Preschool–Grade 6

Samuel Anoints David

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: People look at the outside, but the LORD looks on the heart. God chose the youngest son, out keeping the sheep, so everyone matters to Him.
Bible passage: 1 Samuel 16. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart." *1 Samuel 16:7 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), a nicely wrapped box with a rock inside, a plain paper bag with a treat for each child inside, a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board. Set the wrapped box and the paper bag on a table.

1. Opening game: Pick a Prize (5–10 minutes)

Show the class the beautiful wrapped box and the plain paper bag. Ask: *Which one do you want?* Let the class vote. Open the box first: a rock! Then open the bag: treats for everyone. Ask: *Why did so many of you pick the box?* Say: "We judged by the outside. Today a prophet did that too, and God taught him to look at the heart."

2. Bible story: God Chooses David (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 16. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

A new king. King Saul had rejected the word of the LORD, so the LORD rejected him from being king (1 Samuel 15:23). **Look up 1 Samuel 16:1.** God told Samuel to stop mourning (being sad) for Saul, fill his horn with oil and go to Jesse the Bethlehemite, "for I have provided me a king among his sons." The horn was an animal's horn, hollow inside, used to hold oil.

Off to Bethlehem. Samuel said, "How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me" (16:2). The LORD told him to take a **heifer** (a young cow) and offer a sacrifice to the LORD (16:2–3). Samuel did what the LORD said and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the town **trembled** (shook with fear) and asked, "Comest thou peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably" (16:4–5). He **sanctified** Jesse and his sons, which means he got them ready to come before God, and called them to the sacrifice (16:5).

Not by the outside. Samuel looked on Eliab and said, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before him" (16:6). **Look up 1 Samuel 16:7.** The LORD said not to look on his **countenance** (face) or the height of his **stature** (how tall he was). "The LORD seeth not as man seeth." Then Abinadab passed by, then Shammah, and the LORD had not chosen them (16:8–9). **Look up 1 Samuel 16:10.** Seven of Jesse's sons passed before Samuel, and the LORD had not chosen these.

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The youngest. Look up 1 Samuel 16:11. "Are here all thy children?" Jesse said the youngest was left, and "he keepeth the sheep." Samuel said, "Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither." When he came, he was **ruddy** (rosy and healthy), "and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to" (16:12): he also had a fine face and was good-looking. The LORD said, "Arise, anoint him: for this is he" (16:12).

The horn of oil. Look up 1 Samuel 16:13. Samuel took the horn of oil and **anointed** David (poured the oil on him to show God chose him) "in the midst of his brethren," right there in front of his brothers. The Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. Then Samuel went home to Ramah (16:13). David did not become king that day, but God had chosen him.

David and King Saul. Then the Bible says the Spirit of the LORD left Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him (16:14). Saul's servants said, let us find a man who can play the harp well (16:16). **Look up 1 Samuel 16:18.** A servant said Jesse had a son who played well, "and the LORD is with him." Saul sent for David, "which is with the sheep" (16:19). David came and stood before Saul. Saul loved him greatly, and David became his **armourbearer**, the helper who carried the king's armor and weapons (16:21). **Look up 1 Samuel 16:23.** When David played the harp, Saul was refreshed and was well.

Write on the board: **Man looks on:** the face, how tall, the outside (16:7). **The LORD looks on:** the heart (16:7).

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. Even Samuel, a prophet, judged by the outside at first (16:6). Why is it so easy to do that?
2. David was out keeping the sheep while his brothers were at the sacrifice (16:11). How do you think it felt when they sent for him?
3. What do people notice first about a kid at school? What does God notice?
4. The Bible says "the LORD is with him" about David (16:18). What do you think a heart that loves God looks like at your age?
5. Who is someone that gets left out, that God sees and loves? How can you treat them this week?

Recall questions

1. Which son did Samuel look at first? *(Eliab, 1 Samuel 16:6)*
2. How many of Jesse's sons passed before Samuel? *(Seven, 16:10)*
3. What came upon David from that day forward? *(The Spirit of the LORD, 16:13)*

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4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **countenance** means face; **stature** means how tall someone is; **refused** means did not choose; **seeth** means sees; **looketh** means looks; the **outward appearance** is what someone looks like on the outside. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God chose David because the LORD looks on the heart. God sees your heart too, and He loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. The LORD who sees every heart came to earth as a man: Jesus is God manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: before you judge someone by the outside, stop and remember: the LORD looks on the heart.

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6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. 1 Samuel 16:1: What did God tell Samuel to fill with oil? *(His horn)*
2. 1 Samuel 16:1: What town was Jesse from? *(Bethlehem; he was "Jesse the Bethlehemite")*
3. 1 Samuel 16:2: What animal did Samuel take for the sacrifice? *(An heifer, a young cow)*
4. 1 Samuel 16:6: Which son did Samuel look on first? *(Eliab)*
5. 1 Samuel 16:8–9: Name the next two sons who passed by. *(Abinadab and Shammah)*
6. 1 Samuel 16:11: What was the youngest son doing? *(Keeping the sheep)*
7. 1 Samuel 16:13: Where did Samuel go after he anointed David? *(To Ramah)*
8. 1 Samuel 16:23: What did David play for Saul? *(An harp)*

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You look on the heart and that every person matters to You. Help us not to judge by the outside, and give us hearts that love You like David's. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

Told gently on purpose: 1 Samuel 16:14 gets one plain sentence, in the Bible's own words. Don't add details the Bible doesn't give. If a child asks, say: "Saul had turned away from obeying God's word (15:23). God is in charge of everything. When David played, Saul was refreshed (16:23)."

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