

The Biggest Intangible

n/a

Ready:

The Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or his stature, because I have rejected him. Man does not see what the LORD sees, for man sees what is visible, but the Lord sees the heart.” — 1 Samuel 16:7

Set

A key determinant of success in sports is something we refer to as “heart,” which is an invisible quality that comprises the soul, strength, and mind of the team. Although we cannot see or measure it, we also cannot win without it. While every coach knows that the team must have heart, it is often difficult to cultivate. Heart is also the most elusive factor to quantify when recruiting or evaluating an athlete; the best of coaches are perplexed by it. Even the prophet Samuel, when given the opportunity to pick King Saul’s successor, was fooled by appearance and overlooked the important heart issues.

God sent Samuel to the home of Jesse, who had eight sons (1 Sm 16). Samuel’s job was to anoint one of these sons as the next king. Jesse lined up his sons according to birth order to pass in front of Samuel. First came Eliab, and upon seeing Eliab, Samuel thought that he must be the one. Eliab’s appearance was impressive, but he was not God’s choice.

Coaches need players who not only possess the right physical and mental abilities, but also the commitment and dedication of heart. Six of Jesse’s sons passed in front of Samuel, but none were God’s choice. Samuel asked if Jesse had any other sons, and Jesse replied that he had one more son. It was David, the unimpressive shepherd boy, the youngest son of Jesse, whom God chose. David was so far from making the team that he wasn’t even on the sidelines. His own father didn’t even recommend him for the job. Only God could see that David truly had heart.

Go

1. How can you bring biblical principles into your recruiting process?
2. If you were to stand before God the way that Jesse’s sons stood before Samuel, would you have the kind of heart that pleases God? If not, what changes need to take place in your heart?
3. Why do you think that God values our hearts above all else?

Workout

Extra Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1–13

Overtime

Lord, may my heart seek You, and give me wisdom to recruit players for the best reasons.
Amen.



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