

Get Real... Settling for Less than God's Best

1 Samuel 9:1-20

We miss God's best when we make choices based on appearances.

 1 Samuel 8:5b-7 (LB) "Give us a king like all the other nations have," they pleaded. ⁶ Samuel was terribly upset and went to the Lord for advice. ⁷ "Do as they say," the Lord replied, "for I am the one they are rejecting, not you—they don't want me to be their king any longer."

 1 Samuel 9:1-2 (LB) "Kish was a rich, influential man from the tribe of Benjamin. He was the son of Abiel, grandson of Zeror, great-grandson of Becorath, and great-great-grandson of Aphiah. ² His son Saul was the most handsome man in Israel. And he was head and shoulders taller than anyone else in the land!"

- His **family name** was influential.
- His **physical appearance** was impressive.

 1 Samuel 16:7b (NIV) "The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

We miss God's best when we choose to quit too quick.

 1 Samuel 9:3-5 (NIV) "Now the donkeys belonging to Saul's father Kish were lost, and Kish said to his son Saul, "Take one of the servants with you and go and look for the donkeys." ⁴ So he passed through the hill country of Ephraim and through the area around Shalisha, but they did not find them. They went on into the district of Shaalim, but the donkeys were not there. Then he passed through the territory of Benjamin, but they did not find them. ⁵ When they reached the district of Zuph, Saul said to the servant who was with him, "Come, let's go back, or my father will stop thinking about the donkeys and start worrying about us."

We miss God's best when we look down on the little guy.

 1 Samuel 9:6-8, 10 (NIV) "But the servant replied, "Look, in this town there is a man of God; he is highly respected, and everything he says comes true. Let's go there now. Perhaps he will tell us what way to take." ⁷ Saul said to his servant, "If we go, what can we give the man? The food in our sacks is gone. We have no gift to take to the man of God. What do we have?" ⁸ The servant answered him again. "Look," he said, "I have a quarter of a shekel of silver. I will give it to the man of God so that he will tell us what way to take." ¹⁰ "Good," Saul said to his servant. "Come, let's go." So they set out for the town where the man of God was."

 1 Samuel 9:11-13 (NIV) "As they were going up the hill to the town, they met some girls coming out to draw water, and they asked them, "Is the seer here?" ¹² "He is," they answered. "He's ahead of you. Hurry now; he has just come to our town today, for the people have a sacrifice at the high place. ¹³ As soon as you enter the town, you will find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. The people will not begin eating until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice; afterward, those who are invited will eat. Go up now; you should find him about this time."

We miss God's best when we assume God is unaware.

 *1 Samuel 9:14–17 (NIV) “They went up to the town, and as they were entering it, there was Samuel, coming toward them on his way up to the high place. ¹⁵ Now the day before Saul came, the Lord had revealed this to Samuel: ¹⁶ “About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him leader over my people Israel; he will deliver my people from the hand of the Philistines. I have looked upon my people, for their cry has reached me.” ¹⁷ When Samuel caught sight of Saul, the Lord said to him, “This is the man I spoke to you about; he will govern my people.”*

 *1 Samuel 9:18–20 (NIV) “Saul approached Samuel in the gateway and asked, “Would you please tell me where the seer’s house is?” ¹⁹ “I am the seer,” Samuel replied. “Go up ahead of me to the high place, for today you are to eat with me, and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is in your heart. ²⁰ As for the donkeys you lost three days ago, do not worry about them; they have been found. And to whom is all the desire of Israel turned, if not to you and all your father’s family?”*

Digging Deeper— In what ways have you settled for less than God's best in your life? Why do  choices based primarily on appearances create grief? What have you quit that you needed to quit? What do you regret quitting? Name someone that has had a profound influence on you that others may have labeled insignificant. In what ways have you seen God work behind the scenes?