

LESSON 2

SAMUEL ANOINTS DAVID AS KING

LESSON **AT A GLANCE**

WONDER TRUTH: God Looks at the Heart

SCRIPTURE: [1 Samuel 16](#)

GOD'S BIG STORY: God tells Samuel to go to Bethlehem and anoint one of Jesse's sons as the new king. Samuel obeys, expecting God to choose one of Jesse's oldest, strongest sons. But God looks at the heart and chooses Jesse's youngest son, David.

WORD OF WONDER: Come near to God and he will come near to you. —[James 4:8a \(NIV\)](#)

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The books of 1 and 2 Samuel tell how God established David on the throne upon which His Son Jesus—the eternal King—would one day sit. It makes sense that Samuel—a judge, prophet, and priest—would be the one to anoint Jesse's youngest son.

WHAT?

Though God had provided the Israelites with judges to lead them, the Israelites wanted a human king. After their first king, Saul, disobeyed God, God called Samuel to anoint an unlikely candidate as the next king—Jesse's youngest son, David—because God looks at the heart.

WHERE?

The anointing took place about six miles south of Jerusalem in the town of Bethlehem, the future birthplace of our eternal King Jesus. This small town would become known as the city of David—an homage to David's greatness as king.

WHEN?

First Samuel tells of the transition of Israel's leadership from judges to kings. Due to Saul's disobedience, God has rejected him as king. Saul still remains on the throne as Samuel obeys God's instructions to anoint the next king, a task that is both unprecedented and dangerous.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

A major theme in God's big story is how we experience *shalom*—the peace of Eden. The Israelites thought a human king would bring this peace, but King Saul rejected God. Next, God chose David. David would be a great king, yet only Jesus—the eternal King and a descendant of David—can truly restore *shalom*.

Curiosity

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

Welcome Question

Leader Tip: Choose a food you didn't like at first but ended up enjoying it. Show a picture or the actual food, and share with kids your experience of trying it for the first time. (Be aware of food allergies!)

At your start time ...

Energetically welcome kids and gather them together.

Read the Welcome Question:

What is a food you like even though you didn't think you would?

Thank you for sharing! Sometimes the foods that don't look great on the outside end up being the most delicious! Today in God's big story, we'll hear about how God looks at what's on the inside even when people look at the outside. But first, it's time to be curious!

Curiosity Questions

I'm curious ...

- Have you ever heard the saying, "Don't judge a book by its cover"? What do you think it means?
- What do you think God thinks about you?

Leader Tip: Remind the kids that God's thoughts about them are good! He made each of us in a wonderful way, and when we follow Jesus, God looks at us and sees His beloved kids!

Elementary Multisensory Activity: Choose a Crown

For this activity, kids will help paint two crowns with grape juice. Ahead of time, you'll draw a heart on one of the crowns with invisible ink, and the grape juice will reveal the heart. This activity works best if kids can gather around the workstation to see the crowns. If your group is large, plan on preparing multiple workstations, and invite a volunteer to lead the activity at each.

Ahead of time, set up a table at each workstation and prepare the following supplies for each:

1. Print two copies of the [Crown Sheet](#) on cardstock. Neatly cut out the pieces for one of the crowns and assemble it neatly with tape. For the second crown, cut it out sloppily, with jagged cuts, and assemble it sloppily. You'll need one neat crown and one sloppy crown at each workstation.
2. At least two hours before kids arrive, make your own invisible ink using equal parts baking soda and water. Start with two spoonfuls of each and stir together in a small bowl. Use the invisible ink to paint a large heart on the front of the sloppy crown(s).
3. Prepare a small bowl of grape juice for each workstation.
4. On the table at each workstation, set the bowl of grape juice, two paintbrushes, and two prepared crowns (one neat and one sloppy). Consider also setting a roll of paper towels at each workstation to clean up any grape juice drips.

Leader Tip: The invisible ink takes at least two hours to dry on cardstock. If possible, make the ink and draw the heart on the sloppy crown(s) a day or more in advance. You can also purchase invisible ink pens with built-in UV lights.

Hold up both crowns for the kids to see (one neat and one sloppy). **Which crown looks better to you?** Pause for responses.

Which would you choose to wear if you were king? Give the kids time to look the crowns over and choose one. Invite them to explain why they chose the crown they did.

Then invite two kids up to help paint the crowns with grape juice.

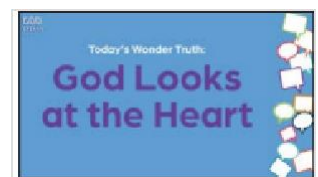
Then ask kids: **What do you notice about the crowns now?** The large heart on the sloppy crown should be visible.

Continue to discuss what kids notice and think about the crowns:

Were you surprised by the crown that had the heart on it?

What do you think the heart means?

Today in God's big story, we'll hear about the person God chose to be king of Israel, and it wasn't the person most people thought it would be! It's natural for us to judge people and things based on how they look, like this crown! Hold up the sloppy crown with the now-visible heart on it.



But like today's Wonder Truth says, **GOD LOOKS AT THE HEART.**

Preteen STEM Activity: The Most Water

Ahead of time, fill three clear containers with different amounts of water. The three clear containers should be of varying sizes and shapes. For example: a 9"x11" baking dish, a tall vase, and a cookie jar.

Your goal is to make it difficult to tell which container has more water. Color the water using food coloring (the water in each container can be a different color or the same color). Set a table at the front of your teaching space and cover it with butcher paper. Set the three containers on a table at the front of your space. Set a large clear pitcher (preferably one with measurement markings on it) on or near the table. The pitcher should be able to hold more water than what is in any one container.

Give each kid a sticker, and ask them to hold onto it for now. **On this table are three containers with water in them.** Point to the table and containers of water. **Which container do you think contains the *most* water?** Invite kids to show their answers by going up to the table and placing their stickers on the table (which is covered in butcher paper) next to the container they think contains the most water.

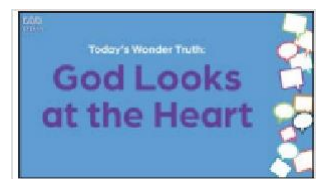


Wow! Those are some excellent guesses! Let's measure the water in each container to see which one contains the most! One at a time, pour the water from each container into the large pitcher and show the kids how much water is in each container. Pour the water back into the original containers before measuring the next one. If the pitcher doesn't have measurement markings, use a washable marker to mark the water levels on the pitcher.

Wow! Which container has the most water in it? Pause for responses. **How many of you guessed correctly at the beginning of the activity?** Invite kids to raise their hands if they guessed correctly. **Was it easy or hard to guess which container had the most water in it? Why?** Invite responses. **Volume is the scientific word for the amount of space that an object—like water—takes up. In our activity, the sizes and shapes of the containers made it hard to guess which one had the greatest volume of water.**

Today in God's big story, we'll hear about the person God chose to be king of Israel, and it wasn't the person most people thought it would be! It's natural for us to judge people and things based on how they look—like we did with these containers! But God doesn't look at the outside of people.

Like today's Wonder Truth says, **GOD LOOKS AT THE HEART.**



Declaring God's Wonder

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

You see my heart, (Kids repeat.)

And You know all about me! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

Word of Wonder Activity

WORD OF WONDER

**Come near to God and he will come near to
you.**

—James 4:8a (NIV)

Ahead of time, print the Word of Wonder Sheet [NIV](#) for each small group. (The activity works best in small groups of eight kids. If your small groups are larger than eight, consider printing multiple sets for each group.) Cut out the verse slips and paperclip each set together.

God looked at David's heart and knew he would make a great king! God looks at our hearts too and loves us just as He loved David! Our Word of Wonder for the God Speaks series reminds us that when we are near to God, He is near to us! Let's say the verse together.

Open your Bible to [James 4:8a](#). Introduce kids to [James 4:8a](#) by reading it several times together.

Now let's practice our Word of Wonder by playing a game!

Tape a verse slip to each kid's back. If your group has fewer than eight kids, tape two consecutive slips on kids' backs. Make sure the kids aren't standing in verse order. Then challenge kids to rearrange themselves, so the Word of Wonder is in order.

For an extra challenge, invite multiple small groups to race against each other and see who can put themselves in verse order the fastest.

For groups with younger kids, tape the slips on the front of their shirts and help them read the slips. Increase the difficulty level by challenging preteens to put themselves in order without talking (with their slips taped to their backs!).

Elementary Questions

- **What town did God tell Samuel to visit to anoint the new king?** (*Bethlehem*)
- **How many sons did Jesse have?** (*eight, including David*)
- **Which of Jesse's sons did Samuel think God would choose to be king? Why did God choose him?** (*Eliab, the oldest. Because he was tall, strong, and handsome.*)
- **Which of Jesse's sons did God choose to be king? Why?** (*David, because God doesn't look at how people look on the outside. He looks at the heart.*)
- **What do you notice first about people? Why do you think that is?**
- **When God looks at people, He looks at their heart. What do you think that means?**

God looked at David's heart and knew David would be a great king. David wouldn't always make right choices, but he loved God and turned back to God when he made wrong choices. God looks at our hearts and loves us too! Let's talk with God in prayer now.

Make It Inclusive: Some kids, especially younger children and kids with learning or processing differences, struggle to answer open-ended questions. Consider re-wording open-ended questions in yes/no format or offering two answer choices. For example, "Did God ask Samuel to anoint the next king or to march around the city?"

Preteen Questions

- **When King Saul's heart turned away from God, what did God ask Samuel to do?** (*go to Bethlehem and anoint one of Jesse's sons as the next king of Israel*)
- **Which of Jesse's sons did God chose to be king? Why did God choose him?** (*David, because God doesn't look at how people look on the outside. He looks at the heart.*)
- **Samuel anointed David with oil. Have you ever heard the word anointing or seen someone use oil to anoint another person? What do you think it means?** (*Anointing with oil is to pour oil on someone's head as a symbol of the special job God is giving that person.*)
- **What do you notice first when you meet someone new? Why do you think that is?**
- **When God looks at people, He looks at their heart. What do you think that means?**
- **What can you do next time you meet someone new to look at their heart rather than their outward appearance? What can you pay attention to? How can you speak and act toward them?**

God looked at David's heart and knew David would be a great king. God looks at our hearts too, and He loves us just as He loved David. As Jesus-followers, we can invite God to help us see others the way He does—by looking at their hearts! Let's talk with God in prayer now.

Small Group Prayer Time

Invite kids to share prayer requests and anything they want to thank God for. Ask if there is anything specific they want to talk to God about. Close by thanking God for looking at our hearts and asking Him to help us see others the way He sees them!

Identity

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

Elementary Responding in Worship: Looking at the Heart

Ahead of time, print copies of the [Binoculars and Heart Sheet](#) for each kid. Consider precutting the binoculars wraps and hearts for younger kids. Cut each paper towel roll in half so that each kid has two small cardboard rolls to use to make binoculars. Also prepare lengths of yarn or ribbon (about 24") for each kid.

Make a sample pair of binoculars ahead of time to show kids. Seeing a visual example will help kids as they create their own!

Today in God's big story, Samuel anointed David as the new king of Israel. As humans, we often look at people's appearance and decide what they are like based on how they look on the outside. But God chose David as king because God looks at the heart! Just as God loved David and looked at his heart, God loves us and looks at our hearts. God cares about our thoughts, feelings, and attitudes. With God's help, we too can look at people's hearts! Let's create binoculars to help us remember that God looks at the heart!

Give one copy of the Binoculars and Heart Sheet, two small cardboard rolls, and a length of yarn or ribbon to each kid. (If you precut the binocular wraps and hearts, give one set to each kid.) Set out a hole punch, coloring utensils, kid-safe scissors, glue and/or clear tape, and stickers if you have them. Explain the following steps for making binoculars; then invite kids to get started:

1. Tape or glue two cardboard tubes together, side by side, to form binoculars.
2. Color and decorate the binoculars wrap and the heart on the sheet. Be sure to include your name somewhere visible.
3. Cut out the binoculars wrap and the heart.
4. Wrap the binoculars wrap around the two cardboard tubes and tape or glue it in place.
5. Use a hole punch to make two holes near the top of the binoculars (one hole along the outer ring of each tube).
6. Thread the yarn or ribbon through each hole and tie it to make a strap for around the neck.



Once kids have completed their binoculars, invite them to set their decorated hearts at one end of the room (if possible, kids can tape their hearts to the wall using a small piece of masking or painter's tape). Next, they can walk to the other end of the room and look through their binoculars at their hearts. If they can see their heart clearly, invite them to read the words on it (or for prereaders, simply recite the Wonder Truth): "God Looks at the Heart."

Close this response activity by inviting everyone to look at their hearts at the same time and saying the Wonder Truth in unison: **God looks at the heart!** Encourage kids to take their binoculars and hearts home and to keep using them as a reminder that God looks at the heart.

Preteen Responding in Worship: Anointing Oil

Allergy Caution: This activity includes possible food allergens!

Ahead of time, pour water into a clear jar or bowl so that it is about $\frac{2}{3}$ full. (During the activity, you'll pour one cup of oil into the water, so make sure there is space in the jar or bowl for the oil.) Consider dyeing the water with food coloring for a fun effect. Measure out one cup of cooking oil (such as olive or canola oil). Place a table at the front of your teaching area and on it set the jar or bowl of water, a medicine dropper/syringe or spoon, and one cup of cooking oil.

Leader Tip: If anointing with oil is something your church practices, consider anointing each preteen with oil during this worship response time. You might invite a pastor, church leader, or kids' parents in to anoint kids and remind them that they are loved, chosen, and set apart by God.

In God's big story, Samuel used oil to anoint David as the new king of Israel. Anointing is a spiritual act in which someone pours oil over the head of someone else to symbolize that person being set apart by God for a special purpose or job. David was set apart by God for the special job of being king of Israel. When Samuel anointed David, David wasn't yet a soldier or a hero. David was just a regular shepherd boy who was chosen by God for a special job.

You are special to God too. God loves you. He sees your heart and has a special plan for you. We're going to pour oil into water and watch how it reacts. As we watch, I invite you to spend time talking with God in prayer. Ask Him to help you remember how He sees you and ask Him to help you look at other people's hearts just as He does.

Quietly play the song "King of My Heart" from the [God Speaks Elementary Spotify playlist](#) as you use a medicine dropper/syringe or a spoon to drop oil into the water.

Consider inviting kids to take turns dropping in the oil. As kids watch the reaction of the oil and water, encourage them to talk with God.

Point out that just as the oil floats to the top of the water, our prayers rise to the ears of God, who loves us and always hears our prayers. Consider having paper or notebooks and writing and coloring utensils available for kids to journal or draw their prayers.

Leader Tip: Provide small notebooks for preteens to use every week as prayer journals. Invite them to decorate the covers; then keep them in your space for kids to use each week.

After a few minutes of prayer, close this response time by praying together: **God, thank You for seeing us, knowing us, and choosing us. Help us remember that You see our hearts and help us open our whole hearts to You. Help us love and see others the way you do. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Blessing Your Kids

Blessing: You are loved, chosen, and set apart by God! May you walk confidently every day, knowing that you have a special purpose. And may you see and love others as God does!

GAME 2: CHARADES RACE

In this charades relay game, kids will take turns acting out different words or phrases for their teams to guess.

Ahead of time, write simple words or phrases on note cards or slips of paper. Here are some ideas: dog, airplane, train, banana, elephant, bike, boat, baseball bat, swing, brushing teeth, eating a hot dog, climbing a ladder, butterfly, diving off a diving board, tent, monkey, flipping burgers, birthday cake, roasting a marshmallow, and any other words or actions you want to add.

You will need one note card or slip per kid. Fold the cards or slips in half and place them in a bowl.

Leader Tip: *For Younger Kids.* The leader holding the bowl can be ready to whisper the word or phrase to prereaders.

Make It Inclusive: If there are kids in your group with physical restrictions, have each group sit around a table with the bowl of cards in the center. Each kid will pull a card and act out the words while seated. When the team successfully guesses, the next person gets a turn to act.

Gather kids and help them form two equal teams. Have teams line up next to each other at one end of the room. On the opposite end of the room, have a leader hold the bowl of charades cards.

For this game, the first person from each team will race to the person holding the bowl, pull a card, and then race back to the team. Demonstrate this for the kids by walking to the bowl, grabbing a slip, and walking back to the kids.

That person will look at the card and try to get her team to guess the word or phrase on the card by silently acting it out. She may not talk, mumble, or make any sounds.

When the team guesses correctly, the next person in line can race to get a new card to act out. You will do that until each person on the team has had a turn to act.

The first team to guess correctly for every person wins the game! Answer any questions kids have, then begin.

Once one team has finished, give the other team a chance to finish as well. Then gather kids back together.

It was hard to communicate without talking, but you all did a great job!

God can communicate to us in many ways too. Today in God's big story, Samuel listened to God and anointed David as the next king of Israel. If it had been up to Samuel, he would have chosen the next king based on outward appearance. However, because Samuel knew the voice of God—even when God wasn't talking out loud—Samuel knew to anoint David because God looks at the heart.