

**“The Lord Sees into the Heart” - 1 Samuel 16:1, 6-13 - Rev. Jeffrey B. Childs**

There are a couple things in this story today that reveal a couple things about God. I first caught it in the words of God to the prophet, *“The Lord sees into the heart.”* Whereas our eyes are often limited like the prophet Samuel’s to the obvious. God sees differently. God sees not only the outside container, but the contents within. God sees the heart and soul. I believe God sees potential. God sees the faith that is growing within. I believe God sees what we do not see, or at least do not see, yet. Often in the end we can look back and see it. But we are not always as good as seeing it in the beginning or in this case even before the beginning.

Last week as I talked about the call of Isaiah as a prophet, I mentioned that it was different when Samuel was called specifically as a boy when God called him by name. Well, here in the scripture, that little boy Samuel is all grown up. He has already anointed Saul to be the first king of Israel. But he turned out to not have lived faithfully up to his potential and now God is calling the prophet to anoint a new king. There is something here about how God speaks. It would be great if God spoke clearly and laid out the whole plan, but that is not what we read. God could have said to go find the youngest son of Jesse’s in Bethlehem and by the way you will have to look for him with the sheep because he is not home. It seems that God is taking it one step at a time. Step one simply is: Go to Bethlehem and anoint one of Jesse’s sons. And then as each son from the eldest on down come and stand before the prophet. God speaks again and again to reveal it is not each one by one by one.

God speaks to us that way. We do not always see the whole plan and each step. We may get one or two words from God. We may get the end result – the vision or the dream. God said to Noah build an ark! Only after that did he get the steps to build it and then to get the animals and get on board. The whole game plan is not revealed but the end goal is and then step by step we get there. And here this morning the prophet has a dream of a new king and step by step Samuel was getting to David.

I think it is important to note that at the beginning of the story Samuel and we don’t even see David. He is not asked to come to the coronation line up! His father has dismissed him as the underdog of the family, the runt of the litter, and he is out tending sheep not even invited to meet the prophet or to sit down at the dinner table with the rest of the family. He probably would have had to sit at the kid’s table. There is probably a whole other sermon in there about who all we miss and dismiss as second class.

Now the other thing I think is significant for today is in the last line, *God’s Spirit came upon David.* Like I said on Pentecost a couple weeks ago, back in the old days, the Old Testament days, God’s Spirit only came upon a few people in a generation – the various prophets like Isaiah from last week. It had come upon the boy Samuel who grew up here to be the great prophet of Israel. And here when he anoints the boy David as the new king, God’s Spirit also comes upon him. (If you come back next week, we will talk about how the boy David faces the giant Goliath and defeats him in battle with the help of the same Spirit.)

Today we will invoke the Holy Spirit to come down upon the bread and the cup and upon us as we come for communion. Today we will also invoke the Holy Spirit to grant us the spiritual gift of seeing like God sees - seeing potential and promise, seeing faith and hope. We celebrate what we have seen in the lives of our graduates already and look forward to seeing the way they live their faith as they continue on their journeys beyond graduation. Let me ask you to look around. What do you see in one another?

Remember what I said a few weeks ago, "If you see something, say something!" Can you affirm something in each person? Each of us, from the tall to the small, is created by the Creator and has sacred worth. Find ways to affirm that in some, especially those who may feel they are least, or last, or lost. See what God sees - and see what happens. Alleluia and Amen.

### **The Lord Sees into the Heart**

Rev. Jeffrey B. Childs 5/27/24

When we follow Jesus,  
We are called and set apart.  
Christ sees what's within us.  
The Lord sees into the heart.

At the time we're baptized,  
We are given a new start.  
Our call is realized.  
The Lord sees into the heart.

As on others we look,  
Seeing fully not in part,  
Somethings could be mistook.  
The Lord sees into the heart.