

God Anoints His Chosen One

- I. David
- II. Jesus
- III. You

(1 Samuel 16:1-13) The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king." {2} But Samuel said, "How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me." The LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' {3} Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate." {4} Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?" {5} Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. {6} When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the LORD." {7} But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." {8} Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The LORD has not chosen this one either." {9} Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the LORD chosen this one." {10} Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The LORD has not chosen these." {11} So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered, "but he is tending the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives." {12} So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; he is the one." {13} So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah.

Have you ever had to go through a job interview? It can be a little nerve-wracking, can't it? Knowing you're going up against who knows how many other candidates. Knowing that people are going to be judging you on the basis of your resume, your references, your looks, the way you dress, the way you talk. You're wondering if your hair looks okay and you got that spinach off your teeth. Let's face it, being interviewed for a job can be more than a little stressful.

But if you think about it, it's not just the interviewee who feels the pressure. To a certain extent, so does the interviewer. I mean, that person bears the responsibility of weeding out all the wrong candidates, trying to find out what they're really like, all in order to find the candidate who's just the right fit—that too, isn't always easy to do. I mean, just ask Mark Murphy, right? The president of the Green Bay Packers spent the last month trying to figure out who should be the next head coach of the Green Bay Packers. You don't think that gave him a few sleepless nights? He knew that likely his job, and the hopes and dreams of Packer Nation, depended on his search team making the right choice. And so what happened this past week? After interviewing

10 different candidates and researching far more than that, Mark Murphy stepped to the mic and said, in effect, “A decision has been made. We’ve found our man. Matt LaFleur will be the new head coach of the Green Bay Packers. No, he’s not all that old. He doesn’t have a ton of experience, but we are in effect anointing on him lead us back to winning world championships.”

Do you know what that scene that played out at 1265 Lombardi Avenue reminds me of? It reminds me of a scene in text for today, where a similar lineup of candidates was brought forward and in the end the youngest candidate was chosen, yes anointed, to be not the next coach of the Packers but rather the next king of Israel. But in this case, it wasn't Mark Murphy doing the choosing. It was God himself. The theme for meditation today it's simply this.

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Do you remember how this account begins? King Saul, the first king of Israel, had turned away from the Lord, and so God decided it was time to replace him. God instructs his prophet Samuel to go to the house of Jesse in the town of Bethlehem, because as God puts it, *“I have chosen one of his sons to be king.”* And so, when Samuel arrives at the house of Jesse, Father Jesse brings out his oldest son Eliab. And immediately Samuel thinks to himself, “This must be the guy!” He's good-looking, he's the first born son. Surely, this is the one that God has chosen to be the next king.” But instead, what does God say to Samuel? *“Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things that man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”*

Boy, isn't that the truth? How often are we tempted to judge people by how they look, whether it be good or bad? Are they wearing the latest fashions, or are they wearing hand-me-downs? Are they attractive, or kind of dumpy? Are they toned and tanned or out of shape and overweight? Or maybe kind of scrawny? Does that person look like a leader or does he look like a loser?

Often times we judge other people, and they judge us, by outward appearance. But God sees things differently. The Lord looks past what is on the outside and sees what's on the inside. In fact, that's why God tells Samuel to take a pass on Jesse's first born son, as well as his second and third and fourth and fifth and sixth and seventh born sons. Samuel gets to the end of the line and says, basically, “None of these sons made the cut, Jesse. Um, do you have anybody else? Jesse's answer? *“There is still the youngest, but he is tending the sheep.”* Notice, dad doesn't even call his son by name. It's like, “Well, there's still the baby of the family, but he's doing chores. We didn't even think to invite him here.”

Samuel's response? *“Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.”* And when the baby of the family shows up, what does Scripture say about him? *“He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features.”* That's kind of ironic, isn't it, that after saying that God doesn't look at the outward appearance, the Bible describes David's outward appearance? But the fact is, God wasn't judging David by his outward appearances. In Acts chapter 13, St Paul explains why God chose David. *“[God] testified concerning [David], I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do (Acts 13:22).*

In other words, God knew David's heart. He knew that David loved the Lord, that he trusted the Lord and that he wanted to do what the Lord commanded him to do. That's why, when David came before Samuel, the Lord said to Samuel, *“Rise and anoint him; he is the one.”* In other words, “Pour the olive oil on his head. Mark him as my chosen one. Set him apart as the

next king of Israel.”

And when Samuel did that, when he anointed this young man with oil, what did God do? Then God anointed David with the Holy Spirit. What does our text say? *So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power.* In other words, even though David already had the Holy Spirit in him, he was already a believer in the True God, now God gave David an extra measure of the Holy Spirit. That outpouring of the Holy Spirit confirmed that David really was God’s chosen one, and it equipped David to carry out his role as the shepherd and king of God's people Israel.

But now let me ask you. Was that the only time that God poured out his Holy Spirit on someone? Didn't the same thing happen at the time of Jesus’ baptism? We heard about it in our Gospel lesson today. *(Luke 3:21-22) When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened {22} and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."* At the time of Jesus baptism, God the Holy Spirit took on the physical form of a dove and landed on Jesus. In effect, God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit, just as Scripture says in Acts 10:38, *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power.*

And why did God do that for Jesus? He did it for the same reason he had done it for David, namely to identify Jesus as God’s Chosen One and to equip and empower him to carry out his God-given task. And what was Jesus’ God-given task? He came to this world to be the substitute for sinners. In fact, isn’t that why Jesus allowed himself to be baptized? Think about it. Jesus wasn't baptized because he needed to have his sins washed away. No, Jesus had no sin. Jesus was conceived, born and lived his whole life without sin. No, Jesus was baptized because he was the substitute for sinners. Because sinners like you and me need our sins forgiven, Jesus took our place there in the Jordan River, and was baptized. And at the moment of his baptism, he received what all sinners receive through their baptism, namely, the gift of the Holy Spirit. Isn't that what Saint Peter told the crowds on the day of Pentecost? *“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).*

Do you realize what that means? It means that on the day of your baptism, there was more than water poured on your head. The fact is, at that moment, God anointed you with the Holy Spirit. Think of the connection between these three events. Just as the Holy Spirit came upon David with power when he was anointed by Samuel, just as the Holy Spirit came and landed on Jesus when he was baptized in the Jordan river, so also the Holy Spirit came upon you at the moment of your baptism.

In fact, it reminds me of something I once saw in the WELS church in Iron Mountain, Michigan. Up in the front of the church there is a baptismal font. And suspended in the air directly over the font is an ornately carved...dove. It was a very visual reminder that that in baptism, the Holy Spirit comes. In fact, I was once told that the ceiling over our chancel was designed to represent the shape of a dove as well. It’s a reminder that the Holy Spirit is here hovering over us, as he comes to through God's Word and the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

So what does all this talk about being anointed with the Holy Spirit have to do with our lives today? It's simply this. When Satan whispers in your ear, “You think God is going to let you into heaven? You think that you're going to make the grade? You think you're going to pass the test? You think God's going to put you on his team? No way,” Satan says. “Not after what

you did. Not with a track record you have. Not knowing what you are really like.” When Satan Whispers all those things in your ear, you know what you say? You say “Baptizatus Sum.” You know what that means? It’s what Luther scrawled on his desk top. When Satan tormented him, he wrote the Latin phrase “Baptizatus Sum.” It means, “I am Baptized.” Not, “I was baptized.” Not once upon a time, a long time ago. No, I am Baptized. It's that new status that God gave me when he washed my sins away with the washing with water and the word. It’s the new status that you and I have because God dressed us in Jesus’ righteousness and anointed us his Holy Spirit.

And if you need a little more ammunition against Satan’s accusations, you know what you do? You pull out one of these. You know what this is? It’s my baptismal certificate. You might call it “my adoption papers.” Here’s the written proof that on January 6, 1960, I was reborn. That was the day of my New Birthday. That was the moment when God transferred me from Satan’s family into his family. That means that now I don’t have to listen to what Satan is telling me. He’s not my dad anymore. Now I have a gracious Father in heaven, who loves me and has anointed me to be his own. And God because of anything I did, but purely because of his love and mercy. Isn’t that exactly what Saint Paul meant when he said in our epistle reading today, *(Titus 3:5-7) [God] saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, {7} so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

My friends, chances are, we’re not going to be interviewed to be the next coach of the Green Bay Packers. But that's okay. Because God has already chosen us for an even higher position. At our baptism, God anointed us with his Holy Spirit. He made us his children and he’s reserved a place at the head table in the mansion of glory. God keep us all in our baptismal grace until that day when we are united with all the saints and angels in glory everlasting. Amen.