



UNEXPECTED: Week 1

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WEEK 1: INWARD APPEARANCE

Bible: 1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Peter 3:3-4; Proverbs 31:30; Luke 12:22-23; Genesis 1:26-27; 1 John 4:7-8

Bottom Line: The world is full of people who look at the outward appearance. God cares about your heart and loves you regardless of outward appearance.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

Students in middle school and high school have some challenging lessons ahead of them.

As they begin to discover who they are in school, they will discover that a lot of their peers focus their attention on outward appearance.

This twist in life can cause you to think it is very important.

However, God cares about your heart, not your appearance.

SUPPLIES

- BeanBoozled Jelly Beans from Jelly Belly
- White board to keep score
- Prizes of good jelly beans for the winners

OPENING GAME: Jelly Bean Challenge

Divide the group in half (if your group is larger, you can break them into smaller groups).

Have one person from each group come to the front.

One person from each group will select a jelly bean.

If you get a good jelly bean, you get 1 point.

If you get a bad jelly bean, you don't get a point.

The first team to 10 points wins (if you have larger groups, go ahead and make the point total higher).

TEACH

That was fun to watch, but was probably pretty disgusting for some of you.

For the ones who tasted a barf flavored bean or a booger bean, I'm sure that was unexpected.

We are starting a new series called, “Unexpected.”

For the next four weeks, we are going to look at some unexpected twists and turns you might face in life.

When you were a kid, how important was clothing to you?

For some, it wasn't that big of a deal.

Some of you probably didn't care what you wore each week.

Fast forward to middle school and high school, and suddenly it's on the top of your list of important things.

Did you know in America, we spend 12 billion dollars on clothes?

If that doesn't shock you, did you know 6.2 billion dollars in make-up is bought each year?

Outward appearance seems to be a big deal.

The internet and TV want you to believe your outward appearance is everything.

The world tends to look at the outward appearance to judge who you are—it isn't right, but it's a reality we all deal with.

God, however, does not look at the outward appearance.

God looks inward at your heart.

Let us look at what Scripture tells us.

Turn your Bible to **1 Samuel 16:7** while I set the scene.

Samuel is a prophet.

God called Samuel at a young age to be a judge over his people.

The people looked to Samuel for guidance.

God spoke directly to Samuel and gave him instructions.

At this point in the story, Saul is King, but God is looking to appoint a new king.

God sends Samuel to Bethlehem to meet Jesse.

Among Jesse's sons, there will be a king.

Samuel has to secretly go to Bethlehem, because if King Saul found out Samuel was going to appoint a new king, Saul would kill Samuel.

God tells Samuel to take a heifer with him so he can say he was bringing it to Bethlehem to sacrifice.

If Samuel told Saul why he was really going to Bethlehem, Saul would have surely killed Samuel.

Samuel was going to stand among Jesse's sons and God would let Samuel know who the new king was going to be.

Jesse brought seven of his sons before Samuel.

Let's read the instructions God gives Samuel to pick the new king.

READ 1 Samuel 16:7-13

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 sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And 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."

And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel.

And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?"

And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep."

And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here."

And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome.

And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he."

Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers.

And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward.

And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

God said specifically to Samuel, "Do not look at his outward appearance. It doesn't matter if he is big and strong, it doesn't matter if he looks like king material."

This shows us that God focuses more on our inward appearance.

Jesse brought seven of his sons before Samuel.

The first son was big and handsome, looking exactly how you think a king should look.

But God tells Samuel that son isn't the next king.

This happens again and again.

Each son is brought before Samuel and God says they are surely not the king.

Samuel asked Jesse if this was all of his sons and Jesse responds, “No I have one more, but he is taking care of the sheep.”

Jesse didn’t bother to bring David because he was the youngest, smallest, and thought for sure that David was not King material.

This account of David being chosen as king is a lot like real life.

People look at other people and think they aren’t important because of how they look.

God does not look at your outward appearance as valuable—God sees your inward appearance as valuable.

The most important thing for Christians to do is to make sure their heart is right before God.

Are you more focused on taking care of how you look on the outside?

God wants you to focus on your inside and have your heart right before the Lord.

It’s the internal, not the external, that affects the eternal.

We see this in the Old Testament, but this is echoed in the New Testament as well.

Turn to Luke Chapter 12.

Read LUKE 12:22-23.

And he said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on.

For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.

Luke tells us we should not be anxious about what we are going to eat or what we will wear.

If you wake up in the morning and have anxiety because your clothes aren’t the latest and greatest, you care way more than you need to about clothes.

All of you in this room are wearing clothes.

God has supplied you with exactly what you need.

But it’s not the most important thing in this world, and it shouldn’t bring about anxiety.

Sometimes, we care too much because we see that the world values outward appearance.

We see models who seem to be perfect and we deceive ourselves into thinking, “If I just looked like them, I would be happy.”

God doesn’t make mistakes.

God created you in His image, and He looks at you and sees your heart—not your clothing, or make up, or your body type.

God sees your heart and wants you to care more about your inward appearance than your outward appearance.

Don't believe in the lies that tell us looks are important.

Looks will eventually fade as you grow old.

Your relationship with God will live on forever.

How do you make sure you're focusing on your inward appearance?

You focus on your relationship with God.

If you have focused more on your outward appearance, ask God to change your heart.

Turn away from caring about the importance of outward appearance and ask God to help you work on your inward appearance.

If you have been judging others based on their outward appearance, seek out forgiveness from God.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is the outward appearance so important to people?
2. How much of your time is devoted to outward appearance each week?
3. Why do so many people value appearance?
4. How important are a person's looks to you?
5. Why does God care more about your inward appearance than your outward appearance?
6. What should you do if your friends are picking on a person because of their looks?
7. How can you help your friend feel better about their outward appearance?
8. Can you tell me about a time when you or someone you knew cared too much about what you/they looked like?
9. How can God help us focus more on our inward appearance?
10. Where do you look for help when you struggle with how you look?