

Third Sunday After the Epiphany, January 24, 2021 **New Year—New Life**

1 Samuel 16:4-13

⁴ Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, “Do you come in peace?”

⁵ Samuel replied, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed stands here before the LORD.”

⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.” ⁹ Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, “Nor has the LORD chosen this one.” ¹⁰ Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, “The LORD has not chosen these.” ¹¹ So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?”

“There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered. “He is tending the sheep.”

Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.”

¹² So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; this is the one.”

¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah. *1 Samuel 16:4-13 NIV*

1. Read verses 1 – 3. What is the setting and circumstance of this time?
2. Why were the elders of the town afraid of Samuel?
3. Why did the man of God, Samuel, think Eliab was the chosen one? Is there a lesson here?
4. Why didn’t David immediately act like the king? What were his family and David waiting for?

1 Corinthians 12:12-26

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ¹⁴ Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

¹⁵ Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. ¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!”

²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. *1*

Corinthians 12:12-26 NIV

1. How do you see yourself as a part of Christ’s body? How do you think others see you? Are you using the gifts God has given you?
2. Are some spiritual gifts viewed as being better than others? What do you think they are?
3. Are all spiritual gifts equal in God’s eyes?
4. Do you think those who are incapacitated with disease, age, or memory issues still have a gift?

Matthew 13:31-34,44

³¹ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”

³³ He told them still another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.”

³⁴ Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable.

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. *Matthew 13:31-34,44 NIV*

1. What does the parable of the mustard seed tell us?
2. What is the meaning of the leaven? Why such a large amount of flour?
3. Did anyone understand these two parables?
4. What is the message of the treasure?