NOTES

SERIES TAKEAWAY

A champion generation isn't raised by accident. It's formed in a house, by an ear that listens, a mouth that tells the truth, and a hand that lets go at the right time.

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BRISBANE

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CHAMPIONS THAT SEE — God Sees What Others Overlook

OPENING PRAYER

Father, thank You that You see us completely and know us deeply. As we open Your Word, help us move beyond the things that often shape our opinions of ourselves and others. Give us eyes to see what You see, hearts that reflect Yours, and faith to trust Your calling even when the journey looks different from what we expected. In Jesus' name, Amen.

OPENING QUESTION (OPTIONAL)

Have you ever been overlooked for something you knew you were capable of doing? Perhaps you weren't picked for the team, considered for an opportunity, or recognised for something you had worked hard to achieve.

How did that experience affect the way you saw yourself?

WORD

16 The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected
him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to
Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” 2 And
Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me.” And the Lord said, “Take
a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’ 3 And invite Jesse to
the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do. And you shall anoint for me him
whom I declare to you.” 4 Samuel did what the Lord commanded and came to
Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, “Do you
come peaceably?” 5 And he said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.
Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he consecrated
Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

6 When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord's anointed is
before him.” 7 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.” 8 Then
Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “Neither has
the Lord chosen this one.” 9 Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said,
“Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” 10 And Jesse made seven of his sons pass
before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen these.” 11 Then
Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the
youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send
and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here.” 12 And he sent and brought
him in. Now he was ruddy, had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. And the Lord said,
“Arise, anoint him, for this is he.” 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed
him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from
that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.
- 1 Samuel 16:1–13 (ESV)

Read the entire passage together from the ESV Bible.

MAIN REFLECTION POINTS

God sees the heart, not the height (vv. 1–7).

When Samuel arrives at Jesse's house, Eliab immediately appears to have the qualities of a king. He looks the part. Yet God challenges Samuel's assumptions with a statement that reaches far beyond this particular moment: people look at outward appearances, but the Lord looks at the heart. We are often drawn to what is impressive, recognisable and immediately visible. God, however, sees beyond presentation to character, motive and the condition of the heart. The challenge for us is not simply to believe that God sees our hearts, but to learn to see people through His eyes rather than judging them by the standards of the world.

God's champions can be overlooked, even by their own household (vv. 8–11).

Perhaps one of the most confronting details in this story is that David isn't even included in the initial gathering. His father has brought his other sons before Samuel, but David remains out in the fields. He isn't necessarily being deliberately rejected; he simply hasn't been considered relevant to the occasion. Yet the person everyone has overlooked is the very person God has chosen. Being overlooked by people who should recognise your potential does not mean you have been overlooked by God. Our value and calling are not determined by who notices us, who gives us an opportunity, or who invites us into the room. God's calling does not require the room's permission.

Anointing precedes position (vv. 12–13).

When David finally arrives, God identifies him as the chosen one, and Samuel anoints him in the presence of his brothers. But David doesn't immediately become king. There are years of preparation, difficulty, opposition and suffering between the anointing and the throne. The oil was not the finish line; it was the beginning of a journey. Like an artist who spends years developing their craft before receiving public recognition, David had to learn to faithfully carry what God had placed upon his life long before he occupied the position associated with it. We must learn to recognise that a delay in seeing the promise fulfilled is not necessarily a denial of God's purpose. Sometimes the space between the anointing and the throne is where God develops the character required to carry the calling.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Seeing beyond appearances: God tells Samuel not to judge by outward appearance but to look at the heart. What are some of the ways our culture, including church culture, encourages us to measure people's value, potential or leadership by external appearances? How might we need to change the way we see others?
2. The overlooked one: David wasn't even invited into the room when Samuel first arrived. Have you ever experienced a season where you felt overlooked, particularly by people who should have recognised your gifts or potential? How did that experience shape your relationship with God and your sense of identity?
3. The danger of comparison: David's brothers were all present, yet God had chosen someone who wasn't even considered. How can comparison with others cause us to question what God is doing in our own lives? What does it look like to remain faithful without needing someone else's recognition?
4. Character before platform: Why do you think God was more concerned with David's heart than his appearance or experience? What are some areas of our character that God might need to develop before we can faithfully carry greater responsibility?
5. The space between anointing and the throne: David was anointed long before he became king. What might it look like to faithfully walk in God's calling while waiting for circumstances, opportunities or recognition to catch up? How do we distinguish between faithfully waiting and passively doing nothing?
6. Champions who see differently: If God sees what others overlook, what might change in the way we treat people in our families, workplaces, universities and church community? Who might God be asking you to notice, encourage or make room for?

ACTION POINTS FOR LIFE

This week, let's put into practice what we have discovered about the way God sees and calls people.

- Change the way you see: Identify someone you may have overlooked, underestimated or dismissed. Take time to recognise, encourage and affirm something God may be developing in their life.
- Refuse to be defined by rejection: If you have been overlooked or passed over, resist the temptation to allow someone else's assessment to become your identity. Spend time with God, remembering that your worth and calling are established in Him.

ACTION POINTS FOR LIFE

- Be faithful in the field: Identify one thing you believe God has called you to do in this season. Rather than waiting for a title, platform or public recognition, take a practical step towards it this week.
- Champion someone else: Look for an opportunity to open a door for someone who may not ordinarily be considered. Be the person who recognises potential and creates room for others to grow.

Personal challenge: What has God already anointed you for that you're still waiting to see materialise? What is one step of obedience you can take now, rather than waiting for the position, opportunity or recognition to arrive?

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank You that You see us beyond our appearance, achievements, failures and reputation. You know our hearts, and You love us completely. Thank You that through Jesus, You have made a way for us to be forgiven, restored and brought into relationship with You.

For those responding to Jesus: Lord Jesus, I recognise my need for You. I have tried to live life on my own terms, and I acknowledge that I have fallen short of Your purposes. I turn away from my sin and put my trust in You. Thank You for dying for me and rising again. Forgive me, make me new, and teach me to follow You. I surrender my life to You as Lord and Saviour. Amen.

For ministry and commissioning: Holy Spirit, awaken us to the calling You have placed upon our lives. For those who feel forgotten, overlooked or disqualified, remind them that their identity is found in Christ, not in the approval of others. For those waiting for an opportunity, give them courage to remain faithful in the field. For those who have received a calling but are still waiting to see it fulfilled, give them perseverance and faithfulness in the process.

We declare that we will not wait for the world to give us permission to obey God. We will see people as He sees them, serve where He has placed us, and faithfully carry what He has entrusted to us. Raise up a generation of champions whose hearts reflect Jesus, whose lives demonstrate obedience, and whose influence makes room for others to flourish.
In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.