



NOVEMBER 12/13, 2022

ALFRED STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

# SIGNALS

1 SAMUEL 16:1-13B

A SERMON BY

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Date: November 12 and 13, 2022  
Preacher: Rev. Ty Jones  
Sermon Title: 'Signals'  
Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:1-13 NRSV

***The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the Lord commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.***

***When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely his anointed is now before the Lord." 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." Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here." He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him, for this is the one." Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.***

### **SERMON SUMMARY**

Rev. R. Ty Jones invites us to consider the importance of intersections and traffic signals in our lives. Drawing from the language and imagery of I Samuel 16, he highlights four powerful signal shifts that guide the lives of Samuel, the people of God, and David. These same signal shifts are available to guide each of us.

The first **signal shift** is found in I Samuel 16:1. Samuel is faced with God's question, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel?" Samuel stands at the intersection of grieving for the past or moving into the future. Samuel seems stopped by a red light of the past, instead of obeying God's green light and moving toward the future. Rev. Jones encourages us to see God's green lights in our lives and to go forward toward our future.

The second **signal shift** is made clear when God tells Samuel, “I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” Here the word “provide” means “see”. In this signal shift, we are called to recognize God sees what we need, and because of this, God will provide no matter the crossroad or intersection.

The third **signal shift** is based on our ability to discern when and where to pour our "oil". Samuel poured "oil" on Saul, but it did not go so well. Now, Samuel has another opportunity to fill his horn and anoint the right king. The third signal reminds us to pour our efforts and time into the things God has chosen for us. David did not look like the next king, but God told Samuel that is where you must pour your "oil".

The final **signal shift** is found in the final verse of our morning's text. When we are at our intersections, we do not need to worry because the same spirit that filled David will fill us. As we navigate the crossroads of life, the spirit will abide with us as our source of power and hope.

May we watch for God's signals and follow them every step of the way.

### ***KEY POINTS***

1. Crossroads occur in our lives and we need God to guide us so that we navigate them well.
2. God will sometimes give us what we ask for to show us that our desires are not always in our best interest.
3. Sometimes those anointed by God are unwilling to obey God.
4. Anytime we choose other than God's intention for our lives, we choose second best.

### ***GETTING TO KNOW YOU QUESTIONS***

1. Rev. Jones mentioned the game “Red Light/Green Light”. What childhood games did you enjoy playing when you were young, and why?
2. Who taught you to drive? Were they a good teacher? Is there a funny story associated with your learning to drive? If so, please share.

### ***INTO THE BIBLE QUESTIONS***

1. Rev. Jones says the book(s) of Samuel are about reversals. Hannah's barren life is reversed and she bears Samuel (I Samuel 2). Saul's life as a farmer (I Samuel 9), and David's life as a shepherd (I Samuel 16), are reversed and both become King. Reversals are common in the story of God. Can you identify other reversals in Biblical stories that have meaning to you? What did you learn from these stories of reversal?

2. God chooses to look on the heart and not on outward appearances (I Samuel 16:6-7). What does this text tell us about what makes us beautiful in God's eyes?

***Village Members and Facilitators,***

***The Curriculum Team does not expect you to cover all the questions. We ask the facilitators to choose the best questions, in each section, for your Village.***

***LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS***

1. Crossroads appear in everyone's life. Think of a crossroads in your life. When God showed up at that crossroad, how did God direct you to traverse the space? How did you move forward? What did you learn?
2. In I Samuel 16, God asks Samuel how long he will grieve over Saul. Grief is a very complicated emotion. Have you ever grieved something and found it hard to heal from the grief? As you look back, what helped/hindered your healing? Are there any scriptures that helped you in past times of grief?
3. When has God placed a bright red light before you and you behaved as if it were green? Why did you act this way? If you could go back to that red light moment, what would you do differently?
4. We learn in this sermon that the production of "oil" is time-consuming and costly. Rev. Jones tells us that Samuel was predisposed to pour his "oil" on a familiar subject, even though that had not worked in the past. Similarly, have you ever wasted your "oil" on something familiar? How have you been able to break that pattern, or if not, why not?

5. As he describes the final signal shift, Rev. Jones declares that we do not have to worry about intersections in our lives. In his sermon, he tells us that it is not our ability to navigate them that carries us safely through, but God's spirit operating in us. What is our role in cooperating with God's spirit when we face life's intersections? If you were to look back over the last half of your life, how would you grade your track record of cooperating with God?

### ***"CAN I PUSH IT?" QUESTIONS***

1. Rev. Jones compares "oil" to effort and time, and urges us to pour our "oil" out according to God's word, even when we are directed to pour it out on entities that are "strangely packaged." When you think of the church, on what "strangely packaged" entities should we pour our effort and time? What are the areas the church is called to bless that may not look so familiar?
2. Rev. Jones shares his experiences as a passenger and general observations of the driving challenges since he moved to the DMV. He shares how past inventions helped to improve the driving experience for us today. In what ways have difficult or unproductive church behaviors improved in your lifetime?

### ***ACTIVITY***

Our world is obsessed with looking at the exterior of people, whereas God looks at the hearts of people. What can we do to combat assessing people by their "looks"? How do we lean in and learn to know the hearts of people?

Share a story of someone you judged by their looks but when you got to know them better you learned the story of their heart.

### ***SPIRIT WORK***

Rev. Jones told a story about God providing for him when he needed to pay his rent. How has God provided for you? Over the next week, take time each day to journal about the ways God has provided. At the end of the week, create a prayer, thanking God for provision.

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

***Within the structure of Village there are various affinity groups. Each week the team creates questions, especially for the individual groups. However, any village may draw from the questions listed below if the Spirit so moves.***

#### ***For Married Couples***

1. Even Samuel is not perfect. He makes mistakes and yet, God is with him. Our marriages are not perfect either. Like Samuel, God is with us and guides us through imperfect situations. Share a moment in your marriage where God guided you through an imperfect moment. What did you learn?
2. Rev. Jones states that God will sometimes give us the very thing we ask for only to show us that what we ask for, we really do not want. Have you ever experienced a situation where you asked for something in your marriage, only to receive it and learn it was not for your good?

#### ***For Young Adults***

1. The path from adolescence to adulthood is not easily traveled. Were there any “red lights” that you should have heeded during this journey? What barriers did you face? What tools did you use to navigate this crossroad?
2. Rev. Jones states that God will not allow us to stay in our grief for too long. Have you ever grieved over the loss of a failed relationship for too long? How did that impact you? If you could go back in time to that experience, what advice would you give yourself?

#### ***For Parents***

1. According to Rev. Jones, Jesse underestimated David’s gifts. Has that ever happened to you with your children? How might a parent see the gifts of their children?

2. In a world that has become fixated on outward appearances, how do you build your child's confidence to make them secure in who they are from the inside?

### ***For Seniors***

1. Some of us have retired, or are on our way to retirement. Being on a fixed income can sometimes be a challenge. Please share a time when your "month was longer than your money". Was your first instinct to pray? Why or why not? How did God show up?
2. The sermon teaches us that God provides in the nick of time. Have you ever seen God provide for you when you thought all was lost? What did you learn? How did that experience impact your relationship with God?

### ***For Women***

1. As women, we often want to "make things happen" for our children, in our work environment, and in our communities. Please share a time when God showed you a red light and you pressed forward with an agenda that you later realized was not God's will. What was the outcome? How has that circumstance changed the way you move?
2. As women, the world often asks us to play small so that others can have space to play large. Please share a time when God showed you a green light and you pressed the brake instead of the accelerator. What was the outcome? How has that circumstance influenced your perspective on your walk with God?

### ***For Men***

1. Life experiences have a way of shaping our perspective. Share a time when you came to a "red light" but chose to proceed. What was the outcome? What did you learn from that experience?

2. Samuel chose to pour his “oil” over Saul, which turned out to be a huge mistake. When was there a time when you poured your “oil” out over someone or something, that turned out to be a huge mistake? How has that changed how you invest your time and energy?

***For Returning Citizens***

1. As the youngest of Jesse’s sons, David would have been assigned the lowest jobs. When Samuel arrives at Jesse’s home, David is “out in the field” tending to Jesse’s sheep, with no one concerned for his welfare. In your life, during your times “out in the field”, did God show up for you? If so, how? What did you learn in your time of waiting?
2. Navigating intersections in our lives can sometimes be difficult. When was the last time you had to navigate an intersection? Did you rely on yourself, or did you lean into the spirit that God has placed in you? How did you know the difference?

***For Differently-Abled Persons/People***

1. Samuel wanted to pour “oil” on the son who “looked” like he could fit the role of a king in his perspective. How has someone’s perspective of you almost hindered your opportunity to perform a role that God had poured “oil” on you to do?
2. How have you successfully navigated through a situation where someone improperly characterized you as being “strangely packaged” and was reluctant to place you in a leadership role? How were you able to help correct their mischaracterization and perform the role?