

Message: Week 1 of “Adjusting My Crown Series”, presented by Rev. Kristen Lowe on 07-10-2016 at Crossroads United Methodist Church, Waunakee, WI.

In our scripture today, the prophet Samuel has been directed by God to anoint a new King of Israel. Samuel has served King Saul and has watched God’s blessing over him. Saul is a large man, he is fierce and strong. Samuel expects that the next king of Israel will be someone who can protect God’s people, lead them into battle, and command the people’s respect.

1 Samuel 16 (selected verses)

The Lord said to Samuel, “Fill your horn with oil and go. I’m sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem because I have found my next king among his sons.”

Samuel did what the Lord instructed. When they arrived, Samuel looked at Eliab and thought, “That must be the LORD’s anointed right in front.”

But the Lord said to Samuel, “Have no regard for his appearance or stature, because I haven’t selected him. God doesn’t look at things like humans do. Humans see only what is visible to the eyes, but the Lord sees into the heart.”

Next Jesse called for Abinadab, who presented himself to Samuel, but he said, “The Lord hasn’t chosen this one either.”

So Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, “No, the Lord hasn’t chosen this one.” Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord hasn’t picked any of these.” Then Samuel asked Jesse, “Is that all of your sons?”

“There is still the youngest one,” Jesse answered, “but he’s out keeping the sheep.”

“Send for him,” Samuel told Jesse, “because we can’t proceed until he gets here.”

So Jesse sent for him and brought him in. He was reddish brown, had beautiful eyes, and was good-looking. The Lord said, “He’s the one. Go anoint him.” So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him right there in front of his brothers. The LORD’s spirit came over David from that point forward.

God’s words to our hearts. Amen.

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The Lord does
not see like
human
beings see.

God sees
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The story of David:

Turn with me if you will to 1 Samuel 16. This is the story where God sends Samuel out to anoint the king that God has chosen to lead his people.

⁶When they arrived, Samuel saw Jesse's son Eliab (with all his brute strength and amazingness) and said to himself, “this man standing here in the lord's presence is surely the one he has chosen.” ⁷ But the Lord said to him, “Don't pay attention to how tall and handsome he is. This is not who I have chosen, because I don't judge as people judge. They look at the outward appearance, but I look at the heart.”

⁸Then Jesse called his son Abinadab and brought him to Samuel. But Samuel said, “No, the Lord hasn't chosen him either.” ⁹Jesse then brought Shammah. “No, the Lord hasn't chosen him either,” Samuel said. ¹⁰In this way Jesse brought seven of his sons to Samuel. And Samuel said to him, “No, the Lord hasn't chosen any of these.” ¹¹Then he asked him, “Do you have any more sons?”

Jesse answered, “There is still the youngest, but he is out taking care of the sheep.” “Tell him to come here,” Samuel said. ¹²So Jesse sent for him. The Lord said to Samuel, “This is my chosen king—anooint him!” ¹³Samuel took the olive oil and anointed David in front of his brothers. Immediately the spirit of the Lord took control of David and was with him from that day on.

God saw something in David that no one else saw. Because God knew David from his innermost being. Physical appearance, status, age... all irrelevant to God. Do you hear me on this? Social status, wealth, accomplishments, job status, possessions, education... that's not who we are.

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But... we tend to believe we are who the world says we are. We allow the world to label us and we begin to believe those labels. We also find ourselves labeling and believing the labels placed on others.

Brian moon of Lakeside Presbyterian church tells the story of a man who was walking through the forest one day and found a young eagle who had fallen out of his nest. He took it home and put it in his barnyard where it soon learned to eat and behave like the chickens.



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One day a naturalist passed by the farm and asked why it was that the king of all birds should be confined to live in the barnyard with the chickens. The farmer replied that since he had given it chicken feed and trained it to be a chicken, it had never learned to fly. Since it now behaved as the chickens, it was no longer an eagle.

“Still, it has the heart of an eagle,” replied the naturalist, “and can surely be taught to fly.” he lifted the eagle toward the sky and said, “You belong to the sky and not to the earth. Stretch forth your wings and fly.” The eagle, however, was confused. He did not know who he was, and seeing the chickens eating their food, he jumped down to be with them again. The naturalist took the bird to the roof of the house and urged him again, saying, “You are an eagle. Stretch forth your wings and fly.” But the eagle was afraid of his unknown self and world and jumped down once more for the chicken food. Finally, the naturalist took the eagle out of the barnyard to a high mountain. There he held the king of the birds high above him and encouraged him again, saying, “You are an eagle. You belong to the sky. Stretch forth your wings and fly.” The eagle looked around, back towards the barnyard and up to the sky. Then the naturalist lifted him straight towards the sun and it happened that the eagle began to tremble. Slowly he stretched his wings, and with a triumphant cry, soared away into the heavens.

For many of us, life is a lot like that story, only we never stretch out our wings and attempt to fly. We spend our lives living the life of chickens when we could be living the life of an eagle. We look up to possibilities from the ground thinking that all of those beautiful dreams are for others, but not us. We dream of life up in the clouds, soaring free and powerfully, but all too often we stay in the barnyard picking at chicken feed. Why do we do that?

Because we have been told that we are not eagles. We have been reprogrammed to believe that we are something other than who we are. We have been kept in captivity and on the ground so long that we forget that we are spiritual beings who live in this world but are not of this world.



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In our society, we place a lot of value on youth, beauty, athletic ability, intelligence, education, wealth and fame. We go in circles comparing ourselves to others. We are brainwashed to believe that our identity lies in where we live, what we achieve, the color of our skin, our financial status, our hobbies, our job, our relatives, what we have, even the clothes we wear. We are bombarded with mixed messages of world-measured self-worth that are so damaging that we actually forget who we are! And we forget who others are as well!

But, if none of that is true, if I am not what I do or what I wear or how much I own or where I went to school, then who am I? Where do I fit in life? Am I valuable? The eagle from the story was not a common chicken, but he did not know this until someone came along and showed him who he really was.



You are fearfully and wonderfully made. You were made to fly. You were made in his image. You are a chosen people. We need to remember who we are and appreciate our sacred worth so we can appreciate the sacred worth of others. We need to see our own light so that we can see the light in others.

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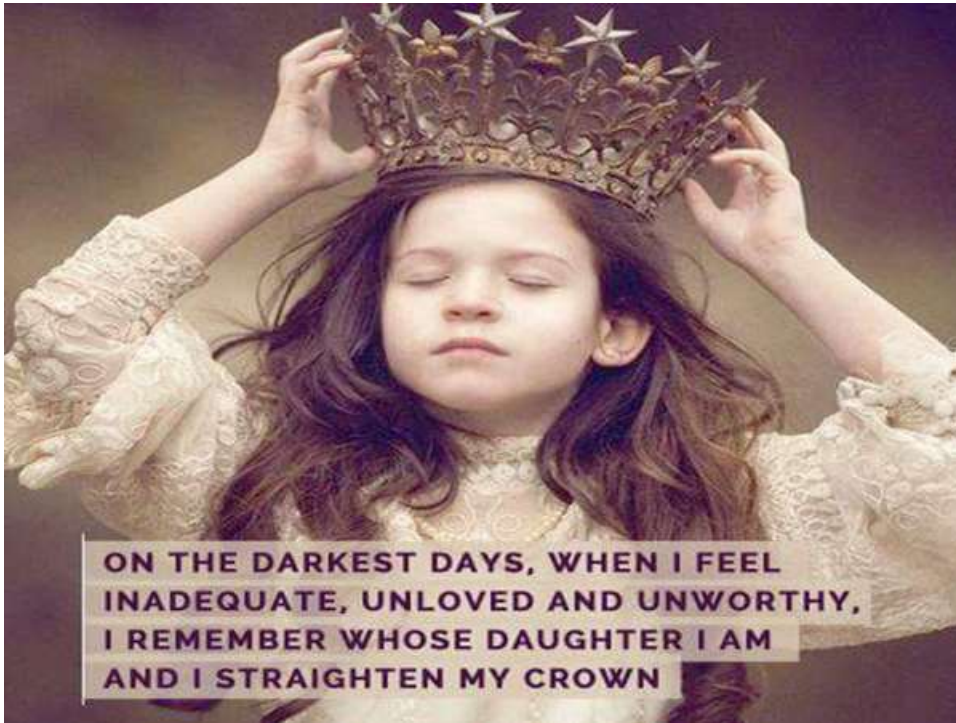
The voice of God comes to announce our extraordinary worth. We are infinitely valuable because we were born in the mind of God – even before we entered our mother’s womb. We were precious to God before the world began – because we were already on his mind and in his imagination. This fact is something that can never change or can ever be taken away from us. It is something we can never lose no matter who the world tells me I am or who I’m supposed to be.

Now, hearing this, I want you to believe! Believe who you are! The next thought, of course, is going to be, “But what about the things I’ve done, I’ve messed up God’s plan for me.” No worries, I’ll cover that next week. In the meantime, it’s important that you remember who you are.

So how do we do that? It’s practice! We practice tuning out the lies of this world... the labels the world gives us that we start to believe and give ourselves. The messages all around us, billboards, magazines, television, the clothing and societal expectations, which close in on us and threaten to brainwash us that we have to... have to tune out! We must be vigilant! We have to surround ourselves with truth! Once the eagle took to the sky, flying was second nature. Once we spend more time in God’s presence, read the word, grow in our prayer life, surround ourselves with the encouragement of other believers, open the channel of communication with our creator through our prayer life, and live into a life of gratitude through our generosity, the scales begin to fall away from our eyes. We begin to see ourselves for who we are... a sparkling, dazzling, life-filled, extraordinary being created by God on purpose for a purpose.

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Who are you? You are good enough! You are a royal priesthood! You are a child of the king! You are created from God’s own imagination and God’s own self. You are blessed, chosen, adopted, accepted, redeemed and forgiven! Remember who you are!!! You are God’s masterpiece! Amen.



**ON THE DARKEST DAYS, WHEN I FEEL
INADEQUATE, UNLOVED AND UNWORTHY,
I REMEMBER WHOSE DAUGHTER I AM
AND I STRAIGHTEN MY CROWN**