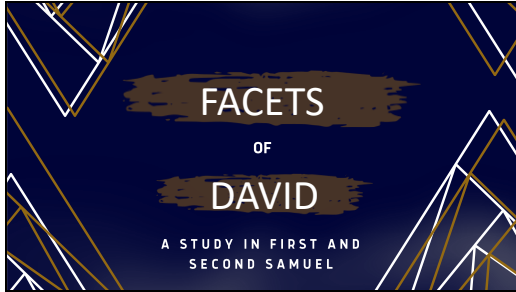


S
l
i
d
e
1



Today we start a new series entitled "Facets of David". The name of this series was inspired by the idea of a cut diamond. The diamond has a number of interesting characteristics.

- It is incredibly hard. On the Moh's 1-10 scale of hardness, a steel nail is 6.5, a masonry bit is 8.5. But a diamond has a hardness of 10 out of 10.
- However, the most obvious feature of the cut diamond is its beauty.

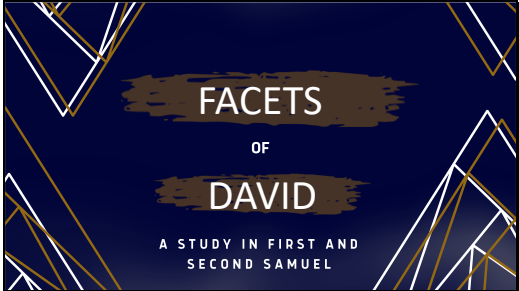
S
l
i
d
e
2



The brilliant cut diamond has 58 individual facets. It is the combination of the way that light is reflected and refracted through these strategically cut facets that accounts for its place as one of the most coveted of gems.

I decided to do a series on the life of King David because of the fact that, like the diamond, David is multi-faceted. Listen to this description of him by Richard D. Phillips:

A modern assessment of David's character and career sees him as "giant-slayer, shepherd, musician,

		<p><i>manipulator of men, outlaw, disguised madman, loyal friend and subject, lover, warrior, dancer and merryman, father, brother, son, master, servant, religious enthusiast, and king” and then asks, “What are we to make of this enormous portrait? Where do we begin?”</i></p>
<p>S l i d e s</p>		<p>The answer is we begin at the beginning, in 1 Samuel 16. And then, over the course of the next couple of months we will explore these different facets of David. In the process I believe that we will see that he is as complex and multi-faceted as we are. We will all find some aspect of David that we can relate to.</p> <p>Also, in this series of 13 planned messages, every sermon will begin with a statement about Everyone or Nobody:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone Needs A Challenge • Nobody Needs A Lunatic • Everyone Needs A Promise • Nobody Needs a Mistress <p>You get the idea. So, let’s jump in.</p>



This week's message is entitled:

Everyone Needs an Opportunity

The nineteenth century British Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, once said:

"One secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his opportunity when it comes."

Our lives are filled with opportunities big and small, caught and missed. And when they are missed, some are gone forever.

As we study King David, we will see that opportunity was unexpectedly thrust upon him. However, he didn't squander his opportunity – he seized it.



Our origin story doesn't begin with David. In fact, he won't be named until verse 13. We begin with Samuel and Saul. The first opportunity we will discuss is:

AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE REDIRECTED

Turn with me to 1 Samuel 16:1-5:

¹ 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 Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” ² And Samuel said, “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.’ ³ 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.” ⁴ 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?” ⁵ And 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.

There is some important background information here. As

you may remember, King Saul was not God's choice. He was the people's choice. Israel rejected God as king so that they could look like all the other nations of the world. In the sermon two weeks ago on Resurrected Parenting, we discussed that the people of Israel were also motivated by the fact that Samuel's sons were unworthy men, lovers of bribes who perverted justice. Although this judgment must have hurt Samuel, he came to love Saul. He saw his kingly appearance and then observed his growth as a king, exhibiting courage and winning many battles. However, on two occasions Saul disobeyed God's explicit commands and God rejected Saul as king. Saul is told that he will not have a dynasty – his royal line will end.

Our text begins with a question and raises a question. God asks Samuel,

“How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel?”

The tense of the Hebrew verb is continuative... it suggests that

Samuel has been mourning Saul's rejected for an extended time. But there is the question within a question. How long indeed? How long has Samuel been frozen in mourning? We don't have a fully descriptive timeline to answer this question. However, I found a Bible student who mapped out the entire timeline of Saul's reign in order to create some parameters. If you look at the length of his reign and carve out room for all the military victories, it seems likely that Saul was rejected at least 3 years and possibly 10 years before Samuel was commanded to anoint David. Even using the smaller number of 3 years, that's a long time to be stuck. God has been patient with Samuel, but we see that God has reached a limit with Samuel's inaction. He tells him to go to the family of Jesse the Bethlehemite and anoint one of his sons king. But notice the specific language here:

I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons."

It's mission critical that we observe that whereas Israel chose Saul, God has made his own choice. He has provided for Himself a king. Samuel is sent with incomplete information. He will have to trust God.

It is in the opening words of verse 2 that we learn the reason for Samuel's inaction – FEAR!

² And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me."

Saul began his journey towards kingship hiding in the coats. However, by this point he is attached to his role as king. One of his defining characteristics is paranoia. There's an old joke:

Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they're not out to get you!

Samuel was not just any Judge of Israel. He was the kingmaker. If Samuel went significantly outside his home turf of Ramah, Saul would grow suspicious, and Samuel knew it.

There is something unique about Samuel. He was not just any judge.

He was a Levitical judge. He was one who could offer sacrifices. God will provide Samuel cover by telling him to bring a sacrificial animal with him. Samuel obeys God's command. In verse 4 we see that Saul's paranoia has become epidemic in Israel. Observe how Samuel is greeted:

The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?"⁵ And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.


There is a lesson here for us. Tense people make people tense. We all know this. When a boss is tight everyone else is set on edge. For almost three years, after my church merged with another and I became a staff pastor for the first time, I worked under a tense Lead Pastor. I watched how a group of amiable and easy going pastoral colleagues all lost their confidence and peace. Tense people make people tense. And when the king is tense the entire nation takes on a certain pathology.

Does God tell Samuel to lie? Is this heifer just a ruse? It did provide Samuel with cover. As a Levitical judge, Samuel was authorized to sacrifice a heifer in providing atonement in an unsolved murder in a rural district. He would not arouse suspicion. However, the sacrifice was also an important part in consecrating those who were to participate in the anointing of Israel's future king. Jesse and the elders of Bethlehem must be prepared for entering into the presence of their God.

As I looked at these opening five verses, I was struck by the fact that, at some time in our lives, everyone needs an opportunity to be redirected. And that is because we are like the sheep David tended – we are wanderers who wander from God.

Application:

Samuel got stuck in fear. He needed new marching orders and God applied just the right amount of pressure. I find great comfort in this. Anointing David king will be the

	<p>crowning achievement of Samuel’s life and ministry – God wasn’t about to let him miss it. Are you stuck? Frozen in fear? Distracted by life’s many diversions and entertainments? God can get you unstuck. He wants to redirect you and get you back in the action. But there is often a critical step that you must take. Allow God to redirect you into your true destiny.</p>
<p>S l i d e 6</p> 	<p>The second opportunity we will discuss is:</p> <p>AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE NOTICED</p> <p>We’re going to look at verses 6-13, however, let’s start with a smaller chunk, verses 6-10 of First Samuel 16:</p> <p><i>⁶ When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD's anointed is before him.” ⁷ 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</i></p>

appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.”⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.”¹⁰ And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen these.”

Let’s pause for a moment and reflect on who Jesse is. Jesse’s father is obscure to us. His name was Obed, Hebrew for servant. However, Jesse’s granparents are well-known, Ruth and Boaz. So, Jesse comes from a great lineage. His grandmother was the epitome of loyalty and his grandfather the epitome of generosity. We’ll pause there before we ask the question whether he represents that fine legacy in his own generation.

And let’s also reflect on where Jesse is, Bethlehem. We have a pretty strong mental image of Bethlehem. It’s likely not accurate. If you’re

picturing gently rolling hills and pastoral vistas, Bethlehem was nothing like this.

One commentator described the Bethlehem region:

The country around is hilly, but hardly beautiful; The limestone rock gives a bare appearance to the hills, which is not redeemed by boldness of form or picturesqueness of outline.

Bethlehem was primarily an area for growing grain in tiny farms built into the crags in the hills.

It is in this bleak area that we find Jesse and his 8 boys. He has 8 sons, but only seven are paraded before Samuel. The key to this omission of one is the fact that Samuel, Jesse and all Israel seem to share a key blind spot. The Hebrew text is interesting and hard to translate:

“Man looks to the eyes... God looks to the heart.”

The wording sounds odd to us, but the meaning is plain. We are drawn to external things... we prefer tall. We prefer fit. We prefer

symmetrical. And we prefer youthful maturity... old enough to have experience and young enough to have vitality. And when it comes to kings and queens, subjects look for one who has regal bearing.

Eliab, the oldest, was Samuel's first choice. Imagine how shocked he was when God rejected him, and then the next, and then the remainder of the seven sons.

However, I imagine that God was shocked that Samuel didn't understand better. Saul was tall. Saul was regal. Saul looked like a king, and he proved to be a grave disappointment. Eliab would have been a bad sequel. Later, his character emerges in his interactions with David.

Commentator, W.G. Blaikie makes an incisive comment:

"The world is full of idolatries, but I question if any idolatry has been more extensively practiced than the idolatry of the outward appearance."

Let's continue as we come to Jesse's overlooked son in verses 11-13:

¹¹ Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here." ¹² And 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." ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

These few verses complete our portrait of Jesse.

- Jesse is not a wealthy man. A rich man would have servants to watch over his flocks, not a son. This is not a blight on his character – it simply tells us some important context

concerning David's family of origin.

- What does reflect badly on Jesse is his treatment of David. One of my favorite songs has always been America's: "Horse with No Name." Notice that David is the son with no name. Jesse refers to him, in the Hebrew text, as "katan." It can mean young in age. It can also mean tiny in stature. He is the nameless "little one", unsummoned and seemingly forgotten. Jesse seems to lack the qualities of his grandparents!
- It seems as if Samuel had to turn the screws in on Jesse a bit. Look at verse 11:

"Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here."

Under the threat of no supper, Jesse fetches his "little one." As soon as he enters the room, God instructs Samuel to anoint him. God has chosen a king for

Israel. It is not until verse 13 that the runt of the litter is named:

And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

Have you ever felt invisible? Maybe you were the middle child, the one the psychologists call the “Lost child.” Or maybe you were the good kid who became invisible while Mom and Dad focused on the drama queen or the bad boy. There is a basic human hunger we all have – a desire to be noticed. One of the most important lessons of David’s origin story is that God noticed him. He may have been young and small but God saw the “giant-slayer” in this boy of about 10-15 years of age. If you feel like David in Jesse’s sheepfold, remember that God has numbered the hairs on your head – he notices you!



This powerful moment of David's filling sets up our final opportunity:

AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE FILLED

Look at verses 14-23. However, I am going to add the second part of verse 13 to make an important contrast:

^{13b} And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward... ¹⁴ But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit from the LORD tormented him. ¹⁵ And Saul's servants said to him, "Behold now, a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you. ¹⁶ 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." ¹⁷ So Saul said to his servants, "Provide for me a man who can play well and bring him to me." ¹⁸ One of the young men answered, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who

is 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.”¹⁹ Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, “Send me David your son, who is with the sheep.”²⁰ And Jesse took a donkey laden with bread and a skin of wine and a young goat and sent them by David his son to Saul.²¹ And David came to Saul and entered his service. And Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer.²² And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, “Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor in my sight.”²³ And whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand. So, Saul was refreshed and was well, and the harmful spirit departed from him.

I would love to explore this entire set of verses more closely. There is so much here. But I want to make a simple contrast and drag out one elephant in the room.

The contrast is between the filling of David and the emptying of Saul. The anointing of the king was more than symbolic.

This Saturday we observed something we haven't seen in England for most of our lifetimes. For the first time in 70 years, a coronation took place in England – continuing a tradition of 1000 years. The coronation was filled with symbolism, a crowning, the giving of a new scepter, and many other solemn rites. But the anointing of Israel's kings was more than symbolic.

When Saul, was anointed, God's Spirit came upon him. This is why the young man hiding in a pile of coats on his coronation day became a mighty warrior. God's Spirit was with him. But, although God had already rejected Saul, he hadn't removed that special spiritual presence until this moment. Only one Israelite would be anointed king and imbued with God's Spirit. So, David was filled, and Saul was

emptied. But it was worse than that. Look at verse 14 again:

14 But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit from the LORD tormented him.

Here's the big question... the elephant in the room. Was God passive in this or active? Did God withdraw his protective Spirit from Saul and Saul became vulnerable to his own ill-temperers? Or, alternatively, did God send a demonic spirit to torture Saul. Clearly, you and I are more comfortable with the former. However, the more active understanding is the more natural reading of this difficult verse. I suspect the truth is somewhere between these two. I believe God withdrew His Spirit and Saul became spiritually vulnerable. God permitted a demonic spirit to afflict him. God allowed it so the spirit is referred to as being "from the LORD." But notice that David's filling is not like Saul's. We saw in verse 13 that ***"the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day***

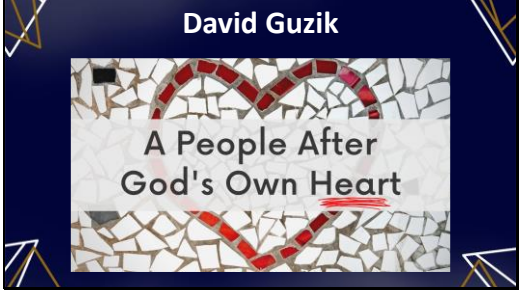
forward.” David received a filling that would not be taken back, despite David’s many sins.

Jesus, David’s Greater Son, extends the same kind of filling to us. As Christians we receive the filling of the Holy Spirit. It’s not a temporary filling – it doesn’t come and go. In Romans 11:29, the Apostle Paul teaches us that **“The gift and calling of God are irrevocable.”** Even though we sin again and again, God’s Spirit abides in us.

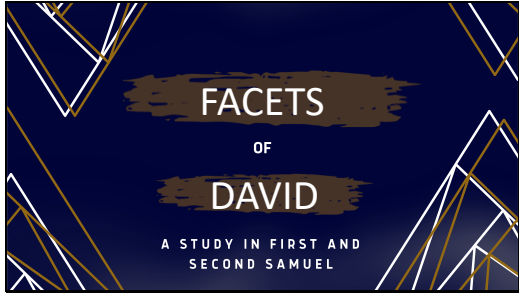
Our text closes with a real twist of irony. The tortured soul needs the soothing that comes when a young boy skillfully plays his lute, a guitar-like instrument. That young man, David, is the one who is now filled and destined to replace him.

When God rejected Saul, he said to him in 1 Samuel 13:14:

14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you

		<p><i>have not kept what the LORD commanded you.”</i></p>
S l i d e 8		<p>David came to be called “a man after God’s heart.” I’d like to close with some powerful words by David Guzik applying this verse to our lives:</p> <p><i>God’s choice of David shows that we don’t have to quit our jobs and enter into full-time ministry to be people after God’s own heart. We don’t need to be famous or prominent to be people after God’s own heart. We don’t need to be respected or even liked by others to be people after God’s own heart. We don’t need status, influence, power, the respect or approval of men, or great responsibilities to be people after God’s own heart.</i></p> <p>What do we need? We need to be a people after God’s own heart! A people who reject the idolatry of the eyes and see, as God sees – straight to the heart.</p>

S
l
i
d
e
9



Let's Pray