

# The Heart of the Matter

**1 Samuel 16:7: But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."**

**1 Samuel 16:4-7: 4 So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" 5 And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.**

**6 So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before Him!" 7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."**

We can watch the news and elections in today's world and see that many people vote for good-looking people who appear like they would be good friends. But are they really, or is it just in our minds? Think how you respond to voices on the other side of the phone line when talking to someone you don't know. Do you draw an image of them according to the tone of their voice or the manner in which they speak and the words they use? We are, unfortunately, all accustomed to judging others by appearances first.

At this point, Saul had proven himself unworthy of God, so Samuel had a new mission: find another to be king. **1 Samuel 9:2: And he had a choice and handsome son whose name was Saul. There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.** What kind of heart did he have? What were the outward signs of the type of man he would be? We have not found anything so far to lead us to a decision on anything about his heart. We find much of the same issue as Samuel begins looking for David. Jesse rolls out all of his sons, and God rejected them all. Then Jesse said he had one more who was out tending the sheep. **1 Samuel 16:12. And they said David was Ruddy-red, and handsome.** So again, we bypass the heart of David and focus on his appearance. God is making a point here, and it has very little to do with looks and everything to do with the condition of the heart of those He chooses to use.

Some of you may be thinking, "Not the heart again; we hear about the heart all the time." And so you should; it is a new heart we need, then we should open up and welcome the change that our rebirth has begun. If we fail to see changes in our hearts reflecting an entirely new transformation, then perhaps we need to talk directly to the

Spirit inside us. We may need to use God's power for wisdom and surrender, ask what we can do, step aside, and allow Him to do all that is necessary to clean the house.

In Life, we are usually drawn toward people whose outward appearance makes us feel comfortable, almost inviting, perhaps like other friends we have grown up with. So, appearance plays a role in our decisions and choices regarding others. Yet, here we find that God tells Samuel not to look at the outward but that God Himself sees the heart. Does this mean that God does and we do not? Not at all; this is precisely the point being made. If God had not said to Samuel, "not to look at the outward," how would Samuel have chosen? Two verses in Matthew give us reason to look at man's hearts by his mannerisms toward others.

**Matthew 7:16: "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?"**

**Matthew 7:20: "Therefore by their fruits you will know them."**

Think of all the Christians you have known over the years; how many have you witnessed as they share the gospel with others? Many are pleased and comfortable to share with others within the church but apprehensive when it comes to sharing with those who have not yet received the gift of faith. Where then are their fruits? Is this the place we are to make a judgment? Are we so better than they that we pass judgment because they may not share as we do? Our responsibilities and giftings are different, but all come from the same Spirit; do we individuals have the privilege to judge others as inadequate just because they have different giftings than us? Ministry comes in many different forms, and all are necessary.

Think of those you have witnessed who have spent time sending cards to hospitals and homes for the sick; perhaps you feel what you do is more important and deserving of greater acclaim, that you should get a bigger reward. If you think like this, I can tell you, you need to rethink your life in Christ. For if your heart were as His, you would humble yourself and esteem all others above yourself. You would find the blessing and reward in the humbleness of servanthood.

What kind of heart do you think is being addressed here in the following verses?

**Humble Service in the Body of Christ.**

**Romans 12:3-8: 3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. 4 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; 7 if it is serving,**

then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; 8 if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

This is the heart of our Christ Jesus, a heart that shines and finds its reward in giving and being used by God.

**Ecclesiastes 1:2: "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher; "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."**

I want to slow down here and look to compile some of what we have been looking into. I want everyone to take a moment and think of a person in your life who sincerely puts others above themselves and puts them first. What are these vanities Solomon is addressing here? In verse three, he explains it,

**What profit has a man from all his labor, In which he toils under the sun?**

International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia. van'-i-ti, van'-i-tiz (hebhel, 'awen, shaw'; kenos; mataiotes): The words "vain," "vanity," "vanities" are frequent in the Bible. Their idea is almost exclusively that of "evanescence," "emptiness," including "idolatry" and "wickedness" as being not only evil but vain and empty things. They also signify falseness. The chief word translated "vanity," "vanities" is hebhel, a "breath of air, or of the mouth," often applied to idolatry (De 32:21; 1Ki 16:13; Ps 31:6; Jer 8:19, etc.); to man's days and to man himself (Job 7:16; Ps 39:5,11, etc.); to man's thoughts (Ps 94:11); to wealth and treasures (Pr 13:11; 21:6); to everything,

Why would Solomon come to this conclusion? **Verse 4:4: And I saw that all toil and all achievement spring from one person's envy of another. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.**

What then changes this for the Believer? Look here at this verse at the word envy. Where does envy have a place in the believer's heart? Envy and Jealousy are often used together and never in a good sense. Vanity describes an emptiness as a breath that goes by, and in the end, it is only emptiness, like sand slipping through your hand. We can only hold the things of this world for a time; then, they fade away. The Heart and the gifts of faith and grace endure forever. Solomon realized that all the horses, men he had under him, the treasures, pagan wives, and stature amounted to nothing but were mere vanity.

The heart of the believer yearns to be in line with that of our Lord Jesus, which is one of personal sacrifice for others, and this should be clear to the world. **Matthew 5:16: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. that the world would see the life inside.** God sees His children as precious, so much so that He sent His son to purchase our salvation and wants us to share that truth in our actions and decisions.

We treasure our time, and we often fail to see the greater need and proper use of the gifts we have been given. At the center of everything we have read thus far, we find the characteristics, actions, and reactions to our calling to the work of God, to be submissive to the work of the Spirit within us, in this we should find the fruit of caring for others.

“Life is transitory, fleeting, useless, empty, and futile. It has no meaning. Nothing on this earth provides a valid goal of existence.”<sup>1</sup> The Life of the Believer should never be this way; we have a purpose and work we must do through the gift of faith given to us by the Grace of God. Can we do all we are called to do with the heart we were born with? No, when we are dead, we have no purpose; we take up room and oxygen and have no goal.

Think of those you love; think both through the eyes of the world and then through the eyes of a loving God. We can get the tingly fuzzy feeling of the love we have for our spouses, boyfriends, and girlfriends, but if you have come to know our Lord, is not the love you now have for others much deeper and more meaningful, more thoughtful and precious?

Yes, the heart, which God desires so much to replace with a loving heart. Spurgeon writes,

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. What grand language this is! How different it is from the stern commands of the law! The law says, “Make your hearts clean; put away the evil of your doings;” but the gospel covenant of grace says, “A new heart also will I give you, and I will cleanse you from all your iniquities.”<sup>2</sup>

Andrew Murray writes,

The invitation comes: “Let us draw near with a true heart.” Let no one hold back for fear that his heart is not true. There is no way for obtaining the true heart but by acting it. God has given you, as his child, a new heart—a wonderful gift, if you but knew it. Through ignorance or unbelief or disobedience, it has grown feeble and withered; its beating can, nevertheless, still be felt. The epistle, with its solemn warnings and its blessed teaching, has come to bring awakening and healing. Even as Christ said to the man with the withered hand, “Stand forth” (Mark 3:3), He calls to you from His throne in heaven, “Rise and come and enter in with a

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<sup>2</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon. Charles H. Spurgeon's Whole Bible Commentary: A Comprehensive Guide to Scripture with Insights from the Prince of Preachers (Grapevine Edition) (The Best ... and Spiritual Insights for Any Christian) (p. 1608). Kindle Edition.

true heart.” As you hesitate and look within to feel and to find out if the heart is true and, in vain, to do what is needed to make it true, He calls again, “Stretch forth thy hand” (Luke 6:10).<sup>3</sup>

B.B. Warfield writes,

“The classical passage in this connection is the Fifty-first Psalm - David's cry of penitence and prayer for mercy after Nathan's probing of his sin with Bathsheba. He prays for the creation within him of a new heart and the renewal of a right spirit within him; and he represents that all his hopes of continued power of new life rest on the continuance of God's holy Spirit, or of the Spirit of God's holiness, with him.”<sup>4</sup>

After reading three quotes from three famous theologians, I believe we are learning more about the importance of the heart.

God is more adamant about the condition of man's heart than other things, such as the love of money, status, pride, and many more. Heart occurs eight-hundred and thirty-two times in the NKJV. Money is used one hundred and forty-nine times, Gold, four hundred and fifty-one times, Silver, three hundred and twenty-one times. Obedience, fourteen times; Love, which displays man's heart, three hundred and sixty-one times.

. Heart, inner man, mind, will, heart, understanding

1. inner part, midst
1. midst (of things)
2. heart (of man)
3. soul, heart (of man)
4. mind, knowledge, thinking, reflection, memory
5. inclination, resolution, determination (of will)
6. conscience
7. heart (of moral character)
8. as seat of appetites
9. as seat of emotions and passions, as seat of courage

So when people tell you God uses these other words more than He does love, be quick to correct them gently. Many pastors like to use money as a battering ram and convince the congregation not to give enough.

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<sup>3</sup> Murray, Andrew. *Holiest of All: A Commentary on the Book of Hebrews* (p. 399). Whitaker House. Kindle Edition.

<sup>4</sup> Warfield, Benjamin. *Sermons and Essays from the Works of B. B. Warfield* (pp. 2880-2881). Monergism Books. Kindle Edition.

B.B. Warfield again,

“The gift of the Spirit as an abiding presence in the heart of the individual is the crowning Messianic blessing. To precisely the same effect is the teaching of Ezekiel. The new heart and new spirit is one of the burdens of his message (xi. 19, xviii. 31, xxxvi. 26) : and these are the Messianic gifts of God to His people through the Spirit. God's people are dead; but He will open their graves and cause them to come up out of their graves: "And I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live" (xxxvii. 14). They are in captivity; He will bring them out of captivity.”<sup>5</sup>