

*“But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart’” - 1 Samuel 16:7*

I have a huge tomato patch out on the farm where I live. Last spring I planted six little plants. They looked so far apart and lonely. I had no need to worry, now they’ve grown into one large jungle that’s taken over an area of the yard. More than 25 feet across, I see new growth every day.

When I pick the tomatoes I carefully use my hands to push the growth aside to find the unseen tomatoes beneath. Once in a while I encounter a spoiled tomato. So I won’t try to pick it again, (yuk) I throw it into another part of the yard. Butterflies light on the rotting tomatoes. I didn’t know that they were tomato juice drinkers.

One day I saw a beautiful Monarch butterfly sipping away. Next to him was a small butterfly. Its wings were shut tight. In fact, they look like two dead leaves. But when they open, the color is glorious. The wings are the brightest orange I’ve ever seen in nature. There are a few black spots polka-dotting the orange, which only adds to the beauty.

People are the same way. Sometimes we see someone who is nice looking and pleasant and we assume they are a good person and love the Lord. That’s not always true. Judging solely from outside appearance, others may look like they barely function in this world. We may see them as beyond hope, as I saw the butterfly with the dead leaf wings. But sometimes when we get to know that person, we find great beauty inside. That’s how the Lord sees us.

Remember when the Lord tells Samuel to go to Jesse’s house to find his anointed king among his sons? Samuel sees Eliab and is sure he’s the Lord’s choice. He’s wrong.

The youngest son, David, is the Lord’s choice. He’s out tending the sheep. He’s the least likely choice. In fact, he wasn’t even presented as one of Jesse’s sons. But he’s the one the Lord refers to as “a man after my own heart.”

David seemed like a butterfly with dead leaf wings, but inside was the glory of the Lord. As we each seek the Lord, may His glory shine through us, making us beautiful from the inside out.