

## DAVID: A MAN OF PASSION AND DESTINY

## STUDY TWO

## A Nobody, Nobody Noticed

*1 Samuel 15:24–16:13*

*If you and I had been Jews living in 1020 BC, all our attention would have focused upon King Saul. He was taking the country by storm. However, about that time, a nobody was keeping the sheep along the Judean hillside near the hamlet of Bethlehem. A little boy that nobody noticed by the name of David.*

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

**T**HE human body is one of God's most marvelous and intricate creations. It also is one of the most fragile. If the lungs no longer expand to take in oxygen, if the heart ceases to pump blood throughout the body, if the brain's synapses stop firing, life can end in just a few moments.

Thankfully, God designed the human body to do these and countless other functions subconsciously. A person could go through an entire lifetime without even noticing that his or her lungs, heart, and brain are sustaining life.

The body of Christ works in a similar way to the human body. No one part is more important than the others, and all the parts work in tandem to sustain the presence of the kingdom of heaven on earth. Some believers, however, have such a profound love for God and a deep commitment to Christ that the mission of the kingdom would suffer greatly without their efforts.

And often, nobody notices these heroes of the faith.



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

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## A Nobody, Nobody Noticed

1 Samuel 15:24–16:13

God's way of doing things subverts human tendencies in almost every way. While the world picks people of power, influence, and prominence to do great things, God uses nobodies. This *Searching the Scriptures* study will look at 1 Samuel 15:24–16:13 to see how God chose David—a nobody, nobody noticed—to be king over Israel and to serve God's greater purposes.



### PREPARE YOUR HEART

Before David donned the majestic robes of a king, he wore the simple tunic of a shepherd. Few in ancient Israel respected shepherds, but they held an indispensable role in society. Use *Psalm 23:1–4* to help you prepare your heart before turning to the Scriptures.

*The LORD is my shepherd;  
I have all that I need.  
He lets me rest in green meadows;  
he leads me beside peaceful streams.  
He renews my strength.  
He guides me along right paths,  
bringing honor to his name.  
Even when I walk  
through the darkest valley,  
I will not be afraid,  
for you are close beside me.  
Your rod and your staff  
protect and comfort me.*



### TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Saul, Israel's first king, was the tallest and strongest man in Israel. The Israelites wanted to have a mighty warrior-king like their neighboring nations. God granted their request. Yet Saul was the king the *people* wanted . . . not the king *God* wanted.



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1 Samuel 15:24–16:13

After years of Saul's reign, God said, "I am sorry that I ever made Saul king, for he has not been loyal to me and has refused to obey my command" (1 Samuel 15:11). What did Samuel say in 15:27–28 when he confronted Saul about his unfaithfulness to God?

Saul likely wondered, *Who is better than me?* After all, the people of Israel made Saul king because no one was better than him . . . physically speaking. However, God desired to set a spiritually strong person over His nation to guide them into a deep, faithful relationship with Him. God desired a spiritual hero—one *nobody* expected.



### Observation: People Choose . . . God Corrects

Successful Bible study always results in practical application. Yet the fruit of application grows out of interpretation of a passage's meaning. And meaning always finds its roots in observation.<sup>1</sup> Read 1 Samuel 16:1–13, and observe what the words of the text say. As you read, pay special attention to Samuel's reaction to the events recorded in the passage.

Previously, the shallow people of Israel selected Saul to be their king. According to 16:1, who would select the *new* king?



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*1 Samuel 15:24–16:13*

How did Samuel react in *1 Samuel 16:6* when he saw Jesse's first son Eliab? According to *16:7*, why did he react this way? Why did God ultimately *not* choose Eliab to be king?

As Jesse paraded each of his sons before Samuel, what was God's answer for each as to whether or not he would be king?

**Abinadab** (*1 Samuel 16:8*): \_\_\_\_\_

**Shimea** (*16:9*): \_\_\_\_\_

**Jesse's next four sons** (*16:10*): \_\_\_\_\_

Although Jesse showed Samuel seven of his sons, he had eight. According to *16:11*, where was this last son while Samuel was meeting the seven other sons?



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1 Samuel 15:24–16:13

According to 1 Samuel 16:12, what did God say when Samuel met David, Jesse's final son? What did Samuel do in response in 16:13?

Not even David's own father noticed the spiritual depth of the lowly shepherd out in the fields. Yet God saw David's heart, and He would turn this overlooked boy into a king.

*Jesse reveals two very common mistakes made by parents. Number one, he didn't have an equal appreciation for all his children. And number two, he failed to cultivate a mutual self-respect among them. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*



### Interpretation: People Forget . . . God Remembers

Pastor Chuck Swindoll notes that interpretation requires determining what a passage of Scripture *means*, not “imposing your opinions on the Bible.”<sup>2</sup> This principle is especially important when the meaning of a passage may feel difficult to accept.

How did Samuel's response to his conversation with God in 1 Samuel 16:1–2 reveal his lack of trust in God's plan? How is Samuel's example instructive for followers of Jesus today?



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Why did Jesse show Samuel all his sons *except* David? What did Samuel's response in *1 Samuel 16:6* reveal about what both he and Jesse considered most important for Israel's future king? Similarly, what does this scene reveal about David, especially in comparison with his brothers? (Hint: Remember God's word in *16:7*.)

*If I could change one thing about my focus, I would like to see people not by face but by heart. Wouldn't that be a marvelous ability? What discernment! Now, you see, we're not able to do that. We have limited focus. Only God can do that. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*



### Correlation: God Comes . . . People Reject

Imagine how the people of Bethlehem reacted when they heard that the young shepherd David would be king. They likely wouldn't have believed it! David's experience parallels that of Jesus' in this way. The gospels say very little about Jesus' life between His birth and His public ministry. For much of Jesus' life, He too was a nobody, nobody noticed.

*Mark 6:1–6* tells of Jesus teaching in His hometown, Nazareth, among people who knew Him and His family well. According to *6:2*, how did these old acquaintances respond to Jesus' teaching?



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According to [Mark 6:3](#), why did the people from Nazareth respond this way? What detail about their response does this verse add?

According to [6:5](#), what was the result of the crowd's reaction to Jesus?

The people of Nazareth saw Jesus as nothing more than the carpenter Joseph's son. And how could God use a nobody like Him? Because the people adopted this narrow perspective of God's power, they missed out on the blessings that God wanted to shower upon them. And God still wants to use nobodies to unfold His purposes in the world today.

### **Application: God Speaks . . . We Apply**

Pastor Chuck sees three timeless lessons taught through this account of a nobody chosen by God that can instruct those who follow Him today:

1. *God's solutions are often strange and simple. Be open!* God's will isn't complicated. He has less interest in external appearance and more concern for inner holiness.
2. *God's promotions are usually sudden and surprising. Be ready!* You never know when God will call on you to fill a need. And He will use you . . . if you'll allow Him.
3. *God's selections are always sovereign and sure. Be calm!* Times will come when the world feels shrouded in darkness—hopeless. Trust in Him. He knows what He's doing.



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In what ways do you find society evaluating people based on outward appearance rather than the heart? If you also feel the temptation to do so, how would shifting more of your own focus toward others' hearts affect your relationships?

*Oh, for the ability to see beyond the obvious. To see beyond the bad track record. To see beyond the age or the looks or the lack of intelligence. To see worth and value down deep inside. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

Do you ever feel like a nobody—as if nobody notices your hard work, your good character, your care for others? How does the example of David speak to your situation and encourage you today?

God can use *anyone* to do amazing things—even a nobody like David. God saw the pure heart of this otherwise unknown shepherd and chose David to rule and lead His people. David's situation, however, is not one-of-a-kind. God still looks at the heart today, and He still searches for nobodies who are ready to serve Him.





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### A FINAL PRAYER

*Father, I praise You for the way You have worked out Your good purposes in the world. Thank You for using nobodies like David to extend Your love to those who need it most. I ask You to use me in this way. Work in my heart to clean out my sin so I might participate in the wonderful plan for Your creation. I pray these things in Jesus' holy name. Amen.*

#### ENDNOTES

1. To learn about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* method of Bible study, go to the web page, "[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](#)."
2. Charles R. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2016), 111.

