

WE DO NOT WALK ALONE

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

March 22, 2020

“But God told Samuel, ‘Looks aren’t everything. Don’t be impressed with his looks and stature. I’ve already eliminated him. God judges persons differently than humans do. Men and women look at the face; God looks into the heart.’”

~ 1 Samuel 16:7 (from *The Message*)

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We are now deep into the Lenten Season, and it’s the perfect time to reflect on our personal spiritual journeys. At first glance, however, I struggled to connect this particular scripture passage with my Lenten journey. After re-reading the text and thinking a bit more, several themes emerged.

In general, I like to “be in control,” as I am sure many others do as well. I like to have a plan and know what direction I’m heading. I also like routines and processes. Too much unanticipated change too quickly upsets my rhythm. But, as we see in this passage, God is truly the one always in control. While there is comfort in understanding that God is in control, my personal journey requires a reminder from time-to-time, and often these reminders appear when I least expect them.

Here, when David is anointed King, it comes as a surprise. They expected a different son to be anointed, but the Lord selected David, and it’s a reminder that God is in control.

Society often tries to persuade us of what is good or best, such as having money and material possessions, being beautiful or handsome and slender, or following the latest trend on social media because it is popular. This text illustrates that those societal images are surface-level only. They focus on outward appearances, but God looks into the heart. Traveling through this Lenten journey, another gentle reminder has appeared, and it is two-fold: look closer and see what is in someone’s heart, and look at your own heart and examine what is there.

And there it is... a simple summary of a Lenten journey found in this short passage – to remember that God is in control and to look at the heart. I get it now. Discover where God is leading by diving into the heart of the matter, by considering what is in someone’s heart, and by exploring my own heart.

A final reminder unveiled recently was stated perfectly by John Wesley many years ago: “Best of all, God is with us.” Indeed, as we walk our spiritual and Lenten journeys, we do not walk alone as God is always with us.

Prayer: Loving and gracious God, thank you for gentle nudges that you provide throughout our journeys. Thank you for being in control, and thank you for guiding us to do your work. And, most of all, thank you for always being with us as we travel through both good days and bad days alike. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

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