

Our first reading gives us the crucial moment wherein the prophet Samuel anoints David as king. It occurs in the major theme of judging by appearances.

After the people of Israel clamored for a king, the Lord instructed Samuel to anoint Saul. By all appearances, he will be a great king. 1 Samuel related that no one was more handsome than Saul and that he was taller than everyone else. He had the look of a king. On the surface level, he has the natural characteristics of a king.

Very soon, however, we begin to learn that his heart is not right with the Lord. Saul's major character flaws are that he is vain, impatient, and overly concerned what people think of him. This drives him to do things contrary to the Lord's will.

After two acts of disobedience, the Lord rejects Saul as ruler over Israel and opts instead to anoint David, which we hear about today.

Oddly enough, we see Samuel make the same mistake of judging by appearances. As Eliab passes before him, he thinks that surely the Lord has chosen him. Of course, we hear that after all the sons pass before Samuel, there is the last son, David, tending the sheep out in the field.

It's noteworthy that Jesse considered David such an unlikely candidate for king that he didn't bother inviting him in when Samuel arrived. Our translation says that David is the youngest, but could also mean the smallest. God loves to work with "inferior" people or people who the world considers insignificant. He chooses the youngest (or smallest) who shepherds the sheep to become shepherd of Israel.

A couple of thoughts comes to mind. A beautiful prayer to include in your daily prayers is "Lord, help me to see the world and people as you see them. Help me to see the heart, and to always give people the benefit of the doubt when I don't understand."

Second, take great joy that the Lord loves to use insignificant people like David for His own purposes. We take great joy in that the Lord's chooses to work through weak people like you and me for His glory and honor.