

March 19, 2021

Read 1 Samuel 16

Key verse: 1 Samuel 6:7

But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.'

Our Beauty Is Within Us

I haven't cut my hair (or had anyone else cut it) since the Covid 19 pandemic began. My hair is now long enough for me to tie it in a ponytail in the back, but when at night I untie it. Since I'm balding on the top and my hair is thick and gnarly I very much resemble Larry of the Three Stooges when I wake up in the morning. And before I walk out the front door to take Archie for a walk I throw a hat on or tie it back or something because I don't want to be seen un-coifed.

Yes, appearances matter to us, but perhaps they matter *too* much. Back in 1975 a very talented musician named Janis Ian released a single called "At Seventeen" that went to the top of the charts. The song begins:

*I learned the truth at seventeen
That love was meant for beauty queens
And high school girls with clear skinned smiles
Who married young and then retired*

It's not a happy song. It conveys the pain and depression experienced by so many people (boys and girls, men and women) who are not beautiful in appearance by society's standards, who are not asked out on dates or are rejected when asking a more attractive person on a date. Perhaps you've been through this and know how it feels.

O that we could see ourselves and others the way God sees us, looking at our hearts and recognizing that beauty within us! O that we could stop qualifying people based on their physical attractiveness.

On the bright side, people who not considered beautiful in appearance are usually the first to discover the inner beauty of themselves and others. They learn that true love transcends appearances and endures the inevitable effects of aging, often growing stronger over time. May God help us to see the true beauty in ourselves and in others.

Prayer: Lord God, you created us with beauty beyond our bodies. We pray for our youth who are so naturally attracted to each other by outward appearance. We pray for our culture that places such high premium on the superficial. Help us to be beautiful within and recognize the beauty within others. Amen.