

THE HEART OF THE MATTER - 1

Pursuing God's Own Heart: Lessons From the Life of David

"He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens; from tending the sheep he brought him to be the shepherd of his people.... And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them."
- Psalm 78:70-72

"Faithfulness to God in the present allows Him to shape your heart for the future."

David. You could read his story and wonder what God saw in him. He fell as often as he stood, stumbled as often as he conquered. David will make you want to be like him at times and nothing like him at others. He is sure to capture your interest if you let him. And God is sure to change your heart...if you let Him.

Welcome

Share an occasion when you failed to make a good "first impression," or were surprised—pleasantly or disappointedly—by someone else's.

Word

Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13

1. What profound assignment did God give the prophet Samuel (verse 1)? Why was Samuel reluctant to respond? What do you know about the historical background that would have made his reluctance to obey God even more dangerous?
2. Why did Samuel suppose that Eliab was the Lord's anointed (verses 6-7; also notice 17:13)? Why do you think the Lord has Samuel look at each of Jesse's sons before revealing that he has chosen David?
3. Why does God often use the most unlikely person to accomplish great things for Himself? Can you think of a time when God's obvious choice for you did not make sense based on outward appearances?
4. In what ways did David's tending sheep out in the pasture help to prepare him to serve as king?
5. How has God used your own occupation or life experiences to prepare *you* for ministry?

Worship

David was known as a man after God's own heart, which was often expressed in song (the Psalms). What psalms come to mind? Sing the psalm or a related song as your share your responses: 71-"As the Deer," "Create in Me a Clean Heart," 533-"I Am a Sheep," 63-"I Will Call Upon the Lord."

Works

How might God be shaping your heart at the moment? Being faithful in the obscure, unknown, unseen, and un-applauded tasks of your life produces the character that God desires for you.

The Chronicler of ancient Israel writes, "*For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.*" (2 Chr. 16:9) In his book, *Facing Your Giants*, Max Lucado puts it this way, "God examines hearts. When he finds one set on him, he calls it and he claims it." Question: *Are you comforted or alarmed, knowing that God knows your heart?*