

Stores often have their employees wear a special outfit or item of clothing to identify them as representatives of the store. In order to serve you, chosen individuals are marked off with company branding. At times this can be really helpful – when you can't find a desired item, you can ask a representative to assist you.

But there are times when employees don't live up to the reputation of the company they are to represent. They may act out, be snarky, or simply not fulfill their task. And when this happens, people don't merely think about the one employee; they think about the entire store, its brand, and consider their loyalty and purchase.

In the kingdom of God, God had marked off chosen individuals to represent him to the world. The head of this kingdom was the king himself – a man who was to be a faithful Israelite, a humble and godly king, a submitted man to the law of God. As the chosen king went, so went the kingdom.

Israel had many ups and downs – and truthfully they had more downs than ups. But God had promised that he would build his kingdom, and that he would do a great work that would bless the world through the family of Abraham.

See what God sees (1 Sam. 16:1-13)

What Israel had wanted was a king so that they could be like the nations (1 Sam. 8:5). God had said he would choose a king to rule over the people, but instead of trusting God's provision, the people chose Saul (1 Sam. 12:13). He was handsome as any man in Israel and was a head taller than anyone else (1 Sam. 9:2). Even worse, Saul was not a king who trusted in the Word of the Lord; he trusted in his own intuition. In his first battle, he disobeyed the command of the Lord and when confronted made excuses. For this, Samuel told Saul, "Your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you" (1 Sam. 13:14). Even with this correction, Saul didn't learn the necessity of obedience. When commanded to get rid of the enemy Amalekites, he spared anything of value (1 Sam. 15:9).

Israel got what they wanted. They got the king like the nations. But this king was a disappointment to Samuel. And this could leave us despairing: will God merely hand us over to our desires, even bad desires that could ruin us?

The problem with Saul was that he was the people's choice. He wasn't from the tribe of Judah, as God had promised, but Ephraim. He looked good outwardly, but inwardly he was a mess. God was grieved over Saul as King, and so was Samuel (1 Sam. 15:34-35). But God does not dwell in the past, but he moves his people towards hope.

The Story of Everything: Anointing – 1 Samuel 16

Since Samuel had not seen Saul since he had told him that the kingdom would be taken away from him, any travel might be perceived to be insurrection. Samuel doesn't want to create trouble for the people, and so when the Lord tells him to go to Bethlehem, Samuel asks how he can go to Bethlehem. The Lord instructs him to offer sacrifices there and invite Jesse. This provides Samuel with a cover – it's not the whole truth, but it keeps everyone safe from the king who has lost his cool.

As Samuel goes, he is to take the horn and oil to anoint Israel's next king. As he sees the sons of Jesse, from oldest to youngest, he is told that the tallest, most handsome sons are not whom the Lord has chosen. When all the sons pass by, all that remains is the boy in the field tending sheep. And when the youngest boy comes, we learn that he is a sturdy, good looking teen.

And as Samuel pours the anointing oil over this young man's head, the Spirit of God comes upon him, giving him the sign of the guarantee of the down payment of the coming kingdom. This hope of Israel's future is given to David – the Beloved – the one chosen by God's wisdom.

So often, we as humans look and decide upon our wisdom. We look at the troubles of the future and we make our plans. But what God's anointing does is it gives us a hope and a future. His anointing reminds us that what God chooses from what God sees, not from what we see. Over and over, the language of this chapter is about perspective. Samuel grieves the past, God determines the future. Samuel sees physical appearances, God sees the heart. Our sight is so often limited. We see dimly now, but God sees clearly from beginning to end. What looks like the smallest, weakest, and most foolish choice is often the wisdom of God. When we determine how we will act by what we see, we are not living by faith, but by sight.

What God's anointing does is reorient our perspective from the seen to the unseen, from the earthly to the heavenly perspective. God gives his Spirit to David to empower him for service, and he gives us his Spirit so that we can see more than what is visible to human eyes. When we merely look with human eyes, we will despise the small, foolish, and weak things of this world and desire the strong, smart, and big things. But God chooses the weak things, the foolish things, the things that aren't, and he does so to shame the proud. While Saul looked like the obvious choice – tall and handsome, the word 'tall' describing Saul in 1 Sam. 9:2 is the same word used to describe a prideful person in Hannah's prayer in 1 Sam. 2. Hannah had prayed that the Lord would raise up the lowly and bring down the proud, and this is what he does with Saul and David. The high is brought low and the low is exalted. For when we see what God sees, we will not despise small, weak, even foolish things to us. For God loves to show that it is not up to our smarts, our plans, and our power, but his.

See how God works (1 Sam. 16:14-23)

While David is anointed and the Spirit comes upon him with power, Saul finds himself in the opposite predicament. The Spirit that was given to him for service and kingship is now

The Story of Everything: Anointing – 1 Samuel 16

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removed. In the OT, the Spirit of God came upon people for specific tasks. This passage doesn't tell us if Saul lost his salvation; but 1 Sam. 10:9 does tell us that God changed Saul's heart, and his heart was changed away from ruling and from having authority.

Instead of the Spirit of God giving Saul the power to serve as king, Saul now experiences a spirit of misery, and this is the most likely meaning of what our Bibles translate as an 'evil spirit.' Most likely, an angel of judgment torments and terrifies Saul, and Saul becomes emotionally volatile and increasingly paranoid.

Ironically, the solution to Saul's torment is to adopt the beloved son into his household. Just as Eli adopted Samuel and Samuel adopted Saul, now Saul adopts David into his household because David finds favour with Saul, and Saul is pleased and delighted in David (1 Sam. 16:21, 23). From this day forward, David will consider Saul like a father (1 Sam. 24:11), and Saul considers David like a son (24:16; 26:17).

As David ministers in the courts of Saul, David is the anointed, chosen one to rule the kingdom, but not yet. He is to minister and relieve Saul from his trauma and distress, playing songs of comfort and joy. But David can minister in the presence of Saul because "The Lord is with him" (16:18). David may be the beloved, favoured one, but his time has not yet come. David may have the Spirit of Christ empowering him to serve and rule, but he must wait. God's anointing does not mean that we can have everything right now; his anointing produces what is good in us to wait, to serve, and to hope in him because his kingdom is secure in his hand. And when we have God's perspective, seeing from his vantage point, and when we see how God works, patiently and with care, we can more clearly...

See the Glory of Christ

David would be the great king of Israel. After the decline of Israel through the judges, God's chosen man would come on the scene and bring Israel into her greatest chapter in the OT. But four centuries after David would die, the prophet Isaiah would see how the kingship of Israel couldn't hold unless God did something. Isaiah would prophesy these words (READ Isa. 11:1-5).

God had promised that the chosen king would not be crowned, but would be anointed, and he would be anointed by the Spirit of God himself so that he would rule and reign with righteousness and faithfulness. This king would judge not with human eyes but by the Word of the Lord.

Luke tells us that when all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized as well. And as he was praying, heaven was opened, the Spirit descended on him in a bodily form like a dove, and a voice from heaven said, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased" (Lk. 3:21-22). Along came another beloved. Along came another son. And given the anointing of the Spirit, he came to do what Isaiah 61 had foretold: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because

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THE STORY OF
Everything
LUKE 24:27

he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor....", and Jesus himself quotes these words in Lk 4:18-19 to declare that this is what he has come to do.

Christ is the Chosen One, the Anointed, the King who comes, beloved by God to do his service to rescue a people who have had no godly leaders to bring them into the fullness of the kingdom. And when you trust in this Chosen, Beloved King who has come to rule and reign by the blood of his cross, 1 John 2:18-27 tells us that we can discern what is true and false. For when God poured out his Spirit upon us, it was not merely a spirit of service, but the Spirit guaranteeing our inheritance of a kingdom that cannot spoil or fade (Eph. 1:11ff; 1 Pe. 1). John tells us that this Spirit guides us into the truth of God's Word (1 Jn 2:20, 27).

But there are many anti-Christ, John warns us. There are those who come who look like they have an anointing, but they are not real. They will pull you away from God's people. But those anointed – chosen – are those who trust in Christ and spread the reign of Jesus Christ.

You have been marked. You wear uniform of heaven. You've been given the authority of the company of heaven to represent heaven to the world. The Holy Spirit is that sign – you belong to Christ, you are chosen, you are beloved. What we say and how we live represents his kingdom to the world.

But we are not the Christ. But we point to the Chosen, Anointed One whose kingdom is coming, whose will is being done here on earth as it is in heaven.