

Heart

discussion guide

based on **1 Samuel 16.1-13** (Linked to sermon of 23/10/16)
which can be accessed at www.stjamesbythepark.org/current-sermon-series

This was the second in our series on David from the OT – looking at his characteristics that made God describe him as "a man after God's own heart" (Acts 13.22). The aim of this series is to see how we can be people after God's own heart as well.

Intro: From what you can remember about David's life, what's your favourite Bible story about him? Why?

The context: The people had asked God for a king, because all the surrounding nations had one. The Lord had issued a stark warning of what would happen if the people had a king. (1 Samuel 8).

Can you think of times you might have asked God for things because you wanted to be like other people? Why might God sometimes allow us to have those things?

Saul became the first king, but it wasn't long before the Lord rejected him; instead God wanted a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13.13-14).

Jesus is the ultimate King over God's people; share some of the ways he showed himself to be a man after God's own heart.

Read 1 Samuel 16.1-13. How would you summarise this passage? What is the key verse?

Our society puts huge store on outward appearances. What are some of the negative repercussions of that?

'Man looks at the outward appearance' (v7). In what ways are you tempted to be judgmental, based on people's appearance? How could the gospel help you become less judgmental?

'The Lord does not look at the things man looks at ... The Lord looks at the heart' (v7). How does that make you feel – scared or encouraged? Why?

These questions might be best in 2s or 3s:

Up (relating to God): what aspect of your heart would God like to work on at the moment?

In (relating to fellow Christians): can you think of a Christian who needs to be reminded of the message of this passage at the moment (eg with God, we don't need to 'keep up appearances')? How could you encourage them with this passage?

Out (relating to the wider community): can you think of someone who isn't a Christian who would benefit from hearing that God doesn't look at the outside, but at the heart (eg someone with low self-esteem)? How could you encourage them with this passage?

Spend time praying for each other, that God would increasingly be shaping our hearts to be like his heart, and that we would have opportunities to share the truths of this passage with others (both Christians and those who aren't yet Christians).