speak of it surely for hours. I pray that we would hear what you have for us, at least in part. By your grace. We pray in Jesus name.

Amen.

And you may be seated. I think we would all agree that everyone makes mistakes and they can be minor or major. I think of World War Two, one of the greatest generals of World War two. General Patton, who prayed, played a crucial role in the stopping of the Nazis and the Italians in World War Two. He commanded a tank brigade that had great effect in Northern Africa and then in the conquest of Sicily and opening up the path through Italy, back into Europe. He was a man who pushed hard and expected others to work hard too, and as his well known, he did not have much tolerance for people who didn't work as hard as he did. Sad, tragic occasion really. He came upon a man, a soldier, who was shell shocked and simply could not abide the idea that this man was healthy and uninjured and yet somehow could not go to war. And he berated him and cursed him and slapped him. And enough people saw that Patton was ordered to apologize, which he found all but impossible to do, was relieved of his command for a number of months. Eventually, with great difficulty, he humbled himself enough to be reinstated and played a huge role in the defeat of the Nazis, especially in the battle of the bulge, and this illustrates the point that everybody makes mistakes, and what distinguishes us is what we do next. Do we repent? Do we harden ourselves? Do we turn around, turn to the Lord? And of course, the sad truth is that Saul made a number of mistakes and found himself unable to repent of them. The crucial moment is in first Samuel chapter 15, which we heard about a few weeks ago from Pastor Alexander in first Samuel 15, the Lord, through Samuel the prophet, confronts Saul for his inability or refusal to obey God and to do things his own way, to keep some plunder for himself.

And when the moment came when he could repent, he chose not to repent, but actually instead to say, David, let's just walked out together. So people think that you're on my side and I'm on God's side and all is well, could not bring himself to repent. And so the kingdom was

taken from him. Now Samuel grieved over this. Samuel grieved over it for a long time. And finally God said to Samuel, how long will you grieve over soul, since I have rejected him from being king? Fill your horn. It's time to anoint a son of Jesse. The Bethlehem Light. Now, of course, the question is exactly how do we come to this spot? The spot when the person who was first chosen by God, Saul, is reject, did.

And now it's time to get an entirely different king, not Saul's son Jonathan. Old Jonathan was a righteous man. God has resolved to start over. And of course it warns us. It teaches us what we do and what we don't do. When we make a mistake, we don't despair over past errors. We repent over past errors. Restoration is always possible. We don't wallow. Maybe even Samuel had fallen into a kind of paralysis because he couldn't make sense of what God was doing in allowing Saul to be king, so we can despair over past errors. I'm just going to name the fact it's not really in this text name. The fact that we can also react to past errors. One thing we do and make a mistake is to say, I'll never make that mistake again, and we go in the opposite direction.

But if you go the opposite direction, you're still letting the past dictate your present. You don't want to simply go the opposite direction. Then you may just run from one mistake to another. Far better to seek God's will and God's ways, and to admit that we make mistakes. And in a crisis, in a hard moment, it's almost impossible to everything, right?

We don't have enough information repressed. We got to do something now. We make mistakes and we take them to the Lord in repentance. So the Lord says to Samuel, how long will you grieve? It is time to move on. Why have they come to this place? What was the failure of leadership? Let me ask you if you would turn to I Samuel 8 for a moment. I'll just remind you that, long ago, in the beginning, when God led his people out of Egypt, his original plan was to make them a holy nation, to give them this laws, to establish a form of government, to take them into the promised land, and to not have a king over them. He wanted himself to be king. The theme this year in our church is seek first the kingdom and seek first the King. God set up Israel so they would seek him first. No king. There were priests who offered sacrifices and taught. There were prophets who brought rebukes. There were elders who give wisdom in the city gates. There was not to be a human king.

God was to reign over them. That's found in judges eight as well as first Samuel chapter eight. Now God knew his people. He knew the fear, always knows the future. He knows what's coming. And so he said, I know that one day you will seek a king. You will not want me to be a king over you. And you will say, this is from Deuteronomy 17. Now let us set a king over us like all the nations around us. God said, but when people say that, it's it is a rejection of me. Samuel says that in first Samuel eight and 12, but if you're going to do it, then at least do it the right way. Appoint over you the King the Lord chooses. He must be from among your own brothers. Do not place a foreigner over you. Rather a brother Israelite. The king must not acquire a great

number of horses for himself, or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, and must not pile up silver and gold and riches, or multiply. Wives, you are not to go that way again. Well, it was a period of time when Israel did start to reject God's way, and the climax of that is actually described right before the Book of Samuel.

And that's in Judges chapters - the last chapter, 17,18, 19, 20 and 21. As you may remember, it says there was no king in the land, and everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Now, of course, today to do what's right in your own eyes is considered the epitome of wisdom. Look within. See what you think is right and just do it and follow the genius. Follow your heart within and of course, in God's Word, following your own inclinations, doing what is right in your own eyes is usually a recipe for disaster. Just speaking pastorally, when people say, you know my heart is telling me this or that, I've learned to cringe because they're likely going to say something that's entirely contrary to the Bible when somebody says, now I was reading the Bible, and then I think, good, here comes something good.

Most likely people misread the Bible, of course, but when people say, I want to do what God has laid in my heart, or what I feel in my heart, or what I think is right in my own eyes, then it's often, often destructive. We need to be guided by God's wisdom, not by what we think or feel to be right the moment people say, this isn't making me happy anymore, I'm just going to stop without regard for promises and vows and people depending upon us.

Well, there was no king in the land and everyone did what was right in his own eyes. They did not serve the king. They did not have a king to reign them in. And so they said, appoint a king over us. This is reacting from one error to another. We aren't following God as king. So give us a king like the nations.

And they got a king like the nations. Saul was tall, tall, dark, handsome, impressive, bold, humble, occasionally, and also intent on wealth, intent on doing things his own way, intent on a form of loyalty to whatever he said that was destructive, interested, willing even to kill people whom he regarded as a threat. That's the way the nation's kings behave.

They got what they asked for tragically talented, grasping, autocratic, warlike, keeping plunder for himself. He was a king like all the nations. So let me just warn you, if I may be careful about what you seek. I do have our next pastor in view this past. This passage teaches us to be wary of leaders who are tall, dark, and handsome, just like everybody else.

I know there's Billy Ball, and there there's various committee members here. They're not seeking a leader like all the nations seek. They're looking for a godly pastor. Praise the Lord. We always have to remember to not look at things through a worldly set of eyes. Tall, dark, handsome, beautiful voice. Whatever it is, people want nothing against a beautiful voice. I think it's being tall, dark and handsome. The pastor said David was so handsome. As one person said,

you got to be really handsome for handsomeness to get into the Word of God eternally. He must have been some dude to look at. So it's not wrong to be handsome. It's not wrong to be large and strong. But we need more than that. Both David and Saul were impressive, physically speaking, but only one of them had the Spirit of God. Saul rejected God. God rejected Saul, and yet he let him stay in power for a while until the right leader should come along. So long that Saul was grieving. How long is this going to last? That's one of the cries of God's people. It's in the Psalms. How long? How long, O Lord, will you not give us what we seek? People are single, seeking marriage. People who are married, seeking children. How long, Lord, when are you going to give me what I desire? And the answer is his timing is not ours. Now, before Samuel leaves, the people, before he finally utterly reject Saul in chapter 12, he tells them what a good leader does. He says, standing before them as an old man. It says. He declares he's old and gray, and he recounts his leadership. He says, first of all, I was godly, I stole nothing, I defrauded no one, I oppressed no one. Is that right? He says. And they say, that's right. You oppress no one. You stole nothing. And that's a great testimony to be able to give a man. I say it that that's a testimony that the last 65 years of pastors, Pastors Barker and Reeder could give, I thought, stolen. I've not defrauded anybody like to rise up against me and praise God could not be done. So number one, godly leadership. Number two, Samuel says, it's not really about me. God led you out of Egypt. God led you into the promised Land. Turn to the Lord. Don't forget the Lord. Live remembering him in the Promised Land. Fear the Lord, obey him. And if you rebel, which they had done the hand, the Lord will be against you. Chapter 12, verses 14 and 15. But repent, God will be gracious. So says chapter 12. He tells him, you've done evil. Repent. Serve God, not idols.

If you repent, return to him. He'll return to you. If we are faithless, Paul says, God will be faithful for he cannot deny himself. God will receive us if we come back. Consider he finally says, what great things God has done for you. That's Samuel's testimony. I've been faithful. But don't look at me. Look at what God has done. His faithfulness. Now, just as a quick thought.

The first King of Israel, the one God appointed, failed. And if that's the case, then we cannot be shocked at failure for God to preserve this church from failure. Big public failures to a remarkable degree. We're thankful for that. But if a failure occurs, if disaster occurs. Identify the sources. Repent of your sins, turn to Christ and he will remain faithful to you and bring you back.

That's what first Samuel chapter eight and 12 and 15 are saying to us. Well, those lessons are in hand. Samuel has given them to the people, and now he starts to choose his next king. Chapter 16, verse one. If I may read it again, the Lord said to Samuel, how long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel?

He was a king like the nation. So fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesse. The Bethlehem might. It is possible to mourn too long to be paralyzed by mourning. God says, get up and go. I still have a plan for you. Samuel objects a little bit in verse two. He says, well, listen, if I go and anoint a new king, you know Saul is going to kill me.

And God does not say, oh, no, he won't kill you. So we kill him. He's that kind of a king. He says, alright, I'm going to give you something the Bible never says. You have to say everything. You know. You have to tell the truth, but you don't have to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

According to Scripture, God says, I'll tell you what. take a sacrifice with you. And if any questions arise, say, I'm offering a sacrifice. And by the way, you do have to offer a sacrifice because we tell the truth. So he goes, taking a sacrifice, taking a sacrifice with him and not volunteering is also going forward to choose the next king, as verse three says, and invite Jesse the sacrifice.

And I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me him whom I declare. And he did it the way he went. And the people came out trembling, because he's a prophet, because they knew they had committed sins, they came out trembling and said, you come in peace. He said, I come in peace. I come to make a sacrifice.

And he looked for a king. Now the text tells us what verse are we in? Go down a few verses on our screen. I know it's going to happen a little bit more, a little bit more. There we go. I've come in peace. There we go. And now in verse six, it says, he looked on Eliab and thought, this is the man now, apparently because David is.

Let me just to set up the family here for a second. David by this point is probably 19 years old. I say he's 19 years old, because in the next chapter, the brothers are with the standing army of Israel and the David and Goliath story. And David isn't. And you have to be 20 to be in the standing army. He wants to be there. They won't let him go because he's not able yet. Therefore, he must be less than 20, 19 years old. If you remember, he has killed a lion and a bear with his hands by the age of 19. And in this family, he's the runt of the litter. He's the one they forget about. So Eliab stands there and they say to themselves, this is the man.

Now, of course, Saul looked regal to lots of people. Look regal. The Lord speaks to Samuel. He says, do not look on his appearance or the height of his stature, because I have rejoice in him. Now again, we've already read that David himself was handsome. That's mentioned. It's not as though appearances mean nothing, but they don't mean much in God's economy.

They mean something, but not much. This man looks good, but he's not the right one. The Lord sees, not as a man sees. The Lord looks on. No, sorry, man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. And so then another candidate comes forward. And this one's

name is a been a dab. And he passes before Samuel, and before Samuel can get very far, saying, this is the one God says, nope, he is not the one either.

Don't look on appearances. You look on appearances. We do, don't we? We look at appearances. I got to tell you, I was studying this passage for other reasons. Reading it years ago, maybe, I don't know, 8 or 10 years ago. And I was in a park in Saint Louis called Forest Park. Beautiful large park, lots of places to go.

And I was walking with a friend and we passed by a group of people sitting on a blanket, and they were young, you know, we were 60ish and they were young. And I have to say, I noticed that it was a really good looking group of people. I mean, just walk by and they're just the men are handsome and the women are good looking. And one of the women I just looked at that is a beautiful woman. She's just beautiful. It's just visible in front of your eyes. And as we were walking by, that beautiful woman cut loose with a torrent of vile obscenities as if to say, don't let the appearance of my face delude you. I'm rough and tough and mean. I've got in me, and I can come up with the best of them. I am not a pretty young thing. She seemed intent on saying, I don't know. It was, it was quite an outburst of cursing. Look at the outward appearances. Can I just say it? Don't look at career success too much. When I talk to people about choosing elders, I find myself here once, but in other places year after year saying business success is not a sign of becoming an elder. Nice guy. Social skills. It's not a criterion anywhere in God's list for being an elder. Tall, dark and handsome. Nice voice, lots of energy. These are not on the lists that God gives us. It's very easy, very easy to look at fine looking seeming things. Don't look at the outward appearance. Don't worry if you're outward appearance isn't quite what you would like it to be, because it doesn't really matter that much to God.

My children take after my wife vertically. That is to say, they are vertically challenged to some degree. The tall one is five four and three eights. Occasionally they lament, why am I so short? Why do I have allergies like you, etc. now if they persist too much, I ask them questions like just give me a yes or no answer.

Do you think you won or lost the genetic lottery? And the answer is yes, I won overall, but still, I'd like to complain from time to time. Appearances just don't matter that much. Repeat that to yourself. They matter enough for the Bible to say David was handsome. He had beautiful eyes, but not enough to make it the criteria for everything.

For pastoral candidate comes in and his nose is bent to the side and one of his ears is higher than the other. Don't pay attention. It's godliness of character. That's what matters. That's what God's Word says. Okay, so they go through all the family and, None of these is the one God chooses. And so the question arises, is this it?

Is this all we God know? Chapter 16, verse 12 says, there is one more, there is one more. And David does look good and he is talented, talented with weapons. He's a man of war. He's a warrior. They report is good with a harp. Two he can calm Saul when the Spirit of God comes in judgment upon him.

When an evil spirit comes sent by God as a judgment for his rebellion and in penitence. And when Samuel sees him, chapter 16, verse 13, the Lord says, 11 1213 Lord says, this is the one, this is he. Anoint him. And then verse 13, The Spirit of comes upon him with power. That is to say, he already had a heart for God.

That's what, for some of 13,14 says, I'm going to send you someone who has a heart for me. This is the one. He's already strong. He's already a warrior, you know, play the harp well, he can sing. The Bible calls him in one place. The sweet singer of is. There is so much going for him. And then the spirit came upon him, and power.

And then he was equipped. And we see what he does in the next verses, verses 14 and 15 and 16, Saul is grieved and he is tormented in his spirit. He says, I need someone to ease my troubled soul. And they send for David, and he plays. And then we find him as an honor, as an armor bearer in God's court.

If you would turn with me to chapter 16, verses 21,22 and see what else happens in the life of David. So he is announced in verse 18, is a man skillful in playing a man of valor, a man of war, prudent speech, a man of good presence, and the Lord is with him. We wish they'd put. The Lord is with him first.

But that's what they said. And then in verses 21 and 22, David comes to Saul and enters his service. And Saul loved him greatly. Side comment. Until they started to hate him because of rivalry, because he couldn't stand his success, so loved him greatly, and he became his armor bearer. And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor in my sight.

Later on, he fights battles in God's name, and so he proves himself, and gradually he knows and all Israel knows that he's the one chosen by God to lead God's people. Praise him. So David was not, by the estimation of his own family, the most talented person and leaders are often not the one who's viewed as most talented.

We could go through a roster of history, but why bother? We have David and we have Jesus. David, who's considered the least of eight brothers. And yet he's the one true to Jesus, one who was despised by his own people, cursed, slandered. He had no appearance. Isaiah says that we would be drawn to him. Leadership often begins with no visible signs.

Leadership often begins small, as it did with David. Can I tell you, the first job I ever had in ministry was to be a youth worker and to help with Christian education at. Don't ask me why. I'll explain it another day, perhaps at a mostly liberal United Methodist Church at the age of 21. You know what I did the first day ?? I licked stamps the entire day.

My boss, who was not entirely a kind man. I think he just wanted to see if I would do what he said. He said, here, we need to send some envelopes out. There's about 500 of them. Lick them.

Didn't look very impressive. Jerry Bridges is a name known in many circles because of his wonderful books about holiness. Holiness by Grace Jerry Bridges. I mean, I knew Jerry Bridges. He's been with the Lord for a few years. Jerry Bridges is an extraordinarily gifted and estimable man. And he was maybe five seven, weighed 124 pounds, maybe 130 tops had a very thin, raspy, reedy voice.

He was at our house one day. I said to my kids, I said, listen, kids, there's gonna be a very famous man at our house tonight, a godly man. A man is written books that are read by well over a million people. And when he walks in the door, you will not be impressed. But he is a great man. He is a great man, not impressive in the ways of the world at all. Man looks at the appearance. God looks at the heart. David is the man after God's own heart, a flawed man, to be sure, man who committed major sins. As we all know, but a man who still love God. We all make mistakes. We all make mistakes.

And the question is, what do you do when you make a mistake? Do you ever? Men who don't cook much, ever try to follow a recipe and put baking soda instead of baking powder, but salt instead of sugar? Put a teaspoon instead of a tablespoon or the reverse. You don't just throw it away and start over. What do you do?

Face your mistakes. The mistake in Israel is to ask for the wrong kind of king. And David said, I'm willing to take the anointing. And Samuel said, I'm willing to anoint. We're willing to start over again. Now, David's not the Savior. The Savior is the Son of David, not David himself. And David erred in any number of ways late in his life, even with lesser things like his quasi betrayal of Mephibosheth.

David is not the Savior. The Lord is the Savior. But leadership does exist in the here and now. Some of you are called to be leaders. Some of you. Some of you think maybe I'll be a leader later on someday in the future. David was called to lead at the age of 19. There are books out, Christian books out. One book has the title Half Time. It says, you know, Christian man, it's written by a man for men.

Christian men should think to themselves, I will, start my career and have a family and get some success. And then at the age of 50, halftime, you know, you get sort of 20 to 80 as your working, vibrant years ideas at 50 years old is halftime. Then at halftime will become a leader. Maybe. Maybe not. David was one more time a leader at 19.

Your next pastor, you know, maybe younger than you expect. You know that, don't you? You may be horrified. You know that some large and blessed churches have done things like call a 37 year old and a 39 year old, and it worked. I'll tell you one thing. They'll be younger than me. Probably a lot younger. On the other hand, they may not be that much younger.

We may call somebody who's well into their 50s and you think, oh, I thought we wanted younger guy. Don't worry about the time. Don't worry about the years. Don't worry about appearances. Seek the man that God has for you. Respond to him. When you find that leader, you know he'll have flaws. The question is, will his flaws be like the flaws of Saul or the flaws of David?

That is to say, does he know how to repent? Does he know how to say forgive? Does he know how to return to the Lord so that the Lord returns to him and takes you back? Your next leader will have flaws. He will have a heart for God. I hope and pray and trust like our previous senior pastors, like Pastor Barker, like Pastor Reeder, a heart for God.

If you have a heart for God, it overcomes a great number of other problems. If you love the people, it overcomes a great number of other problems. You can make all kinds of mistakes as a parent. If your kids know you love them, it just doesn't matter that much. It matters a little, but not that much. And similarly, if a pastor loves his people, loves the Lord, he can make all kinds of mistakes and have a crooked nose and one of your higher than the other.

And it really doesn't matter.

By the way, it doesn't matter if you don't like him either. You know, there's a all but certainty that some of you will just look at the new pastor as happens and say, I don't like him. That feeling. I don't like him. I got to tell you, if you have that feeling, it's completely irrelevant. It's probably based on some minor thing that he said or did, some minor trait, some little mistake he made in the early going. Disregard it. And by the way, if your friends say, you know, I don't like him, say, well, that's interesting because I love him.

By the way, God chose him.

The best leaders will receive loyalty because they're chosen by God. And David did. We'll see that in coming weeks. David commanded incredible loyalty. He didn't force it. People came to him, and I think they came to him because they knew that God's Spirit was with him. And every

leader has some taste of that. Every elder, every deacon, everyone who's set apart for ministry has some taste of that.

That is to say, there is some sense that God has called me to something and some are called even more like David. Like I hope and trust and pray your next pastor. But above all, remember that all humans are flawed and fatally flawed. We're not looking to a king, or to a pastor, or to any human leader. We're looking beyond them, beyond David, to the Son of David beyond, and a leader that arises on the scene to the Lord himself, whom the leader proclaims, it's pretty good.

Heavenly father, I thank you for your word. Thank you. That addresses all the issues on our minds. Lord, I confess, you know, I confess that I did not plumb the depths of this passage, but I pray that our meditations tonight would be pleasing to you and would guide and direct us to be true to your Word, listen to your word. Seek a man who has great attributes, but not look upon the appearance. Look instead for a man anointed by you, empowered by your spirit. Lord, we know that even though David had that especial measure, we all have your spirit. Today, when we turn to you by faith, we thank you for that, for giving us your spirit to regenerate us, leads us to repent. It makes us dare to try ourselves to serve you in the place you've given us in this world.

And we pray it in Jesus name.

Amen. Amen.