

Series: Life's Defining Moments

VBC

Pastor John Johnson

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1 Samuel 16:1-13

“When God Comes After Us”

I was listening this week to Dr. Matsakis, Chief Scientist for the US Naval Observatory—talk about TIME

- he oversees the work that keeps the clock for the rest of the world—which is critical, for *time coordinates our lives*
- the USNO sets the digital clocks on our walls, our phones, and our iPads
- so it is critical that the instruments they use are precise—though he admits they are not perfect
- even with the present use of atomic fountains—that set the frequency of an atomic clock
- time could lose—or gain one second—*but it will take 300 million years!*

What we do know for certain is that within time—there are defining moments—moments that change everything

- moments that hence must be seized

“Moments move in a timely manner, and time waits for no one. Though it may seem the case, time never stands still. And like petals of a rose, moments fall to the ground once there is no life in them”—McManus

Saul had his moments—but now they have fallen to the ground—and now there is no life left in them

- it is now David's time—1 Samuel 16 begins his story
- and here—we are introduced to one of his defining moments
- and there are many—for God tells us more about David than anyone else
- “he is the most detailed rendering of God dimensioned humanity we have”*
- the opening verses set the context—read verses 1-5

- Saul was a disaster as a king—and Samuel felt the weight of Saul's mistakes
- even God “regretted” He had made Saul king (15:35)
- and for a moment it felt like nothing was happening
- and maybe it feels this way for you right now*

-but God's plans are never frustrated—He is always on the move—doing the unfathomable—doing what is radically incomprehensible

- suddenly showing up—this is how the Psalmist put it—

“Then the Lord awoke as if from sleep, like a warrior from the effects of wine...He chose David His servant and took Him from the sheepfolds” (Psalm 78:65ff)

- and so God sent Samuel—TO SUMMON HIS MAN!!
- but Samuel has to be careful—for his movements could be interpreted as a kingmaker looking for a replacement for Saul

-and Saul will brook no rivals

-but here in Bethlehem—it is Samuel's presence that brings fear

-he has a formidable reputation—what is he doing in our town suspending normal activity?

-clogging the traffic, calling for a moment of consecration?

-what is he doing at Jesse's house? Are his sons in trouble?

-Samuel's presence was like a police car parked in front of one's house

-have they broken one of the Ten Commandments—worked on the Sabbath, eaten tacos made with unclean meat?

-what happens next sounds like a police lineup—read verses 6-10

-Peterson has his own metaphor—what transpires is likened to a farmer who brings out his farm animals on a halter

-Eliab came a swaggering in—his mountainous size and rough-hewn good looks commanded attention

-Eliab dominates—he gets things done

-he even has the right name—Eliab—“my God is father”

-and Samuel was impressed—“*Surely, no doubt, indeed—before God—His anointed*”

-Samuel is acting like an awe struck general manager at the NFL combine

-seeing Johnny Manziel's moves—his build, his speed

-in verse 7, one can hear God asking—“*Haven't we covered this already—didn't we go down this path with Saul?*”

-“I'm looking for different timber—there's no king material here”

-sometimes—try as we may—we can't get past the outward, the exterior

-it reminds me of one resume I looked at when looking for an associate pastor in Europe—a candidate impressed with his own appearance—

“I have recently grown my hair long at my wife's request. Consequently, strangers are for some reason compelled to tell me almost daily that I look exactly like Jesus. This striking resemblance causes people to want to SEE me, HEAR me, and LISTEN to what I have to say. It comes in handy”

-it did not come in handy in this search process—nor Samuel's

-physical appearance and impressive accomplishments might provide a head start, but they do not necessarily finish the race

WE MUST NOT FORGET THIS in our decision making!

-so Samuel began to see as God sees—his prophetic eye began to penetrate the surface—and he found no one

-to again use Peterson's imagination—

-Abinadab was an intellectual snob who used big words

-Shammah was a little sophisticate in Calvin Klein jeans

-the rest were empty suits—were not “king material”

-leading Samuel to wonder if he had the right family—read verse 11

-David was marginalized from the start—for as the language suggests—he was the family runt

-insignificant and unimportant are undertones of the word

-he was out in the field where he could cause the least problems—he won't wreck the car, burn down the house, break valuable things

-but God tends to go after such types—among smallness is the potential for greatness

-and so—in an extraordinary moment—David was anointed—read verses 12-13

-like Saul—David was not expecting it

-like Moses—who is chasing after sheep—and meets a burning bush

-Gideon was threshing wheat, Amos was breeding sheep, Levi was working the books, Peter was casting a net—David was tending sheep—and then God showed up

Anointing is not something scheduled, predicted—it suddenly happens

-anointing was an ANE practice in which the object anointed takes on a whole new weight, gravitas

-things formerly common are suddenly given the weight of profound significance

-be it a rock Jacob poured oil on—or furnishings in a tabernacle set apart and anointed by Moses

-or garments, or kings, or priests, or prophets—or David

-in this moment—status, stature, and ownership change!

-hence this was obviously David's most defining moments

-David's reference point for everything he does

-now there were presence and blessing and authority and power and purpose

WHAT IF THIS IS TRUE OF US?

-what if what was true of OT kings and prophets and priests is true of us?

-is it possible we have a divine anointing on us?

-our initial tendency is to assume God's anointing is reserved for special moments for special people, the religious elite

-until we look more carefully at Scripture and realize everyone who is in Christ is anointed—

-“The One who anointed us is God; He has also sealed us and given us the Spirit as a down payment in our hearts—2 Corinthians 1:21-22

-“But you have an anointing from the Holy One...the anointing you received from Him remains in you”—1 John 2:20, 27

-the pronouns are plural, inclusive—as they should be—

-for if we are believers, then—

a) ALL OF US ARE PROPHETS

-at Pentecost—we were all set apart as a prophetic community to speak God's truth—Acts 2:17

b) ALL OF US ARE PRIESTS

-we are God's holy priesthood—1 Peter 2:5

c) ALL OF US ARE IN CHRIST

-who was anointed—"The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me"—Luke 4:18

-nowhere are we commanded to pray for God's anointing
-nowhere do we see some Christians anointed and others are not
-anointing is a necessary part—just as it was for other prophets and priests—and kings like David—and here are seven words to explain why—

1. HOLINESS—to be holy is to be set apart

-to anoint is to set apart, consecrate

-when David was anointed—he was set apart from others

-set apart as owned by God—"bought out"—no longer his own—dedicated to God

-so in our anointing we have been sealed, stamped, marked as owned, set apart for "honorable use", for the good work God prepared in advance—I Peter 2:20;

Ephesians 2:10

2. EMPOWERMENT—to be anointed is to receive the Spirit

-just as the Spirit rushed upon David immediately after he was anointed—enabling him to powerfully reign

-so in our anointing—the Spirit comes upon us—a deposit guaranteeing

ownership—and then takes control, enabling us to do what we could not otherwise do

1) live supernatural lives through supernatural empowering

2) receive God's revelation and then speak prophetically—which is so critical in an age rapidly losing its moorings

-an age in which our moral values are being threatened, structures are being dismantled

-cultural norms are colliding with Christian conviction

-and too many of us do not speak nor live powerful lives—and maybe it is because we are oblivious to our anointing

3. PRESENCE—when David was anointed—there was a profound and sustained experience of God—God's way of shaming out fear

-the Psalms record this

-when we are anointed—we also become aware that God is now present to us—as we must be present to Him

4. BLESSING—to be anointed is to be marked as favored by God—David lived with the sense of divine approval—God's support

-*With my God I can leap over a wall*"—Psalm 18:29

-so our anointing should give us this same confidence

5. CALLING—to be anointed is always for the purpose of mission, vocation, assignment

-David was anointed to carry out a sacred responsibility

-our anointing serves the same purpose—we are commissioned to carry out a work of service...

- be it as a missionary going overseas or across the street
- be it as a pastor to a church or a full-time mom shepherding her family, raising them in the ways of Jesus
- be it a high school student or a university professor representing Jesus well on campus
- be it a barista or an engineer at Intel or a designer at Nike or Adidas

-in David's anointing—as in ours—God in effect declares—
“He has created us and our gifts for a place of His choosing—and we will only be ourselves when we are finally there”—Guinness, *The Call*

6. OBLIGATION—in the moment David was anointed—he entered into a mutual obligation between Anointer and anointed
 - anointing is something contractual—a mutual obligation between the Anointer and anointed
 - the moment becomes the central part of David's life
 - the moment God chooses to permeate a man with divine activity
 - the moment David no longer lives for lesser things—but lives for God and His purposes
 - TO DO WHATEVER THE CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE!!
 - hence Paul could say of David—*“For David, after serving his own generation in God's plan, fell asleep”*—Acts 13:36

7. SIGNIFICANCE—the moment David was anointed—he was lifted out of insignificance—the same is true of us
 - as one put it—*“In my insignificant sheep keeping obscurity—in my non entity—in my smallness—I am also chosen”*

CONCLUSION

What weight does God's anointing have on you?
 Does it matter? Does it change everything?

LG QUESTIONS

1. How have you understood anointing? Does this message change this?
2. Does it matter believers understand they are anointed?
3. Why were the people afraid of Samuel?
4. Why do you think Samuel anointed David in front of his brothers?
5. When are there times you are guilty of looking externally rather than internally?