

Sermon Text Discussion 10/14/2018

I Samuel 16: The One Thing That Matters More Than Anything in Leadership (Drew Hunter)

Overview

Our study of I Samuel has led us through God granting the nation of Israel's request for a king and the introduction and challenges of Saul as their first king. In chapter 16, we are introduced to David, the 2nd and greatest king of Israel. Verse 7 is the key verse of this chapter and of the book of I Samuel.

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."

In this verse, God calls out that we are unable to see a leader as God sees a leader. While we are focused on outward appearances and characteristics, God looks at the heart.

Quotations

"The most remarkable features of the list is that it is unremarkable. It contains nothing about intelligence, decisiveness, drive, wealth, power. Almost everything on the list is elsewhere in the New Testament required of all believers." Don Carson, commenting on the biblical qualifications of elders

Understanding & Application

- 1) Samuel is saddened by the failure of Saul. Reflecting on Saul as king, what leadership characteristics do you think Samuel would list for Saul? Which would be valued by man and which would be valued by God?
- 2) In verse 7, God tells Samuel He looks on a person's heart. How do you define the biblical use of the term 'heart'? What does it mean? Find other times the term 'heart' is used in the Bible and share with the group.
- 3) Think about the leaders you know – those for whom you have worked, selected, promoted, and demoted or fired. What are common characteristics of those whom you respect? What are common characteristics of those you don't necessarily respect? Based on first impressions, did some of the leaders surprise you? Describe one example to the group.
- 4) We are all leaders in some way – at work, at school, in sports, in our homes, etc. Think about a specific leadership role you have played. How did God prepare you for this role? What did you learn in the role and how have you applied what you have learned?
- 5) David was Israel's greatest king and yet he proved to be very human by his multiple failures while king. What were some of these failures? What was the root issue behind these failures? How can we prepare our hearts for facing challenges life throws at us?
- 6) How does this introduction to David remind us of our ultimate and perfect King – Jesus?

- 7) Drew explained that both the hot water (of Hierapolis) and the cold water (of Colossae) were 'good' while the lukewarm water of Laodicea was considered detestable. What specific aspects of your spiritual life would you consider 'lukewarm'?
- 8) It is clear in verse 17 that the Laodiceans were not aware Jesus found their way of life detestable. What aspect of their life does Jesus call out? What aspects of your life might you be comfortable with, but which Jesus might find detestable?
- 9) Drew challenged us to pause at least once each day to reflect on our own level of self-awareness and self-understanding. Ask yourself:
 - a. "What am I feeling"?
 - b. "Why am I responding to people as I am?"
 - c. "Am I depending on myself, like the Laodiceans, or am I moment-by-moment relying on Christ?"Talk as a small group how you might put this into practice and hold each other accountable.
- 10) Affluence can lead to at least three challenges: becoming prideful, a lack of generosity (wanting to keep it for myself), and preferring the riches of the world over the riches of Christ. Which of these is your biggest challenge? Discuss an example with your group. How can you change to address this challenge?
- 11) Read versus 19. Do you believe God rebukes and disciplines us because He loves us? How have you seen Him demonstrate both love and discipline in a specific way?
- 12) A goal of all Christians should be to close the gap between the sins we commit and the sins to which we repent. We should do more of one and less of the other! Discuss how you might practically do this in your daily lives.