

Intro. Hundreds of thousands of visitors trek to a tiny town in Israel under Palestinian control just to see a spot on the floor of a church where tradition tells us the Lord Jesus was born. Before entering the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, visitors have to enter the door of humility—a doorway surrounded by 3 large stones—the doorway is about 4 feet high & 2 feet wide. The main reason for it was probably to deter horsemen during the Ottoman period from entering, but it is also a reminder that Christ humbled Himself & left heaven to walk in our shoes. We who seek to enter the presence of the Lord must humble ourselves before Him. Today, we begin a 4-part series on “The Humility & Beauty of Bethlehem.” We start with 1 Samuel 16 “In Anointing a King.”

Theme: Kingship & the Spirit of the Lord

Background: The narrative of 1-2 Samuel is a transitional time in Israel’s history. A few hundred years prior to this timeframe, Yahweh rescued Israel from Egyptian bondage through the leadership of Moses. After wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, Yahweh gave Israel victory under Joshua in taking the Promised Land. The next 200-350 years (depending on whether the judges overlapped) saw Israel go through the cycle of apostasy—oppression—repentance—deliverance—peace. Now, around 1050 BC, the people of Israel began rejecting God’s rule through a prophet & judge (like Samuel) & began demanding a king like the other nations (rejecting God as their king). They would transition from a theocracy (God as the Head of the people) to a monarchy (a king as the head).

- When we think about what the Lord did in choosing & anointing David to be king, there are some parallels with what He does for other believers.
- **What do we learn about the Lord’s choosing & anointing?**
- 1. **The Spirit’s anointing is an outward sign of His regenerating & indwelling work (16:12-13; cf. 1 John 2:20, 26-27)**
- What I’m speaking of is New covenant language, as shown in 1 John 2—it wasn’t necessarily true during the old covenant era—for instance, Samuel anointed Saul king in 1 Samuel 10, but Saul eventually sinned against the Lord by playing the part of priest & then disobeyed the Lord from devoting the Amalekites to destruction (1 Samuel 15)—though Saul had been anointed, the Spirit left him because Yahweh rejected him (16:1, 14)
- The word for “anoint” is the root for Messiah—“Anointed One”—the NT term is translated “Christ” (Anglican & Methodist churches refer to baby sprinklings as christening, which is rooted in the word for anoint & relates it to baptism—but this outward sign is forced upon the baby & doesn’t point to the Spirit’s regenerating or indwelling work, but is only hopeful that such happens in the future)

Illus: Just as a steep hill sign can inform you of the terrain ahead, so outward signs can indicate the presence of the Lord

Illus: Some people say you cannot really know if someone genuinely knows the Lord. While we may be fooled by some, Paul knew Timothy & his mother & grandmother had a relationship with the Lord—when you see the hand of God on someone’s life in a remarkable way, that can be a sign of the Lord’s work of regeneration (new birth) & indwelling

- 2. **Those whom the Lord chooses He also enables, equips & empowers by His Spirit (16:6-23; cf. chapter 17; 2 Timothy 1:7)**

- The OT spoke of an anointing for priests, prophets & kings—the Spirit coming upon someone in the OT was to enable them for the task of priestly service or prophetic word or to rule over a people (like the judges or kings) (see 16:13, 18)
- The Spirit of the Lord not only enables, but He equips & empowers—that’s why little ole David could slay Goliath in the following chapter. That’s why Samson could kill a lion with his bare hands & slay thousands of Philistines

Illus: To the Jew, King David was about as important to Israel as Jesus is to the Christians. They sang songs of David & it would not be unheard of for them to come up with something like “Jesse did you know that your baby boy would one day rule all Israel? Jesse did you know that your baby boy would slay a man colossal?”

- Not only did the Lord choose David to be king but He also chose to set up an eternal covenant with him through a descendant, the Son of David—this is clearly Jesus Christ, crucified-yet-risen
- Now the Lord hasn’t chosen you in the same way He chose David or Christ for the same kind of reign (though believers will reign with Christ), but when He chooses you for salvation, He enables you by His Spirit to repent, trust Him & serve Him—as a believer, the Spirit of God lives within you to empower you for service to the Lord

Illus: Some people get bent out of shape over talk about God’s choosing & they believe they are chosen, but they don’t do anything. Others argue against God’s choosing, but want to live for the Lord in service to Him—the truth is they go hand-in-hand—those whom the Lord chooses are equipped to serve Him—there’s little point in arguing about it—just do it!

3. The Lord’s choosing & anointing results in faithfulness to the Lord (16:13, 18, 23; cf. John 15:16-17)

- Much of this goes along with what I was just saying—once the Lord chooses you & anoints you (through regeneration [being born again] & the indwelling work of His Spirit), if that has really happened in you, then you will want to serve the Lord faithfully—David faithfully served after the Lord came upon Him (16:13,18, 23)
- I’m not saying just because you serve the Lord, then you must be saved, but if you are truly saved (regenerated), then you will want to serve the Lord

Illus: Think of it like 2 circles—this big circle represents everyone who serves the Lord. The smaller circle inside the bigger circle represents everyone who has been born again. If you are born again, you also serve the Lord. Simply serving the Lord is no guarantee that you’ve been born again, but failure to serve the Lord (outside the big circle) means you are not saved (because you are also outside the smaller circle)

- Jesus told His disciples that He chose us & appointed us to bear lasting fruit (John 15:16-17)—part of that lasting fruit is loving one another (v. 17)—best expressed in our size church through small group fellowship & ministry (get plugged in, if you aren’t already)

Conc. I began this series & this message with a few remarks on humility & when you think about the Lord’s choosing & anointing & the role of the Holy Spirit in your life, those truths often move people to humility, because none of us are worthy of the Lord’s work in our lives. Winston Churchill was once asked, “Doesn’t it thrill you to know that every time you make a speech, the hall is packed to overflowing?” “It’s quite flattering,” replied Sir Winston. “But whenever I feel that way, I always remember that if instead of making a political speech I was being hanged, the crowd would be twice as big.” (Norman McGowan, *My Years With Winston Churchill*). We need humility & the first place that starts is in bowing before the Lord in humble dependence for salvation as we turn from ourselves & place all our hope in Him.