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1 SAMUEL 16:5-7

1 Samuel Series

[PRAYER] Lord, there are some times when we are like the psalmist who cried out, “Lord, hear my cry. Lord, where are you?” There’s sometimes when we feel like in our lives there are things going on that maybe we’re not listening to or something. It’s hard to know sometimes what that looks like. So we’re asking you, Lord, to make yourself real to us in those special ways. Father, we know that the greatest way that we can experience that close connection to you is not to ask how you can be involved in our plans, but how we can be involved in yours. So today, Lord, we ask that you would reveal to us what it is that you’re doing in situations around us and how we should act in the midst of that and how we should respond. Lord, we want to serve you. We love you with all of our hearts and we want you to tell us what you’re doing. We want to understand how you’re working in our hearts and how you’re working in those people around us so that we can participate in your work. We know that Jesus told us that He was successful because He saw what the Father was doing. We ask you to reveal what you are doing in and around us, and then give us the courage and wisdom to know how to participate in that activity. We appreciate knowing you as our personal heavenly Father. We thank you that you do care about everything that’s going on in our lives and our children’s lives. We ask now that as we ponder this passage that you have provided for us on this day that you would feed us with morsels that would touch our souls so we’ll go out of this place enriched, nurtured, challenged in new ways to serve you. We ask this in Jesus’ name, amen.

Now I’m really grateful for the full house that we have. I don’t mean that there aren’t empty chairs, but I mean there is a sense of an expectation, full of expectation that God is going to speak, that God is going to do something, and it’s in the midst of that expectation that we see great things happen. So I’m grateful that you’re here. You come here waiting to see what is God going to do, how is He going to work. I want you to know that God wants to do much for you and He wants to do much through you in your personal life.

Today what we’re going to do is we’re going to look at a passage that’s what I would say relatively well known. Maybe you even know the story. Most of us do. The story of how David (of David and Goliath) was called, he was chosen by Samuel.

We know that story already. That’s where the verse is about *man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart*. So we’ve heard it many times. Maybe it’s so familiar that we miss some of the richness of that story. So I’m going to slow it down today. We’re going to take it in slow motion. I like those slow motion plays you see in football. They’re going so fast, but they just slow it down so you can see how the play is developing. I really like

that. That's what we're going to do today. We're going to take this nice and slow as we go through here because God's principles are rich and they apply to our lives today.

So turn in your Bibles with me to 1 Samuel 16:5. We're going to pick up the story where Samuel arrived in this town and there's some concern in the town as to whether he's coming antagonistically against Saul (that had already been rejected as king). Are you coming in peace, Samuel? In verse 5 he says, *"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.

When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord." God had given Samuel a word. Maybe He's done that with you. I'm going to give you a word, I'm going to speak to you, I just want you to know. But He doesn't tell him what the word is yet. He said I'm going to speak to you, I'm going to tell you what to do. It's going to be one of the sons of Jesse. Go there, consecrate them. Samuel goes there and he's ready to hear God speak. So you just imagine the anticipation on Samuel's mind and in his heart. He's looking around trying to think what is God going to do here. How is He going to operate? What is He going to work here? I know He's going to speak, but I don't know what He's going to say.

Sometimes I'm in a meeting, whether it's with one person or others, and I'm thinking, "Alright, I'm trying to work this out. I don't know if the answer is going to be yes or no, but God is going to speak in the midst of this yes or no." And I'm trying to listen to the Lord in regards to the decision we're making. But then don't you find this that sometimes you're working on the yes and no and God is working on something completely different. He wants to, through a comment made in the meeting or a discussion point, touch my heart in a way that I didn't expect.

That's what's going to happen to Samuel. He wasn't expecting this comment. He's expecting just to respond and to ordain the next king. But God often does the unexpected. Whenever something unexpected happens in life, I want to be listening. Because maybe it's in that moment that maybe God wants to do something. God often does unexpected things. Maybe the fact that this unexpected thing happened is part of what God wants to do in my life. That's where Samuel is listening to the Lord. He's going on normally. He's doing what He needs to do. He's not just sitting around. He's going to look for the king and anoint the next week, but he's listening at the same time.

Now sometimes I do know what God's doing. You've probably experienced this too. You know God is working in this person's life and as it unfolds you're going, "Yep, that's right. I understand." You just smile because you know God's working here. But other times we don't know. We always have to have this listening ear out there to listen to the Lord. Samuel knew how to listen to God and to what God had to say.

So here comes the first boy in here. His name is Eliab. Now Eliab looked probably pretty cool given the next verse. He probably was tall, handsome; just looking at him reminded him of a kingly kind of a person. Maybe even reminded him of the last king, King Saul, who was tall and handsome. He was a good-looking guy. This is probably going to be the one who's going to be

king. So naturally Samuel is trying to discern, work ahead of the Lord, which I don't think is necessarily bad. I think God is going to do this or that. So he's working with this and he thinks it's going to be this guy.

Notice verse 7. This is the key verse I think in this passage, and a passage that not only helps us understand God a little bit more, but helps us understand ourselves. Look at verse 7. *But the Lord said to Samuel (as he's looking at Eliab), "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."*

Yes. The Lord looks at the heart. God is revealing something about Himself. How He operates, who He's looking at, what He looks at inside of a person. Now that in itself is really important because we get to know God a little bit better. But I also think this is a very important practical principle for us because we can learn how to relate to other people.

I'm a teacher. If I want to be a good teacher I want to reach the hearts of people when I'm teaching them, whether it's one-on-one or in a group. There's a difference between education (passing on information to someone) and transformation, which is taking that Jesus home and putting it into practice.

I'm not just interested in education. There are too many educated people around already. We need people who are transformed, and so that transformation is the important thing. I want to take on the teaching model of Jesus who looked for ways to have the truths explode inside of the person's heart. Man, if I can do that then I feel like I've accomplished my God-given purpose in life. Just have truths blow up in people's hearts so they say I get it. Not just I get it up here, but I get it here and it's going to change who I am.

Do you remember the story where Jesus met the guys after the resurrection on the road to Emmaus. The Bible says there that He explained all the scriptures to them. He taught them all the things about Him through all the scriptures. Well that's a great statement right here because He's teaching them. But the beauty of the statement happens after He is sitting down to have a meal with them. He prays and He disappears and they're talking to each other and they say these words. *"Didn't our hearts..."* We're going to look at that word *heart* today because the word hearts is so important. We're going to understand what it looks like. But they say to each other, *"Didn't our hearts burn within us when we were walking on the road?"*

Wow. That's the kind of teaching I want to have. So as I'm preparing the teaching for you on Sunday or preparing to teach someone anything, I want to be thinking beyond the information and the data because I'm not teaching information, I'm teaching people. And God wants people to understand the truths that He has. So that transformation is so important.

Knowing the hearts of people is important not just for teachers, but if you're in a relationship with someone you want that relationship to be close. If you're in a marriage relationship or a relationship with a child, you want a close relationship. What is that going to look like?

I like the words of Jonathan's armor-bearer when he uses the word *heart* to say, "*I am with you heart and soul.*" In other words, we're together here. I really like that. We're together. We got it.

Or the New Testament tells us that *the believers were one in heart and mind* in the church. You know that experience, I'm sure. When you find a church that really works for you, that you really enjoy, there's this connecting that takes place. So some of the relationships that you build within the church are stronger even than the physical family relationships you might have outside of the church. Why? Because we're together in heart and mind. That heart togetherness is strategic and it helps us have that strong relationship together.

So what does this mean that God looks on the heart and not just outward appearance? What is the heart anyway? Let's just talk about the heart because I think if we understand it, it will draw us to an understanding of ourselves, a better understanding of who we are.

I mean you can study psychology. Psychology is great because psychology provides a lot of insight in to the human person and how a person thinks and changes and perceives things and so on. So I like studying psychology, but I'll tell you this: The best psychology textbook is the Bible. Here's why. Because in the Bible we understand how God made the person. Psychology – the study of the soul. That's what psychology means. But if you understand how God made this person, made this soul, then you're way up ahead of any textbook that you have.

God made people different than He made animals. When He created people, He created them with a heart. So we understand what this heart is. Wow. Big things can happen inside of us.

Here's this guy, David, who's just a boy now, but in the New Testament we're looking back on his life after it's all done and they say this: *he was a man after God's own heart.* What does that mean? Well it certainly can't mean that he was perfect because we know his sin with Bathsheba and killing Uriah. So we know it didn't have to do with perfection, but it had to do with something going on inside of this heart of his. Once we understand this piece of what was going on with David and what God looks on in the heart instead of just the appearance, we can understand ourselves better and good things happen inside of us.

Let me explain to you my perception of what the heart is according to the Bible. The heart is this place where a lot of things are moving around and they collide together. There are things like desires that are in the heart. Psalm 37:4 – *Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.*

So we know desires are in the heart and they're moving around. We've got a lot of them – some of them good some of them bad. But we've got those desires running around in our heart. We've got emotions running around in our heart. Some of them are good and some of them are bad. We've got beliefs inside the heart. Some are good, some are bad. We've got attitudes inside the heart. Some are good, some are bad. We've got convictions, we've got temptations, and all these things are in the heart and they collide with each other. So this heart becomes this place where they collide and then out of them come very important things. Commitments to do this. Passion to do that. Decisions come out of the heart of a person because all of these things collide together.

That's why it is so important to look at this next verse. I like the translation that says *guard your heart*. But this one says – *Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flows the spring of life*.

This is a picture of a well. It's the Tuhala Witch's Well in Estonia. I don't know if you know where Estonia is, but it's a country (not a city in America) that is a country south of the Baltic Sea, south of Finland. So you've got that Estonia over there and just north of Estonia there is this well. In the springtime when the snow melts and the water comes rushing down, the water flows out of this well. It's just a sight to see apparently. So that's a well. That's why the bucket is up at the top. It's a well that's gushing this water. What a beautiful illustration.

So I wanted to throw this verse on the top of this picture because the idea is we want to guard the well. Why? Because the life that you and I experience doesn't take place outside in the behavior, the externals. That's part of what God is saying here. Man looks on the outward appearance. Oh we're looking at that problem and this problem and that relationship and that political disaster, and this economic problem. So we're looking at those things, but real life doesn't take place in all of those things.

How is your life doing? If you tell them, "Oh my life is bad because I've got this problem," wait. Wait. Let's get into the heart because you can control that. You are in charge of your heart. Did you know that? This is not something that's random. You're not a victim. Your heart is not a victim. You are in charge of your heart. That's why it says *guard your heart*. Why? Because it's your heart. That's where life comes from. How's your life doing? If you're going to tell me all the bad things in your life, that's going to tell me something bad about your heart. If you can guard that heart, you can experience the abundant life inside your heart today.

God wants you to experience that in your life, so it starts right there inside of the heart. It's a strategic place where God is at work. We wrestle with things in our hearts. We wrestle with them because these things are colliding. Some are good or bad and we come out with these behaviors and decisions and so on, but we're wrestling with things inside of the heart.

It reminds me of the passage in the New Testament when Mary the mother of Jesus was seeing these things unfold and the Bible says *she pondered all these things in her heart*. She's working it out trying to figure all this out. That's what happens in our hearts. We're pondering things. We're wrestling with these things, and we are continually getting input. We need input to help wrestle. Because if we just get stuck there inside, it turns into a cesspool sometimes because we're just going around in circles inside of our hearts.

You know that experience. You're just going around in circles. You get tired of going around in circles. So we get this input that goes into our hearts that helps us to move forward. Because the heart is a very complicated place. Wouldn't you say it's complicated? This is not an easy place to work. It's a very complicated place to work. I have a complicated relationship in my heart.

For example I have a complicated relationship with carbohydrates. I love carbohydrates and I love what they do for me. Oh man. You know when you ask a person what their favorite food is, I'll tell you my favorite food is French fries. That is my most favorite food. And the second

runner up is ice cream. I hardly get to eat them, but they're my favorite foods. I have this love relationship with carbohydrates. I just enjoy eating carbohydrates. I love what they do for me.

But I hate what they do to me. Because I'm allergic to them. I swell up, especially around the middle. So I have this love-hate relationship with carbohydrates and I've got to work that out in my heart before it comes out in my food choices when I stand in line to buy something. I work it out in my heart first before I get to the line. I better or I'm going to be in trouble because it all smells so good because all the smell comes from the fats. So we really enjoy all the things that are there. I have this love and hate relationship and I wrestle with it in my heart about carbohydrates.

There are some people who have a love-hate relationship when it comes to anger. Oh don't you just love anger? Oh man it feels so good to get it off your chest, tell somebody off, let them have it. It feels great, doesn't it, to just let loose on your anger? Boy, you love what anger does for you. It does something great. But then look at what it does to you. Because now you're alone. Nobody wants to be around you because you're angry all the time. So we have this love-hate relationship when it comes to anger. We wrestle with it in our hearts about what are we going to do with that.

We have a love-hate relationship when it comes to complaining. Isn't it great to complain? Well wouldn't it be great, some people they just can tell this is their favorite thing to do because you just open the door, "Hey, how are you doing," and you get five minutes of the worst aches and pains you've ever done in your life, and all kinds of bad things that are going on. Well what happens then? You see that person coming, you take the other way around. Those people are alone a lot. Complainers aren't people who have deep relationships. We like what it does for us, but we don't like what it does to us, and so we wrestle with these things. So the wrestling takes place in the heart of a person. We've got to be able to wrestle with these things, especially when we experience things that are out there.

This week we had a lot of political decisions made. I have no idea what's going to happen as a result of these executive orders and decisions, but I'll tell you it can start to make me feel a little anxious about our world and what's going to happen. I'm not sure I agree with all this stuff. Some of it looks downright dangerous to me. I don't exactly know what to do with it. Now my heart can start getting anxious if I start putting it out there, but I'm in charge of my heart. I can allow God to do this work inside of me in the midst of cultural uncertainties instead of allowing it to damage relationships between me and somebody else. It's very easy in our political environment now that even Christians become at odds. Look, the most important thing is the heart. Are we connected in our hearts? That's what we want.

Now I want to go just a little bit further because I want to say you're in charge of your heart. It's important for all of us because that's what the Bible says. We're in charge of our hearts. We guard it. We'll see another word in a few minutes about our hearts and how we're in charge of it, but He doesn't leave us alone to deal with it.

I'm going to quote a verse from the Bible in Philippians 4:6-7 that goes like this: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in with prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make your*

requests known to God. And (notice this next part when you're doing the prayer thing) the peace of God, which transcends all understanding (mind stuff), will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

He'll guard just like it says *guard your own heart, for it is the wellspring of life*. He gives us a tool. That's prayer. We can come into His presence and instead of experiencing anxiety, we can come into His presence, not only asking Him but thanking Him. When those things come together, *the peace of God will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus*. Now do you see He's given us a tool for guarding the heart? Wow. Prayer. We need to be praying more in order to have our hearts at the place that God would have for us.

Here's another tool that God gives us in order to get our hearts going in the right direction. He gives us His words. That's why Psalm 119:11 use the word heart when it says this: *I have hidden God's word in my heart so that I might not sin against you*. Now we have a tool that God has given to us. So I don't want you to think that your idea of you're in charge of your heart and you've got to guard it is all about something humanistic. It's not just about me doing my thing. It's about me guarding my heart with the tools that God has given me, the strength that He has provided in helping me to do what I need to do. Our hearts are the place where life happens and we need to be in charge of our own hearts because our hearts get damaged.

I mean just think about your own heart. How has been it been damaged? Maybe by a relationship. That's the most common one I see. Maybe it's been damaged by a bad experience even. We've got other people that are so easily tempted that they fall into addictions or other kinds of problems. There's this sense that the heart is a challenging place to live. Some people have an extra scoop of emotion in their heart, so it's kind of dominating what's going on inside of the heart and it's hard to settle it down in there. Let's rely on some beliefs here instead of emotion inside of the heart. There are some people who are easily discouraged, some people who are easily angered in their lives, but we can take charge of that.

Jesus talks about the evil that exists inside of our heart when He says this – *A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings the evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.*

That's a good motivator for me to stay on track and make sure that my heart is full of the right kind of things. Because if I'm just thinking disaster in my heart continually, then I'm liable to have it coming out of my mouth continually. If I'm always thinking about revenge and justice, then I'm likely to have some anger coming out of that. If I'm always thinking about the uncertainties of life and that's what my heart is pondering continually, then I'm going to be anxious about life. It's going to come out of my mouth. It's going to come out in my actions.

That's why it is so important to do this next word that I want to look at about the heart in Colossians 3:1. *Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.* God has a message for Samuel: Samuel, I want you to know that I am more concerned with and I am looking and making decisions based on a person's heart, not just their behavior.

Does God care about behavior? I certainly think He does, even what we know in the scriptures. But the heart is where the behavior comes from. So if we can work on the heart, then good things can happen. So as we kind of take a tangent today on the heart to understand the heart a little bit better so that we can take advantage of the passage and the tool that God is giving to Samuel in this moment, we can see things like this.

There's a word there. What's the verb there? How about the word *set*. Let's take the word *set*. *Set your hearts on things above*. Set. Fix. I don't know about you, but I like the idea of a slow cooker. We have a crockpot at our house and amazing things come out of the crockpot. Not just because of the slow cooker, but because of the person putting stuff into it. But anyway, you know the neat thing about the crockpot? You can push the button, set it, and forget it. That's right. You can walk away. Set it and forget it. Don't you wish you could do that with your heart? Just come to church one Sunday in January and your heart is set for the whole rest of the year. Wouldn't that be great? Because then you could set it and forget it.

But the problem of the heart is you have to set it, but the heart naturally moves back to its natural course of temptation. For each of us that's different. For some it's emotional upset, for some it's addictions, for some it's worries. Whatever it is, we go back to our natural tendencies of pride or whatever that the heart tends to go to. So we can't do that. We have to set it, then we have to check it, then we have to reset it. We have to reset it regularly.

We have to set it on what? *Set your hearts on things above*. Why? Because it's the earthly things that get us into trouble. We find ourselves going in different directions and "oh man, we didn't want to go here." "Oh man, I need to reset my heart." Here's how you can tell when your heart needs to be set again or reset. It's when you're upset. If you're upset then you need to say, "Why am I so upset here? I need to set my heart on things above." Do you see what God is saying to us about our human heart? Our heart is in our charge. You can't say, "He makes me angry."

This week one of my coaches reported a story about a parent she was working with. The parent reported it to the coach who reported it to me. The parent said this: I told my nine year old daughter who was starting to get upset (and ramping herself up and starting to get mad, because we're working on anger in that family), I told her, "Look, you're starting to get upset. It's causing a problem. You're starting to make me angry."

The nine year old says to the mom, "I thought you said nobody can make you angry. You make yourself angry."

Mom says, "Yeah, you're right. I think we both need to take a break here."

Hey, that's the case. Right? You're in charge of your own heart. God does amazing things in the midst of that and He helps us deal with it. Getting upset is one of those indications that we need to reset and set our hearts on things above. We can't just do it once. We've got to be doing it every day.

Or here's what happens. You lose heart. At least that's what the Bible says. Let's look at this verse in 2 Corinthians 4:16. *Therefore we do not lose heart. Why? Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.* We're setting our hearts on things above every day being renewed every day so we don't lose heart. It's a reminder to you and me I

think this is a reminder or the new information maybe that God is giving to Samuel that it's the heart that's the most important here.

Don't just look on the externals. This helps you in so many different areas. When the laundry or the dirty clothes are left on the floor (by the husband or the wife) and the other person gets angry, it's not only the behavior we're dealing with. We've got to be able to work on the heart. The heart is so important. When things start going really bad or our lives start to be under so much pressure, we've got to reset and remember that God is in control, that God is good, that God is love, that God cares about us, that God wants us to be part of His plan. All of that is strategic if we're going to have our hearts going in the right direction.

This idea of the heart and having it set in the right place is so important and that's why when Joshua was about to take the people into the land, Moses hadn't died yet, and so there's this message being given to the people in Deuteronomy 6. The message is: Here's what I want you to remember, folks. I want you to remember to *love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength*. Love the Lord your God. That's the most important thing. If you read the verse it continues. It says to *impress these on your children*. So he's telling them this is not just for you, but teach your kids to love the Lord your God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

When Jesus was here on earth and was asked the question, "What is the greatest commandment?" He could have listed one the ten because those are really important things to do. But He goes back to this passage in Deuteronomy and He says, "I'll tell you what the greatest commandment is," and He actually gives you two commands. *The greatest command is to love the Lord your God with all your heart*. When you love the Lord your God with all your heart then amazing things happen. Because of all the places God chooses to live, does He choose to live in fancy buildings, these beautiful churches, and beautiful architecture? Is that where He chooses to live? No. Where does He choose to live? He chooses to live in the heart of a person. It's the dwelling place of God.

That's why we must come before the Lord and say, "Lord, I just want you to control me and organize the things that are in there." Because most of our hearts are pretty scrambled, I would suggest. If we're not taking time of being still before the Lord, we're just kind of getting all this stuff going all around us all the time, we never have time to sort this stuff out, to ponder things, to let God do that work. That's why we need the Lord so much in our hearts. So He comes to live there when we ask Him to come into our hearts.

Sometimes as I work with parents some parents will say, "I am just so tired of this. I am so tired of this parenting thing."

"How old are your kids?"

"Six and seven."

I'm going, "You've got a long way to go, ma'am. So we've got to deal with this weariness problem that you're experiencing right now."

Here's why I think we're weary. We're weary because we're running around in circles inside of our hearts instead of running in a direction. If we're running in a direction we know where we're going and it's not so tiresome because we know we're getting somewhere.

This next verse shows us another use of the word *heart*. I just highlighted some of the words because this is the running passage in the Bible. *Since you have been surrounded by this great cloud of witnesses, let us throw everything that hinders off and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance.* This perseverance somehow has this ability to overcome weariness that exists in our hearts.

So if you're weary today you need to know that there's something that can happen inside of your heart that is called perseverance. The perseverance is keeping on even after you feel like quitting. We all need that in our lives. This perseverance is strategic for continuing on. I chose this verse because it's another one like all these verses today use the word *heart*, and we come to this last verse that says *so you will not grow weary and lose heart*. Why? Because we know where we're going. We have our eyes fixed on Jesus. We're in control of, we're managing this heart that God has given to us. You have a job to do. Manage the heart.

How's your life? If your life is having a lot of problems, we better start looking in the heart. All of us have problems and I know yours are worse than anybody's, but you've got to look at those problems and it's how you're relating to those problems that is the most important thing. It's the heart of a person that's so strategic Hebrews is telling us.

A couple more verse about the heart. In fact I've given you a handout. This was going to be something I was going to share from. But there are just so many verses about the heart, here's thirty of them that all tie together. You can look at them any way you want. I started by looking at ten solutions or things you can do. That's the middle column. But then there's the ten problems of the heart that you can look at. If you want to start with problems you can. But then there's the ten results. Each one of the thirty verses uses the word *heart*.

Now sometimes in your translation it won't have the word *heart* because it's translated something else, like *conscience* or something else. But the reality is that the word *love* in the Hebrew Bible or the word *kardia* in the Greek New Testament is being used in the passages that I chose. So the word *heart* is in there. You might have to look at a different translation in order to find it.

But a couple more verses that will help you do a check on your heart to see if you're in the right place. The next one is Matthew 26:21 that says – *Where your treasure is there your heart will be also*. So the things that we spend our time and our energy on. But you just might even think about where do you spend the most time thinking as you're going to bed? If you spend a lot of time thinking before you go to bed on something, it's probably what you treasure. When you get up in the morning, what's the first thing you're thinking about? It's probably what you're treasuring. So we want our hearts to be this place where we are in control and we're feeding it and we're nurturing it in this positive way.

Then of course I want to share this next verse, which is a favorite of many people. For some this becomes a life verse. *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your paths* (Proverbs 3:5-6).

I chose a different translation than I memorized it in, but I like the beautiful picture of the path. We have to choose. God is the one who helps us. He directs those paths for us. But what do we need to do? *Trust in the Lord with all of our heart*. Not just this little part on Sunday, but all of our heart. We're trusting in Him. We want to do that because God wants to do this work inside of us. If that is our life, it is the wellspring of life. That's what the heart is.

So if you're having trouble in life, you just have to look inward and start rearranging things and adjust them because, yes, you have to solve the problems. You have to deal with the issues that you have to face in life. But it starts in the heart. The way that you process those things are important.

So as we come back to our passage in 1 Samuel 16 we see that God is looking for someone whose heart is in the right direction. He chooses David and He's taking this lesson that is important for Samuel, but He's taking this lesson and applying to us because all of us need to realize that God is on the lookout for people who have a heart for Him.

It says in 2 Chronicles 16:9 – *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong* (He wants to provide strength to somebody. That's who it is) *on behalf of those whose heart are loyal to him*. There's another heart verse.

If you take that heart and you make that heart loyal to the Lord, He's the one that provides that strength and He want to do amazing things. He wants you to be able to kill giants. He wants me to be able to kill giants. He's going to show us how a man who has a heart for God can kill giants. But we're not going to get there next week. You just got to know. Next week we're going to talk about the things that happen before you kill giants. Because God is looking for heroes in the small things. That's the whole sermon for next week and we're going to spend time looking at it.

But today we can't get past this idea of the heart. We've got to spend some time looking at our own hearts because that's what God is interested in. I would suggest that's what you and I are interested in too. Because if we can deal with our own hearts, then life will be much better. We can connect with people better, and we'll be able to connect with the Lord in a strategic way. Amen?

Would you stand with me? Let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we come before you now and ask that you would reveal our hearts to us, not all at once – it's just too much for us to bear. But please reveal to us areas that we need to adjust or change or draw closer to you in that area of our heart. Give us action steps that we can use to take you home in our lives this week to be people that are men and women after your own heart. Do that deeper work, Lord, in our hearts right now. In Jesus' name, amen.

We're going to sing a worship song. As we do, I encourage you to spend some time with the Lord and allow Him to speak to you. Maybe you just need to be quiet and not sing this next song. Or maybe you just need to listen to the words of the song and allow God to speak to you. But this is the time for you to do business with the Lord. If you'd like prayer for any area of your life, or someone else you're praying for, a decision you're trying to make this week, or someone else is trying to make, then come up here and get prayer from our counselors while we sing this song. Use this time as a time to take what we've talked about and what the Lord has already said to you and discuss it with Him and allow Him to solidify it inside your heart in these next few moments.