**God’s Choices**

 *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.*

***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 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.”****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. (1 Samuel 16:1-13, ESV)*

 God’s choices are examples of right judgment for us. Greetings in the Lord as we talk today about God’s standards, which are much different than man’s. In reality, we are really talking about one verse today. Verse 7 says, *“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.”*We’re going to talk about how God chooses (people) today, and my hope is that each of us will take God’s mode of operation and compare it to their own and begin to make the necessary changes by faith in their lives. Again, God’s choices are examples of right judgment for us. There is a simpler way to say this:

 We are called to have God’s eyes for judging, not man’s. In today’s passage, we find out immediately that God had already rejected King Saul, but Samuel, overcome by his own grief for the disobedient king, had not been able to shake off the heaviness of his mourning for him. But God spoke to him to go and anoint a new king; He gave him the directions, and Samuel got on the road, because it was now safe to do so (given his obedience to God’s directions). However, when he arrived, he did not realize that God’s standards for a king were much different than his own human standards. God said about Eliab, “Don’t look at his height…” because God does not simply examine a man’s exterior life, but what’s more, he looks at a person’s heart. And so, the youngest (even smallest) one, who was busy herding sheep, was chosen by God at last.

 As a point of knowledge, the word for “seeing” in Hebrew here in this passage is the same as what was used when God provided a ram for Abraham to sacrifice on the mountain instead of his son Isaac. The word that Abraham used as a title for God, “*Ra’ah”*, was the verb for “God sees”, and not “God provides”.[[1]](#footnote-1) In other words, God does not simply look at, examine, or even provide for us as people do. He examines the inner life of the person.

 We often say that we should not judge a book by its cover. We also, are called today to approach our everyday tasks with prayer, faith, and wisdom. It is important to know the person when we are conversing with him or her. It is important to know our own hearts as well as others’ hearts. We must be careful not to get enticed by peoples’ smooth words, external appearances, or their many talents. Rather, let us have God’s eyes in these matters, so that He can act through us in the most impactful way among His people.

 We are called to have God’s eye of judgment, and not our own. God’s choices are lessons for us in right judgment. God bless you all. Amen.

1. Though metaphorically or situationally we can say that “Jehovah Jireh” can mean God provides, but it is really “God sees.” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)