



## LESSON 17

*God sees David's heart*

1 SAMUEL 16:1-23



**God sees the heart and desires hearts loyal to Him.**



***“But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not look on 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’” (1 Sam 16:7).***

## Supporting Truths

1. God does not see as man sees.
2. God sees the heart.
3. God chose a king with a loyal heart.
4. God supports those whose hearts are completely His.
5. Jesus is the perfect king with a heart perfectly loyal to God.

## Objectives

1. Discuss what people think is important when they look at a person.
2. Explain what God sees and desires in our hearts.
3. Explain why God chose David to replace Saul as king.
4. Describe how God equipped David and gave him success in Saul’s court.
5. Explain how Jesus is the ultimate Davidic King, and how He can give us new hearts.

# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

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## Lesson Summary

Because Saul rejected God, God chose a new king for Israel. This new king was part of God's plan from long ago, so He sent Samuel to anoint him. Samuel was looking for a tall and handsome king like Saul, but God corrected Samuel. God sees the heart, and He wanted a king whose heart belonged to Him. So He chose David, Jesse's youngest son. He also filled David with His Spirit and gave David success in Saul's court.

## Spotlight on the Gospel

God was gracious in giving Israel a godly king, but He is even more gracious in giving us the King of kings. David was a man after God's own heart, but Jesus was supremely a man after the heart of God. Because Jesus is the perfect and eternal King, we should trust and serve Him as our King. He paid the price of sin and conquered death, so all who come to Him become new creations, with new hearts pleasing to God.

LAST WEEK



**Saul disobeys God**  
1 Samuel 13:1-15:35

THIS WEEK



**God sees David's heart**  
1 Samuel 16:1-23

NEXT WEEK



**David fights for God's honor**  
1 Samuel 17:1-58

UNITED KINGDOM



## Lesson Commentary

*God sees the heart and desires hearts loyal to Him.*

Saul led the nation in battle, but he was spiritually bankrupt. He was not loyal to God, so God rejected him and ripped his kingship from him. But Israel would have another king, and this time, God would give Israel a king of His own choosing. God's choice was not like the kings of other nations. God chose David because David's heart was loyal to Him.

### The Plan: The LORD sent Samuel to anoint the next king (16:1–5)

Samuel was still mourning for Saul because he cared deeply about Israel's leader. This is a hallmark of spiritual leadership: God's leaders care deeply about those they serve (Acts 20:31) and the lost (Rom 9:2). But it was time for Samuel to remember that while Saul was lost, God's plan for a king was not.

Samuel's new mission was according to the LORD's old plan. About 800 years earlier, Jacob had prophesied that kingship would belong to the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:10), not to Saul's tribe of Benjamin. Nearly 400 years after this prophesy, God rescued Rahab the Canaanite by granting her true faith and making her an Israelite (Josh 2:8–14; 6:25). Rahab's son was Boaz, who married Ruth the Moabitess. Boaz and Ruth lived

in Bethlehem and had a grandson named Jesse, and now God was sending Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint Jesse's son (Ruth 4:17).

So when it seems like all is lost, as it did to Samuel, we

can have hope in God's sovereignty and faithfulness. He is **sovereign** because God plans what will happen and His plan never fails. He is **faithful** because God never abandons His people, despite their sin and the failure of their leaders. Samuel could press on in hope, because God was raising up a faithful king. We, too, can press on in hope, because through that king, God has sent the King of kings, who will one day return and make everything right (Rev 19:16).

Not only is God sovereign and faithful, but He also guides His people with wisdom. Saul knew God had chosen to replace him and was likely on the lookout. He would have been watching Samuel to see if he went out of his ordinary judging circuit, and he may have tried to kill Samuel or the one Samuel came to anoint. So God instructed Samuel how to keep the mission secret from Saul, protecting both Samuel and Israel's future king (1 Sam 16:2–3).

### The Person: The LORD chose a king loyal to Him (16:6–13)

When Samuel arrived, he looked for a king based on external appearance. Eliab was tall and good-looking, like Saul (16:6–7). But Saul's failure shows how foolish it is to judge a person based on externals. God does not judge as man judges. God looks straight into the heart (1 Kgs 8:39; Ps 44:21). This means He sees even our innermost thoughts, motivations, and desires. He sees what we truly love and value. He sees where our true loyalty lies.

After rejecting the next six sons of Jesse, God chose the youngest.

No one thought it would be David. He was not even invited to the feast. He was watching the sheep, a job given to the least important. But God often chooses the younger. Seth, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim, Moses, and Gideon were all younger sons chosen by God. He often chooses the unexpected, as he had when he chose barren Hannah to be the mother of Israel's last judge. He chooses the lowly so that no one can boast in themselves, but only in the Lord (1 Cor 1:27–31).

Samuel **anointed** David, an external symbol of God's choice and affirmation of David as king, and the Spirit of the LORD took control of David from then on (1 Sam 16:13). The Spirit of the LORD would empower David to do God's work in much of the same way

#### THINK ABOUT IT

In the midst of loss, having hope in God's plan encourages us to persevere in serving God (Rom 8:24–29; Jas 1:12).



#### THINK ABOUT IT

God works according to His plans formed long ago (Isa 25:1).

#### THINK ABOUT IT

The heart is what matters, because it is the control center of our lives (Prov 4:23).



# STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

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God's Spirit had empowered Israel's Judges for service. God both chooses and equips those He calls to lead (Eph 4:11; 2 Tim 3:17). This equipping was essential to David's ministry, because as even before becoming king, David endured years of trouble, living as a fugitive betrayed by his own king.

The world has many ideas of what makes a good leader. It crowns the strong and athletic; the smart and good-looking; the rich and successful. While these things aren't bad—even David was healthy and handsome (1 Sam 16:12)—these mean very little to God. God is most interested in the **heart**, who we are on the inside: *our emotions, will, intellect, and desires*. He desires those who love Him with heart, soul, and might (Deut 6:5), who treasure His word in their heart (Deut 6:6; Ps 119:11), and whose hearts are completely loyal to Him (2 Chr 16:9). This is the kind of leader we should follow, and this is who we should strive to be. But this is only possible through a new heart (John 3:3; Gal 6:15). So as we strive to have a heart pleasing to God, we first need God to give us a new heart so that we can trust and please Him (1 Pet 1:3).

## The Placement: The LORD brought David to Saul (16:14–23)

The LORD's presence with David quickly became clear. As Saul grew worse, David earned favor in Saul's court. Because Saul had forsaken God, God took His Spirit away from Saul. God sent an evil spirit to torture Saul,

perhaps as punishment, or perhaps to provoke Saul to repent (1 Cor 5:5). God is able to do this because even Satan cannot act without God's permission (Job 1–2).

God used this evil spirit, along with a servant who had heard of David, to

bring David into Saul's court. One of the things the servant had heard about David was that the LORD was

with David (1 Sam 16:18). Just as God was with Joseph to give him success in difficult situations (Gen 39:2, 3, 23), so God was with David and would give him success through the many difficulties to come. So under God's direction, David came to serve the king he had been anointed to replace.

The story of David's anointing is a reminder of Hannah's song. Her song sets the tone for the entire book, a story of God's grace to the humble and His care of His people through the leadership of a godly king. Hannah praised God for giving power to His king and lifting up the strength of His anointed one (1 Sam 2:10), and this is what God did for David. God would continue to do so throughout David's life.

But David was just the beginning of something much greater. As a humble shepherd and a godly king, David pointed forward to the great Shepherd (Heb 13:20) and eternal King (Rev 19:16). Unlike any other human, Jesus, the Son of David, was truly a man after God's own heart. No matter the temptation or pain, Jesus prayed, "Not My will, but Yours be done" (Matt 26:39). His will was the Father's will, and His words were the Father's words (John 6:38; 12:49). Jesus' heart was devoted to the Father even to the point of death (Phil 2:8). Because of that, in Christ we may become new creations (2 Cor 5:17), with hearts that are pleasing to God.



### THINK ABOUT IT

Saul's misery is contrasted with David's growing success; a good reminder that it is much easier to walk with God than to rebel against Him.

# Lesson Outline

*God sees the heart and desires hearts loyal to Him.*

## AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



1. God had a plan for a king after His own heart (16:1–5).
2. God chose a king after His own heart (16:6–13).
3. God gave success to the king after His own heart (16:14–23).

## AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE



1. **The Plan: The LORD sent Samuel to anoint the next king (16:1–5).**
  - Samuel mourned for Saul (16:1).
  - The LORD had already chosen a king to replace Saul (16:1).
  - The LORD sent Samuel on a secret mission to anoint the next king (16:1–3).
  - Samuel obeyed and came to Jesse in Bethlehem (16:4–5).
2. **The Person: The LORD chose a king loyal to Him (16:6–13).**
  - Man judges based on what he can see (16:6–7).
  - The LORD sees and evaluates the heart, not the appearance (16:7).
  - The LORD rejected seven sons of Jesse (16:8–10).
  - The LORD chose the youngest son, David (16:11–12).
  - Samuel anointed David, and the Spirit took control of David (16:13).
3. **The Placement: The LORD brought David to Saul (16:14–23).**
  - The Spirit of the LORD left Saul, and an evil spirit tortured Saul (16:14).
  - Saul called David to come play the lyre for him (16:15–19).
  - David pleased Saul (16:20–23).



# TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

*God sees David's heart • 1 Samuel 16:1–23*



## Lesson Questions

*Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.*



### Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **What did God tell Samuel to do?**  
God told him to anoint a new king.
2. **Who did Samuel want to anoint?**  
Samuel wanted to anoint Eliab, because he was good-looking and tall.
3. **God does not care if someone is good-looking and tall. What does God care about?**  
God looks at the heart.
4. **What did David do for Saul?**  
David played the lyre for Saul to stop the evil spirit from tormenting him.



### Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **Why was Samuel sad?**  
Samuel was sad that Saul had rejected God.
2. **What hope did God give Samuel to encourage him to keep serving God?**  
God told Samuel He had chosen a new king. God never stops providing for the salvation of His people.
3. **What is the difference between how man sees and how God sees?**  
Man looks at a person's appearance, but God looks at the heart. He knows even the secret thoughts and desires.
4. **Why wasn't David with his brothers?**  
David was the youngest, so he was away watching the sheep. God likes to choose those who are valued less in order to show His grace and glory.
5. **What kind of people does God want?**  
God wants people whose hearts are loyal to Him.
6. **When Samuel anointed David, who took control of David?**  
The Spirit of the LORD took control of David.
7. **What happened to Saul?**  
The Holy Spirit left Saul, and an evil spirit tormented him. It is much better to be loyal to God!
8. **Who is David's descendant, the perfect King after God's own heart?**  
Jesus is the perfect King, and He can give us hearts pleasing to God.

## Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



### THINGS WE CAN'T SEE

Begin this activity by talking with the children about things that we can see. We can see parts of our body, such as the face, arms, and legs. Next, discuss parts of our body that are inside and that we can't see, such as the stomach, liver, and brain. Explain that there is another part of us that we can't see but that God can see. That is our heart. Discuss what the heart is. Explain that it is not our physical heart but it is the part of us that makes decisions and that knows right and wrong. God knows our heart, and that is what He cares about.

### A NEW HEART

Hard boil an egg. Then, dye or color the shell black. Use this to introduce the concept of a new heart (Ezek 36:26). The black shell represents the hard, stubborn heart. Peel away the shell to reveal the soft, tender heart.



### SEEING THROUGH THE EYES OF GOD

Bring in two different pairs of glasses, one labeled "Man's View" and the other labeled "God's View." Alternate wearing the glasses throughout the lesson when talking about people who saw David with a worldly perspective and others who saw him with God's eyes.

### GIFT-WRAPPED BOXES

Bring to class seven empty boxes nicely wrapped as gifts. Each should look slightly different, and one should look particularly nice. Also bring an eighth wrapped gift; it should be fairly average-looking, but inside it should be a large red heart. During the lesson, as each of Jesse's sons is presented to Samuel, allow various children to open the first seven boxes. The first brother, Eliab, stood out to Samuel as likely to be God's anointed. Use the especially nice-looking gift to illustrate him. When you reach the part of the lesson where David comes before Samuel, have a child open the average looking gift. Reveal the red heart to the class. Explain that even though men look at the outside to determine who is best for a job, God looks at the heart.



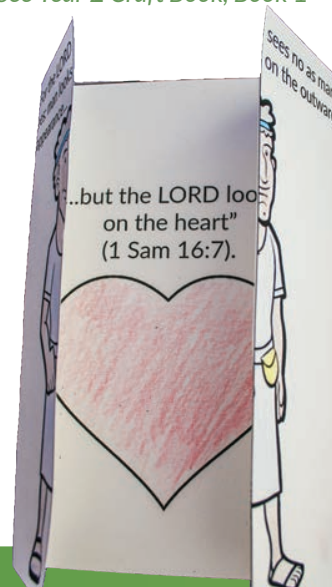
### GOD LOOKS AT THE HEART

*See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.*

**Materials:** Craft sheet, scissors, glue, and crayons.

**Directions:** Have students cut out the pictures along the dark lines. Color the heart and David. Fold the paper in on the dotted lines to bring the ends together, forming a tri-fold card. Glue the heart behind the picture of David in the center section of the tri-fold (as shown below).

*God Looks at the Heart  
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*





# TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

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AGES 6–8



## PICK BY APPEARANCE

Talk with the children about how they are chosen for games. Who usually is chosen first? Tell the children that in today's lesson, David, the youngest of Jesse's sons and the most unlikely to be chosen, is selected by God to be the new king of Israel.

## HEART X-RAY

Each day people fall and get hurt. Sometimes these people are taken to the hospital, and a picture called an X-ray is taken to see whether any of their bones are broken. This X-ray sees part of us that can't be seen with human eyes. But God can see things that not even an X-ray can see. He sees our hearts. He knows what our motives are—why we do what we do. He knows us and requires obedience from the heart. In today's lesson, we will see that God took a look at David's heart and liked what He saw. David desired the same things as God and had a spirit of repentance when he sinned. This pleased God.



## GOD'S PLAN

Make many folds in a large piece of paper. Then, draw a straight line across the folds. During the lesson, show the children the paper unfolded, with random line segments on it without any design. Then refold the paper to how it was when you drew the line, revealing the straight line. Compare this to the way God brought about His plan to choose David as King, even though the kingship seemed a disaster to Samuel.

## GOOD ON THE OUTSIDE

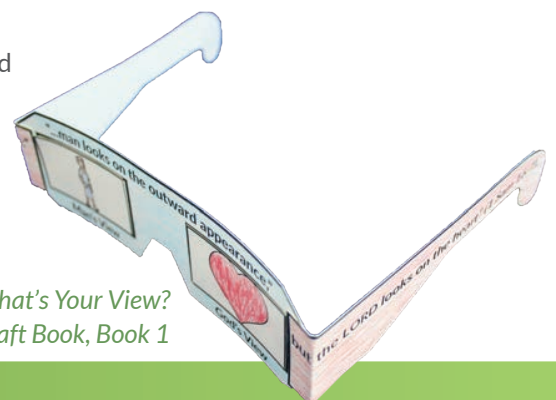
Bring two containers, preferably heart-shaped. One should have good stuff in it (like candy) and the other should have bad stuff in it (like garbage). Either both containers should appear the same on the outside, or the one with the good stuff in it should look less attractive. Ask for volunteers to choose which container they would like to receive a prize from. Talk about why the children chose the less attractive container over the more attractive one.



## WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

**Materials:** White craft paper, scissors, crayons, glue

**Directions:** Have students color and cut out the pieces for the glasses from the craft sheet. Instruct the students to put the pieces together with glue. Place the pictures in the appropriate places (as shown below).



What's Your View?  
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1

AGES 9–11



## INTRODUCE

**WHAT MAKES A LEADER?**

Discuss with children what it means to be a leader. Ask them what a leader looks like. Explain that many of us look at a person's outward appearance to determine whether he is a leader. Explain that this was true in Samuel's time, too. People think that leaders should be good looking and smart, but they fail to look at what God finds important: the heart. Ask the children how their hearts measure up. Discuss characteristics of David, and determine what God looks for in a leader (living for God's glory, defending His name, repenting of sin, loving God's Word, etc.)

**CHOICES**

Ask the children how they choose particular things. For example, how would they choose a dog, a book, or a friend? Now ask them how they would choose a king. In today's lesson, we will see that God uses Samuel to anoint the next king. Samuel thought he knew who the next king would be just by looking at him, but Samuel was wrong. God did not use the methods of choosing a king that we would choose, but instead, He chose a king with a special kind of heart.



## ILLUSTRATE

**LOYALTY**

Bring in various items that represent loyalty. Some items might be: apparel from your favorite sports team, the flag of your country of birth, the logo of your favorite type of clothing, car, or shoes, etc. Use these items to talk about the concept of loyalty and how we display it. Then, ask the children how we display the loyalty of our hearts. Do we have hearts totally committed to God? Are our hearts divided?

**A ROTTEN HEART**

Bring in some spoiled milk, moldy bread, or rotten fruit. Ask the children how to make this food fresh and edible again. Explain that you cannot. The food is spoiled and new food must be purchased. Use this activity to discuss every man's need for a new heart (Ezek 36:26), purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ.



## APPLY

**GLADYS AYLWARD**

Tell the story of Gladys Aylward (February 24, 1902 – January 3, 1970), a British missionary to China. This short, plain looking housemaid was used by God to bring thousands in China and Taiwan to Christ. She also saved the lives of over a hundred orphans in China during World War II. Her story is told in the book, *The Small Woman*, by Alan Burgess, and in the children's book *Gladys Aylward: The Adventure of a Lifetime* by Janet and Geoff Benge.