

Bible Passage: 1 SAMUEL 16**Key Passage:** Ephesians 1:7-8**Big Picture Question:** *What is grace? Grace is when God gives us something good even when we do not deserve it.*

LEADER DEVOTIONAL

At some point we have probably encountered the underdog rising to a position of prominence or victory. We see this in sports, in business, and in other situations. In a similar way, the Lord often uses unexpected people to display His glory. The Bible tells us that God chooses to use what is “weak in the world to shame the strong” (1 Cor. 1:27).

And Isaiah 55:9 says, “For as heaven is higher than earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” While we may look at current circumstances or outward appearances to determine a particular outcome, God’s ways are always better because only He holds all wisdom.

In 1 Samuel 16, we find an example of this. God chose to use David, a young shepherd with musical talent, to lead Israel.

David’s outward appearance and young age may not have fit with the cultural standard of a king, but God saw David’s heart. God’s choice was not based on visible characteristics, but rather on the invisible character of the heart.

Similar to David, Jesus was not a King the people expected. Rather than come to earth in power, prestige, or prominence, Jesus came in humility. He did not have an impressive physical stature, yet His heart was fully set on obeying His Father and loving others through self-sacrifice.

Like David, God looks at our hearts and desires that we follow after Him. Regardless of our physical stature, age, or occupation, God desires to use us for His glory. And He wants us to grow in Christlikeness so that our gifts can be used for His kingdom purposes.

Who would have thought that David’s ability to play the lyre would get him into Saul’s inner circle? God did. It was His plan all along. And it is His plan to use us in great ways too. God is faithful to use the gifts He’s given us. May we have hearts that are willing to serve Him for His glory and our joy.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

David: the first king to unite Israel and Judah and the first to receive the promise of a royal Messiah in his line. David was pictured as the ideal king of God’s people. He ruled from about 1005 to 965 BC.

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WELCOME

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY: *I am so glad to see everyone today! What do you think a king should look like? [Allow responses.] We might think a king should wear nice clothes or look very strong, but the heart of a king matters more. In today's Bible story, we will see how God looks at the heart.*

ACTIVITY PAGE

Invite kids to complete "Choose the Right One!" activity page.

SAY: *Did you have a difficult time choosing the matching picture? Some of those were a little tricky! In today's Bible story we're going to learn about how God chose just the right person to be king. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 6:5 together.*

KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Ephesians 1:7-8 together.

SAY: *God chose David to be king. God also chose to lead us to salvation. He sent His Son, Jesus, to die in our place on the cross. Jesus' blood covered our sin and provided our salvation.*

Before the session, write each word of the key passage on an index card. Tape the index cards on the floor to create a path. (Keep the key passage words in the correct order.) Instruct the kids to recite the key passage aloud together from the key passage poster. Invite the kids to walk or jump from card to card, reciting each word as they step on it.

SESSION STARTER

FIND THE HIDDEN SHEEP

Crumple several half sheets of scratch paper into balls to resemble sheep. Hide the sheep throughout the classroom. Encourage kids to help you find the sheep. Play several rounds of the game, allowing the kids to take turns hiding the sheep for their friends.

SAY: *David was a shepherd before he was the king. Shepherds had to protect their sheep and find them if they were missing. David was taking care of his father's sheep when Samuel came looking for a king. People were surprised that God chose David to be Israel's next king. Would you be surprised to know that a king used to be a shepherd? What type of person do you think should be king? God said what a person looks like is not the most important thing about him. God sees what people think and feel.*

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INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

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SAY: *I love coming to church to read the Bible with all of you. Does anyone have their Bible here this morning? [Allow responses and distribute classroom Bibles to anyone who needs one.] Reading the Bible is the most important thing we do together. God gave us His Word in the Bible so we can know about Him, learn how much He loves us, and understand how we can obey Him.*

Does anyone know how a person becomes the president of the United States? [Allow responses.] Yes! United States citizens vote on who they think should be the president. Does anyone know how a person becomes a king or queen? [Allow responses.] That's right! Kings and queens are born into a royal family. They are not chosen by the people who live in that country. Today we're going to read about King David. King David was actually chosen to be king, but not by the people. He was chosen to be king by God Himself.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

SAY: *We're going to learn a new big picture question today. **What is grace?** Raise your hand if you have heard of the word grace. [Allow responses.] Does anyone know what the word grace means? [Allow responses.] **Grace is when God gives us something good even when we do not deserve it.***

I am going to choose a volunteer to stand up here with me. [Choose a volunteer to join you.] Did I choose this person because he did something amazing, like win a contest or bring his Bible to church? [Allow responses.] No, he didn't do anything special for me to choose him. He's just standing here. Do we usually win awards for just standing? [Allow responses.] No, we don't usually deserve awards for standing. But I'm going to give him one anyway. [Give the volunteer a piece of candy or small prize.] You see, we don't deserve God's love and salvation, but He gives it to us anyway. That's God's grace to us!

REVIEW THE TIMELINE

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY: *The Israelites wanted to be like the nations around them. They rejected God as their King and asked for a human king. God gave them Saul. But Saul sinned. Saul was rejected as king because he disobeyed God. But God didn't leave Israel without a king. God chose a new king for Israel. Let's take a look at the person God chose to rule His people.*

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BIBLE LESSON

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 16. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story or show the Bible story video “God Chose David to Be King.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

GOD CHOSE DAVID TO BE KING

Saul was the king of Israel, but he had disobeyed God. So, God told Samuel to fill a horn with oil and go to Bethlehem. A man named Jesse lived there. God had chosen one of Jesse’s sons to be Israel’s next king. God said, “Visit Jesse and his sons. I will show you which one I have chosen.”

Samuel went to Bethlehem and met with Jesse and his sons. Jesse’s oldest son was tall and handsome. When Samuel saw him, he thought, this must be the one God chose to be king.

But God told Samuel, “He’s not the one. Do not pay attention to what he looks like. You look at what you can see on the outside, but I see the heart.”

Jesse brought his next son to Samuel, but Samuel said, “The Lord hasn’t chosen him either.”

One by one, Jesse’s sons approached Samuel. Each time, Samuel said, “The Lord hasn’t chosen him either.”

“Do you have any more sons?” Samuel asked.

“Yes,” Jesse said. “My youngest son, David, is in the field taking care of the sheep.”

Jesse sent for David. When David arrived, God told Samuel, “He’s the one!”

Samuel anointed David; he poured oil on David’s head to show God had chosen him to be the king. The Spirit of the Lord was with David, and Samuel went back home.

Now King Saul was bothered by an evil spirit. Saul’s servants thought Saul might feel better if he listened to beautiful music. One of Saul’s officials knew that Jesse’s son David could play the lyre. So, David came to Saul and whenever Saul felt troubled, David played his lyre and Saul felt better.

Christ Connection: Samuel anointed David, setting him apart to be the next king. God’s choice for Israel’s king was surprising; David was the youngest in his family, but God saw David’s heart for the Lord. When Jesus came to earth, He seemed like a surprising choice for a king. Jesus is the perfect King who saves us from our sin and reigns forever.

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REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY: Saul was the king, but Saul sinned against God. God decided to choose a new king. God sent Samuel to Bethlehem to find the new king. Samuel saw the older, taller son and thought God would choose him to be king. But God wasn't looking at physical appearances. What was God looking for in a king? [Pause for kids to respond.]

Samuel saw the youngest, smallest son. David was a shepherd. He didn't look like a king. David was not who Samuel expected as king. But God saw David's heart. Who did God chose to be the next king of Israel? [Allow kids to respond.]

Samuel poured oil on David's head. The oil showed that God had chosen him to be the king. The Spirit of the Lord stayed with David. David waited for his time to be king. While David was waiting to be king, he played music for King Saul. Whenever Saul felt troubled, David would play the lyre.

David was not an expected choice for a king, but through his royal family line, the true King would come. Jesus is the perfect King who saves us from our sin.

Questions from kids

What might you need to do if you want to work with a church when you grow up?

How can you serve and honor God no matter where you work?

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Small Group ACTIVITIES



Say • Raise your hand if you had heard this Bible story before today.

Distribute Bibles and help the kids find 1 Samuel 16. Explain that 1 Samuel is a historical book in the Old Testament. 1 Samuel teaches us about the prophet Samuel, King Saul, and King David. The Book of 1 Samuel comes right after the book of Ruth.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 16:10-13 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses. Consider pointing out the location of Bethlehem (I5) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map.

SAY *God had rejected Saul as king because of his disobedience. God sent the prophet Samuel to find the next king of Israel. Samuel went to Bethlehem to the house of Jesse. Jesse presented many of his sons to Samuel, but none of them were chosen by God. Jesse brought his youngest son, David, who was a shepherd. David didn't look like a king, but God chose David to be king. Samuel anointed David with oil and the Spirit of the Lord was on him.*

GROUP DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY: *Why should we not judge others based on what they look like?*

Discuss how God told Samuel not to look at David's appearance. God told Samuel that He sees the heart. We should not judge people based on what they look like because this is not what God does. Someone can be tall, cool, and wear awesome shoes, but what is most important is if he loves and obeys God.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Sam. 16:7.)

SAY *What does it mean that the Spirit of the Lord was with David?*

Remind kids that Samuel anointed David with oil and the Spirit of the Lord was with David. Samuel's oil didn't actually do anything for David. It was just an outward sign of the Spirit dwelling inside of David. The Spirit was guiding him to make wise decisions and lead the people of Israel well. The Spirit of the Lord guides us in the same way when we believe in Jesus.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Sam. 16:13.)

SAY *How does David remind you of Jesus?*

Review how David did not look like a king. He was a lowly shepherd. But God chose David to be the king of Israel and lead His people. In a similar way, Jesus did not look like a king. He was born in a lowly stable and was raised in the home of a carpenter. But Jesus loved God and perfectly obeyed Him. God chose Jesus to rescue His people from their sin.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Sam. 16:1-13.)

PRAYER TIME

Pray for your group.