Chosen inspired by 1 Samuel 16:4-13

It was Saturday morning at New Hope Community Church. The church was preparing to choose a student leader for the upcoming youth outreach program. Everyone assumed the leader would be one of the older teenagers who were popular, talented, and confident.

Pastor Williams gathered several students in the fellowship hall.

"I've prayed about this outreach ministry," Pastor Williams said. "God has someone special in mind to lead."

The students sat up straight. Some smiled, certain their name would be called.

Among them was Raymond, a quiet eighth grader. Raymond wasn't the tallest, strongest, or most popular student. He usually stayed in the background and helped without being noticed.



Looking at the Outside

Pastor Williams began talking with the students one by one.

First was Marcus, the star athlete.

"Marcus," Pastor Williams said, "you're very talented."

Marcus grinned. "Thank you, pastor."

Many students whispered.

"He's definitely going to be chosen."

Next was Jordan, who was known for his public speaking.

"Jordan, you have great confidence," Pastor Williams said.

Jordan smiled proudly.

The students continued guessing.

"Marcus or Jordan has to be the leader."

Raymond sat quietly in the back corner stacking chairs.

God's Different View

Pastor Williams paused and looked around the room.

Then he said, "Sometimes we judge people by what we see on the outside. But God sees something deeper."

The room became silent.

At that moment, Ms. Taylor, the youth director, walked over.

"Pastor," she said, "there's one student missing."

"Who?" asked Pastor Williams.

"Raymond. He's outside helping an elderly member carry groceries from her car."

Pastor Williams smiled.

"Please bring him in."



Raymond Arrives

A few minutes later Raymond entered the room, slightly out of breath.

"I'm sorry I'm late," Raymond said. "Mrs. Jenkins needed some help."

Pastor Williams nodded.

"Raymond, come stand here."

Raymond looked confused.

"Me?"

"Yes, you."

The other students exchanged surprised looks.

Pastor Williams continued.

"Over the past year I've watched you serve. I've seen you pray with younger children. I've seen you help without being asked. I've watched you stay faithful when no one was watching."

Raymond's eyes widened.

"I wasn't trying to be noticed," he said.

"I know," Pastor Williams replied. "That's exactly the point."

The Anointing

Pastor Williams took a small bottle of olive oil used during special prayer services.

"Today we're praying for the leader God has chosen."

The room became quiet.

Pastor Williams gently placed a drop of oil on Raymond's forehead.

"Raymond, God often chooses people others overlook. Just as David was chosen long ago because of his heart, God can use you because your heart belongs to Him."

Raymond felt tears forming in his eyes.

"You really think God can use me?" he asked.

Pastor Williams smiled.

"I don't just think so. I believe God has already been preparing you."

The students began clapping.

Several of them realized they had been judging by appearance and popularity instead of character.



Moving A HEADD

Raymond bowed his head.

"Lord, thank You for choosing me. Help me stay humble. Help me serve You and not seek attention. Use my life for Your glory."

Everyone joined hands and prayed.

From that day forward, Raymond led the outreach team with kindness, humility, and faith. Many students came to Christ because Raymond led from his heart instead of trying to impress people.

And whenever someone asked him why he was chosen, Raymond would say:

"People look at what is on the outside, but God looks at the heart."