

‘SEEING BEYOND THE VISIBLE’

How familiar to us is the sentiment behind 1 Samuel 16 to us today. When people are choosing new leadership often, they often go for the look of a person, the stature of a person, the age comes into the equation, as does their background or how eloquent and articulate they are. It seems they miss the most important part. And that’s just the beginning.

Under instructions from God, Samuel comes to anoint a king, scanning Jesse’s sons for signs of regal grandeur, Samuel is looking for one that stands out above all others from his perspective. On the surface, the scene is about outward signs: height, bearing, presence. Yet God interrupts Samuel’s criteria with a piercing reminder: “The Lord looks on the heart” (paraphrase of 1 Samuel 16:7). David, the youngest and seemingly least, is chosen not because of him being charismatic, but because he has a heart that is generous, teachable, faithful, repentant, and utterly dependent on God. While David is tending the sheep in the hills, he learns to sing, to trust, and to respond to God’s call in the ordinary rhythm of tending sheep and guarding his flock. The light here doesn’t blaze in a dramatic moment of national spectacle; it begins in private faithfulness, in loneliness, in small acts of obedience that prepare him for future leadership.

That interior light—formed in quiet faithfulness—is precisely where anxiety thrives and where loneliness often tightens its grip. Anxiety whispers to itself, that we must prove ourselves, that our worth rises and falls with visibility. Loneliness amplifies the sense that we are unseen, unneeded, or out of step with the world around us. However, David’s life tells a counter-narrative: true significance comes from a heart which is in tune with God, not from the applause of people. When we internalise this, we begin to see differently the cracks in our own lives. The light of God’s gaze invites us to stop measuring ourselves by the loudest voice in the room and instead to nurture an attitude of Godly dependence, repentance, and faithful presence wherever we are because where God is also.

Paul’s letter to the Ephesians deepens that transformation by confirming our identity in light: we are “light in the Lord” and called into deeds of goodness, righteousness, and truth. This is not moralistic lighting; it is the sanctifying work of Christ within us, turning our inner reality into outward radiance. Light, in Paul’s imagery, exposes darkness, but its purpose is restorative not to be seen as a punishment: to reveal what is true so that what is untrue can be made known; and to invite healing where wounds have taken up residence.

In the cracks of anxiety, loneliness, and brokenness, this light begins with truthful self-awareness. We confess our fears, our smallness, our failures to trust God. We bring them into the presence of the One who knows the heart and who has already endured loneliness on the cross so that we might never be wholly abandoned. Then light moves to action: truth-telling that frees, gentle accountability that heals, and mercy that binds up wounds. Someone you know calmly names a struggle with mental strain, a neighbor reaches out to someone newly isolated because of a move into a new area, a family extends forgiveness across a broken relationship. These are not grand gestures alone; they are consistent, everyday examples of what it means to walk as children of light in a world shadowed by worry and pain.

There are practical ways Christ’s light can take shape in our communities:

We continue to nurture our heart-led culture. Encourage humility over prestige, teachability over certainty, and dependence on God over self-reliance. Create spaces where people can share fears and hopes without judgment, so vulnerability becomes a doorway to grace.

Practice light-bearing habits. Let honesty, kindness, and integrity be the baseline of each of our interactions. Practice active listening, patient presence in others' pain, and acts of mercy that meet tangible needs. Small, faithful deeds—a shared meal, a listening ear, a timely check-in—become channels of Christ's light in darkness.

Build spaces for healing and reconciliation. Recognise mental health, grief, and brokenness as legitimate realities in need of compassion and care. Support church groups, and activities which care and walk with people through difficult seasons in their life. Don't be afraid to offer your help or participation to any of the activities led by the church. At this moment the team who are coordinating The Market @ The Meeting Place would welcome support and participation, as would UCAF and WAGs leaders welcome support and encouragement as would the Bible Discussion group.

Celebrate ordinary faithfulness as a sacred vocation. David's preparation in the fields is not a footnote; it is the schooling of leadership. In our context, the ordinary tasks of family life, workplace duties seeing beyond the visible Christ's shining light break through the cracks of anxiety, loneliness, and brokenness is the lived invitation woven through 1 Samuel 16:1-13 and Ephesians 5:8-14. In a world quick to reward visible greatness, these scriptures invite us to seek and recognise light where it often seems most hidden: in the heart, in ordinary daily faithfulness, and in the vulnerable places of our lives and neighbors.

Let us pray:

Lord, open our eyes to the light you kindle in hidden hearts. Help us value faithfulness over fame, and honesty over image. Grant us David's teachable heart—gentle, apologetic, dependent on you—so our daily tasks become acts of love. Heal anxiety and loneliness with your presence; let your truth Guide us to mercy, courage, and unity. May our ordinary lives reflect your light, until all see your grace in us. Amen