



Session 10
Fall 2015
Junior Youth

Samuel anoints David

1 SAMUEL 16:1-13

prepare



PRAYER

God, when I feel forgotten and invisible, remind me that I am always in your sight. Remind me of the beauty you see in me and call me to your service. Amen.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

To know that God sees what we can do

STORY SUMMARY

When Saul's kingship took a turn for the worse, God instructed Samuel to go to Bethlehem and anoint one of Jesse's sons as the new king. Jesse brought seven of his sons one at a time, but none of them was God's choice. Jesse said that his youngest son, David, was out with the sheep. David was the chosen one, so Samuel anointed him as the next king. God's spirit came upon David.

teaching tips for junior youth

Being overlooked is a feeling junior youth know well. No longer children but not yet adults, youth can sometimes feel like they don't fit anywhere and are not needed. David's story can remind them that they are never out of God's sight or thoughts—that God sees not only their potential, but what they are capable of in this moment. Affirm the gifts of your youth throughout the session, encouraging them to give the best of who they are to God.

For this session, purchase some oil to use for anointing. You may be able to find a fragrant oil in the cosmetic section of a drug store, or you can add a drop of perfume to olive oil.

Decide which Explore activities you will do, and check Supplies and To do throughout the session to see what needs to be prepared.

Choosing another king

After God's rejection of Saul as king, God tells Samuel to anoint one of the sons of Jesse as Saul's replacement. Samuel has been grieving over Saul, but God will not allow him to remain in this state. God instructs Samuel to journey to the small village of Bethlehem, to the house of Jesse, so that God can reveal to Samuel which of the sons will become the new king.

When Samuel sees Jesse's firstborn, he feels certain that Eliab is God's choice. God, however, rebukes Samuel, warning him not to consider appearance or height. These are the attributes that made Saul seem like a good choice for king.¹ God tells Samuel that "the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

Finally, after Samuel has seen and rejected seven of Jesse's sons, David is brought before him. There seems to be some confusion in the biblical tradition about whether David has seven brothers, as it says here, or whether he was the seventh son, as it says in 1 Chronicles 2:13–15. In any case, David is the youngest and the one ignored in the original call to come before the prophet.

Biblical texts tend to resist the tradition of primogeniture, in which the firstborn son receives the most, best, or all the family inheritance. The book of Genesis has several famous examples of this overturning of tradition: Ishmael and Isaac; Jacob and Esau; Reuben and Joseph; Ephraim and Manasseh. This pattern continues in the selection of David and later in that of Solomon, David's son.

Choosing a shepherd

Shepherding was commonly used as a metaphor for kingship throughout the ancient world. The shepherd/king must lead the sheep/people, care for them—especially for the weak and powerless—and put himself in danger to protect them. This understanding was common throughout Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Greece, and other ancient civilizations as well.



So it is not surprising that a king should be compared to shepherd. What may be surprising is that a shepherd would actually become a king. From this humble beginning will come one of the most influential figures in the entire Old Testament.

The text then sets up a contrast between David and Saul. At this point the spirit of the Lord comes on David while it departs from Saul. God's presence will now follow the young shepherd rather than the current monarch.

The condition of the heart

The condition of the heart is a recurring theme in the books of Samuel and the books of Kings, as in many other biblical texts. David becomes known as one after God's own heart.² He will be the standard by which the books of Kings evaluate all subsequent kings of Israel and Judah. Even though David, like Saul, will commit some grievous sins and make terrible mistakes, God does not abandon David. Why the two kings are treated so differently is never stated. In this passage, David is selected by God; we are not given any indication why. The reasons for God choosing certain individuals are often not revealed in the Bible: see, for example, the calls to Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Jeremiah, and the apostle Paul.

We often have mistakenly thought that inner spirituality is a concern of only the New Testament; that the Old Testament emphasizes only physical manifestations of spirituality and devotion. This view, as with many of our ideas about differences between the Old and New Testaments, does not reflect what the texts actually say. Many of the Hebrew scriptures, including most of the Prophets, Psalms, Chronicles, and Deuteronomy, celebrate the condition of the heart and the one who seeks God. Jesus clearly builds on this part of the tradition and makes it a priority in his understanding of what it means to follow after God.

1. 1 Samuel 9:2; 10:23.

2. 1 Samuel 13:14; 1 Kings 3:6; 9:4; 11:4; 14:8; 15:3.

gather

supplies

- *Shine Songbook and CD*
- *Year Two Songbook* (optional)
- CD player
- Chalkboard and chalk
- Easel paper and markers
- Current newspapers
- Sticky notes
- Pens or pencils
- Thumbtacks

poster pack

- Bible memory poster (Psalm 25)
- Windows poster

to do

- Gather newspapers or news magazines from the past week.
- Clear the bulletin board of the “pray the news” postings from the last session to make room for new ones.

media connections

- Clip of Samuel anointing David from the 1997 movie *David* (Use the Watch Bible Movies website.)
- Internet search for “shepherds today”
- *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio (opening pages of the novel)
- *Jesse Presents His Sons to Samuel*, a painting by James Tissot

BUILD COMMUNITY

As youth arrive, divide them into pairs to shake hands and give a short affirmation to each other—sharing a gift they’ve noticed: “You’re a good singer,” “I like the way you play with little kids,” “You’re good at baseball,” and so on. Then gather the group and invite them to share about their families—especially their siblings. Are they the oldest, youngest, in the middle, or an only child? Do they often get compared to their siblings? How are they the same or different from others in their house?

WORSHIP TOGETHER

Draw attention to the Windows poster. Invite youth to look at the fourth pane, which shows the field of sheep. Explain that this may have been the setting where a character in today’s story wrote the words to the song you’re going to hear. Invite youth to imagine themselves in that scene as you listen to or sing “I Lift My Eyes Up” (track 10, page 17 from *Year Two Songbook*). Lyrics are also found at the back of *L.E.D.*

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

As youth look at the newspapers you have brought, think about stories that are missing in the pages of our news. Who do we hear about a lot, and who gets forgotten? What articles remind us of people whose stories are seldom heard? Give each youth a sticky note and have them write on it the names of people, groups, places, or situations that seem to get left out. Put the sticky notes on the prayer bulletin board you began in session 9. Pause to silently pray for each request. Then end with:

God, thank you for seeing each one of us.

Bible memory

Write out the memory verses on a chalkboard or easel paper, supplying only the small words (as seen below). See how well your group can complete the verses with only these words to guide them. Have youth come up one at a time to fill in a word, or let the group work together to fill in blanks. Check the finished work with the Bible memory poster.

_____ me to _____, O _____;
_____ me _____.
_____ me in _____, and _____ me,
for you are the God of my _____;
for you I _____ all day _____.
— _____ 25:4-5

experience

SHARE THE STORY

Remind the group that in the last story, Israel asked for and got its first king—a tall, handsome man named Saul. But things with Saul quickly took a turn for the worse. God spoke to Samuel and told him to do something about it. It would involve a boy who was the youngest in his family—with seven older brothers. He was often forgotten or overlooked, but God saw him and called him for a special task.

Have the group turn to 1 Samuel 16:1–13. You will read the part of the narrator. Assign youth to be the Lord, Samuel, and Jesse. The whole group will read the part of the elders in verse 4.

WONDER AND REFLECT

Ask youth to keep their Bibles open as you enter the story more deeply through some questions for reflection.

- I wonder why Samuel was so sad about God rejecting Saul as king.
- What kind of relationship did God have with Samuel?
- What do you think God sees in us that is different from what others see?
- I wonder what Samuel said as he anointed David.
- Imagine being David, kneeling at Samuel's feet and feeling the oil run down over your head and hair. What thoughts would run through your head?

PEACE NOTES

David was almost completely forgotten—Samuel could have left and never seen this hidden brother. Yet God knew David—had seen and loved him all along. Point out that David's name means "Beloved." Hand out sheets of paper. Have each youth write the word *BELOVED* down the side of the page and complete an acrostic poem about traits God might see in them.

Even when the rest of the world overlooks us, we can find peace knowing that God sees what is inside us and loves us for who we are.

**Samuel anoints
David**

1 Samuel 16:1–13

supplies

- Bibles
- Paper
- Markers

explore

MOVE

Challenge youth to get themselves in a line from oldest to youngest (no talking!), as David's brothers probably lined up to pass before Samuel. Once the group is in a line, have each one say their birth date (including the year) to see if the line is in the right order.

RETELL

Retell the story by saying in turn what each character did in the story. What did God do? What did Samuel do? What did Jesse do? What did David do? Bring a prop or costume for each character. One person uses a prop and the rest tell what that character said or did. Suggestions for props: Colorful robe for God, headpiece for Jesse, walking stick for Samuel, stuffed sheep for David. Look through your church's nativity scene or costume stash and adapt as needed.

supplies

- Bibles
- Simple props and costumes

L.E.D.

Have youth read how anointing is still practiced today, on page 24 in *L.E.D.*, and write or draw a picture in the space. (If some have no experience with an anointing, they can draw a picture symbol of anointing.) Read "A little illumination" as well. Pass around some fragrant oil for youth to smell and dab on their hands. They can dab some on their drawings to see how the appearance changes. This can be a reminder that God sees what they can do and calls them to do great things.

supplies

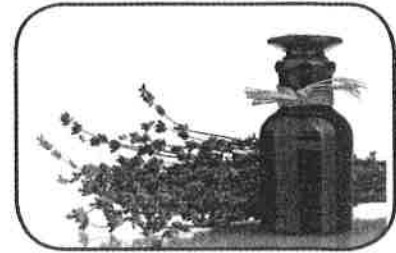
- *L.E.D.* magazines
- Fragrant oil or olive oil with perfume

CONNECT

God chose David, a youngest brother and lowly shepherd, to be king. Likewise, Jesus' teachings turned our usual view of others upside down. Challenge youth to complete the verses and puzzles on page 25 of *L.E.D.* to learn more about how God turns things upside down.

supplies

- Bibles
- *L.E.D.* magazines
- Pencils



other ideas

- Write your "hidden talents" on slips of paper and mix them up in a bowl. Draw slips and have the group guess who has the unseen gift.
- Play "Ups and downs charades" using the Charades cards from the poster pack. Use the cards for Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Samuel, and Saul. Use instructions from Move in session 9.
- Look at Magic Eye pictures and find the images hidden within, or look at optical illusions to see how people see them differently.

bles

PRAY

Listen to “Oyenos, mi Dios” from the Shine CD, track 15. Remind the youth that they are always in God’s sight—heard and known and loved.

SEND

If you did not practice anointing as part of Explore, rub a drop of oil on each youths’ hand as they prepare to leave. Speak these words of blessing, adapted from Isaiah:

God says, “I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands; the thought of you is continually before me.”

supplies

- Shine Songbook and CD
- CD player
- Fragrant oil or olive oil



I've learned that affirming youth (even in small ways) allows them to be more open in sharing and affirming of each other.

—Carrie Smith
Clayton, Ohio

leader's closing prayer

What gifts lie within you that you have not yet shown to the world? What might God anoint you to do?

God, my heart and my life are open to you. Help me to be open to hear and receive your call. Amen.