The Heart that the Lord Looks For (1 Samuel 16:1–7) 11/15/2026

At last, Saul's era is coming to an end, and the era of David is prepared. A new generation does not simply arrive all at once. God prepares David, anoints him, and prepares for the future. In verse 1 of today's scripture, God identifies David as the son of Jesse, a man from Bethlehem in the tribe of Judah. This was the fulfillment of God's long-standing preparation and prophecy (Genesis 49:10).

What we need to focus on is, why David? David had seven older brothers who appeared to have the looks and abilities one might expect of a king. Yet God chose David, the youngest. His older brothers were so impressive that even the Lord's servant Samuel was struck by their good appearance. At that moment, God spoke these important words that we know so well.

"Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (Verse 7). There are several meanings contained in the expression "God looks at the heart."

First, the Hebrew word for "heart" refers to a person's heart, mind, emotions, and will. Although these things may not be immediately visible, they ultimately determine a person's character and the course of their life. This is why we need to spend time getting to know someone. Only then do these inner qualities become evident. From Genesis 6 until today, people have continued to judge others by outward appearances. As a result, they are deceived, cheated, and sometimes misled throughout their entire lives. Even psychology recognizes that a person's initial impression, particularly their outward appearance, is one of the first factors that influences whether others feel drawn to them (approximately 45%).

Second, the heart refers to a person's diligence in life. David demonstrated this quality even while tending his father's sheep (Psalm 78:72). To make sure that not even one sheep entrusted to him by his father was lost, David learned to use a sling. That very skill later became a secret weapon in his victory over Goliath.

Third, the heart refers to a person's deep longing for God. Whether David was tending sheep, enduring hardship, serving as king, or experiencing a shameful failure, his deep longing for God's grace and love is recorded throughout the Psalms. His longing was so profound that I would encourage anyone who desires a deeper relationship with God or is going through difficult times to meditate deeply on the Psalms.

There is something at the center of a life like this. Above all, it is the key to enjoying a deep relationship with God. That key is the Gospel.

When God looked at David, He said, "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will" (Acts 13:22). Was David a perfect man without any flaws? No. Yet he became someone whom God continued to use until the end of his life (1 Chronicles 29:28).

What exactly is this Gospel? What do we need in order to be used by God throughout our entire lives, all the way to the end?

1. It begins with truly understanding the gospel. Simply knowing about the Gospel is knowledge. Truly understanding it becomes a practical power. The Gospel is the covenant (Ephesians 2:8 "gift of God's grace") God graciously gave us when humanity fell into sin and the curse began in Genesis. It is a better covenant through which Christ intercedes for us, even though we are sinners (Hebrews 8:6). It is the new covenant through which all our sins are eternally redeemed (Hebrews 9:15). The One who came according to this promise is Christ, the Son of God. His coming was proclaimed as good news of great joy, the Gospel (Luke 2:10).

1) The heart of God is contained in this Gospel. David's heart was in harmony with the heart of God. There are two aspects to God's character. The first is His righteousness and justice. This includes fairness and the judgment that comes from it. This reflects God's perfect reason. After Adam and Eve fell, judgment came upon all humanity (Romans 5:12), and the devil himself is destined for eternal judgment (Matthew 25:41). The second is love. It is the heart of God that never gives up on those He has created and chosen, even to the very end. That is why the Bible says that while all humanity was still trapped in sin, God demonstrated His love for us by sending Christ (Romans 5:8).

2) Three things are contained in the Gospel, which reveals the heart of God.

① **God's absolute plan for all humanity.** This is the reason He created us in His image. He does not discriminate against anyone. He shows no favoritism toward the wealthy or the poor, the educated or the uneducated, the powerful or the weak. His heart is like that of a parent.

② **God's absolute love for all humanity.** The Bible says that God does not want anyone to perish (John 3:16). That is why He gave fallen humanity the Gospel covenant of Genesis 3:15 and 3:21. Every problem in human life began with the sin and fall of Adam and Eve. Behind it all was Satan, who deceived humanity and caused it to fall (John 8:44). All humanity inherited that sinful nature and continues to be held captive by Satan, suffering the consequences of his work (1 John 3:8). Every person carries hidden wounds (family problems, childhood experiences, and events from the past).

These wounds can become lifelong snares and develop into spiritual problems (Acts 10:38). Personality disorders, panic disorders, obsessive-compulsive tendencies, depression, addictions, and other mental struggles can all have roots in these issues. Christ came to heal these wounds through His sacrificial love of giving Himself for us (Isaiah 61:1).

③ **God's absolute power to save, give life to, and heal all humanity.** God confirmed this power through the resurrection of Christ. Within the power of His resurrection, anyone can be healed, and anyone can begin again. Through His resurrection, Christ shattered Satan's authority (1 Corinthians 15:25) and gave us eternal life (Romans 6:4). That is why even someone like Paul, who was a persecutor and a violent man, could be used for world evangelization. He testified to this power of the Gospel (Romans 1:17).

2. The gospel becomes my gospel only when I experience it.

Only when we experience the Gospel does it become something so precious that we are willing to stake our lives on it (Acts 20:24).

1) Experience the Gospel as you meditate on God's Word. The Bible contains both the Law and the Gospel. God gave us both because we need them. When we encounter the Law, we should recognize humanity's sinful nature, helplessness, and evil. This allows us to remain humble throughout our lives. The Gospel is that God never gives up on those lives. Although He may discipline us for a time, He gives us another opportunity. Even His discipline is an expression of His love (Hebrews 12:8).

2) Experience the power of the Gospel through prayer. A miracle can take place within us, even when we are weak, sick, defeated, or suffering. When we pray, angels are sent to serve God's purposes (Hebrews 1:14), and the power of Satan is broken (Mark 9:29). Train yourself to resolve every problem through prayer.

3) Experience the Gospel through the problems and suffering you face. This is also why God sometimes allows temporary suffering and failure in the lives of people like David and Peter. Through these experiences, we come to realize, “I am truly such a weak person.” “I am someone who makes mistakes and experiences failure.” That is why I need the Gospel alone. I need God's grace and power alone. This is where tears come from, and this is where miracles also arise (2 Kings 20:5; 2 Timothy 2:4).

3. When we share the gospel, its blessings multiply. This is evangelism and missions. Even though persecution and loss may come because of the Gospel, God promises blessings a hundredfold for what we have given up for His sake (Mark 10:29–30).

1) Evangelism and missions mean carrying the heart of God and bringing His answers and light to those who are suffering. We are God's messengers, His heralds, proclaiming His message (Hymnal “Heralds of Light”). This is why God even turns our weaknesses, suffering, and tears into testimonies.

2) Evangelism and missions fill us with the heart of God and bring life to us. As we evangelize and participate in missions, we receive grace and are revived ourselves. When we see even one person come alive through the Gospel, we ourselves become filled with joy.

3) Evangelism and missions are the ultimate conclusion of the Gospel. That is why Jesus commanded us to go to all nations and to the ends of the earth. After this work is accomplished, the end will come (Matthew 24:14), and the new heaven and new earth will begin.

Conclusion-The heart that God desires to see in us is a heart centered on the “gospel”. It is His heart that gives life to us and gives life to anyone.