

Does God Only Look at the Heart? (1 Samuel 16:7)

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A Misleading Statement

Someone said:

“If it looks like the world, and sounds like the world, it is the world!”



This is good advice for the day in which we live. The Bible summons Christians to “love not the world” (1 John 2:15) which is an organized system made up of ideas, philosophies, activities, plans, success, and purposes rooted in the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. However, today’s modern form of Christianity has invented a popular slogan to promote and sanctify worldly Christians who listen to rock

music, who plaster tattoos all over their bodies, and who grotesquely pierce their bodies as heathen would.

A popular catchphrase has been adopted and promoted by Christians who want to *look* like the world, *listen* to the same things as the world, *live* like the world, and *like* the same carnal things that the world enjoys today. The popular slogan and misleading statement is this: “God only looks at the heart.” This alleged fact supposedly sanctifies everything that a Christian does today as they try to keep step with the modern culture of dress, social drinking, music, entertainment, the blurring of the sexes, body art, etc.

God only looks at the heart. How often have we heard this repeated cliché or common place saying which has become a favorite explanation for engaging in worldly living? God only looks at the heart. This certainly is a misleading statement. It has become one of the myths of modern Christianity. Many worldly Christians who want to take no responsibility for their actions or who no longer want to be faithful to God in some particular

area of their lives find a way of escape with this popular expression.

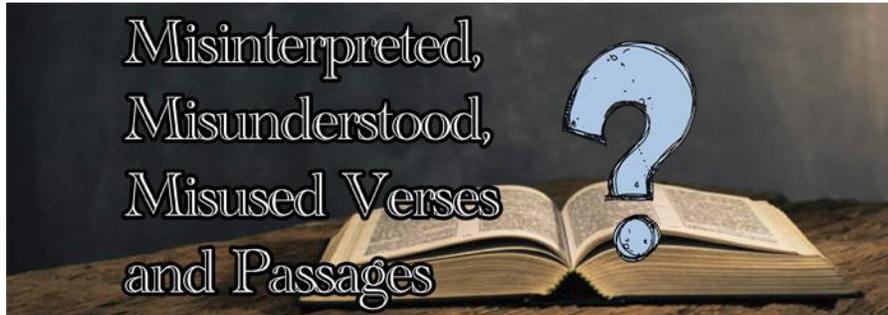
A.W. Tozer said:

“The sea is always trying to get into the ship, and the world is always trying to get into the church. The world around us continues to try to find its way in, to splash in, to come in with soft words and beautiful white crests, forever whispering, “Don’t be so aloof; don’t be so hostile. Let me come in—I have something for you—something that will do you good!”

Many of God’s children have come to this conclusion: “God accepts me the way that I am.” This assumption somehow frees them from taking any responsibility for their outward actions and decisions. It’s true that God always loves and accepts us as His children (Rom. 8:38-39) but it’s not true that God always accepts the way that we live out our lives and the particular conduct associated with our lives (1 Cor. 3:1-3). God never accepts carnality! There is a vast difference between God accepting us in Christ and loving us as His children, despite what we do, and God accepting or condoning carnal conduct within our lives. Homosexuals say that God accepts them the way that they are. They claim God hardwired them with homosexual tendencies. Of course, this is a lie. God never accepts or condones the sins of sinners. He loves all sinners (John 3:16) but He does not overlook their sins (Isa. 6:1-5).

The expression “God only looks at the heart” is often used as an excuse for not doing what is right, an excuse for not being holy before God, and an excuse for not being faithful to the Lord. If something seems out of the ordinary for Christian conduct one way to sanctify the particular action is to use the excuse that God only looks at the heart and not the outward body. There are many today who suggest that since the Bible declares God only looks on the heart, our outward appearance, or our dress and how we use our bodies isn’t that important; it’s what’s on the inside that counts. However, this corrupt conclusion of contemporary Christianity is not Biblically accurate. There are dozens of verses that verify God looks at the body, the specific actions of Christians, and expects all believers to follow His commands for holy living and conduct.

A Misused Bible Passage



Any text out of context becomes a pretext. This has always been true. A Bible passage becomes a pretext when people take a particular Bible passage out of context and then read into the passage something that is not taught to support their own doctrine, viewpoint, and agenda. In other words, Christians can extrapolate more from a text than it was intended to teach or convey. The key Bible passage that most Christians abuse and misuse to sanctify their worldliness or rebellion is found in the book of First Samuel.

1 Samuel 16:7 says:

“But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”

This text has been misinterpreted and misapplied by many in the contemporary church movement. Samuel was going to pick a new king out of the sons of Jesse. He looked over the men and Eliab seemed to be the man (1 Sam. 16:6). It seems that Eliab reminded Samuel of King Saul. King Saul was a tall, dark, and handsome type of man. Eliab fit the outward caricature or description for the kingly position. Therefore, Samuel, who was commissioned by God to search for a man to replace Saul on the throne, began to look for the same type of man (Eliab).

Samuel wanted a man who possessed outward beauty, charm, and a physical stature that was tall and kingly in appearance. However, God reminds Samuel that this was not important when it came to choosing a king. He should have learned this lesson from Saul. What was important

was the man's inner heart or relationship with God (His character and convictions). He should possess a pure heart and a right relationship with the Lord.

Samuel should have learned from his previous experience with Saul that the outward man is not nearly as important as the inner man (1 Sam. 13:14). First Samuel 16:7 reveals to us that God looks on the heart and that He actually judges the heart and not the outward physical stature or physique of a person. God is more concerned about a person's heart being pure and acceptable in His sight (Ps. 51:10) than the outward physical characteristics of an individual. The truth is this. Only God can know and judge the heart of an individual with His omniscience (Jer. 17:10; Rev. 2:23; 3:15).

The flipside of this statement is often completely missed by those in modern Christianity who are promoting worldly habits that involve such things as grotesque body piercing and tattoos. God says in this Bible text that "man looketh on the outward appearance." God is chiding man for doing this. Man definitely looks on the outward appearance. This is certainly true of modern man and our present-day culture who tries to impress others with what they call body art, body piercing, and contemporary music that sounds exactly like the devil's music. When we try to impress others by our looks and entertain people through our modern forms of worship, we are committing the age-old sin of pride (1 John 2:15-16). We want others to see us and say something about us.

I overheard one woman in a store telling another woman that wearing tattoos all over her body was a way to express herself. What she was really saying was it's a way to express her pride before others. When we want others to look at us ("look at me"), we are prideful in our dress and outward adornments (1 Pet. 3:3).

When a man entered the hospital for tests, he never would have guessed what the doctors would find. At first, they thought the X-ray technicians had put their film in backward. But then they discovered that nothing was wrong with the X-rays. There was something wrong with the patient. The man's heart was in a reversed position. What was supposed to be on the left side of the man's chest was on the right side, and vice versa. He had a

rare reversed-organ condition. His heart was not where it should be. Scripture speaks of a different kind of heart problem--one that is all too common. Pride is a spiritual condition in which the heart is in the wrong place.

A man once said to me who was part of a contemporary Christian rock band that God knew his heart was sincere. I told him he was absolutely right. Only God can know the sincerity of the heart (1 Cor. 4:5). However, sincerity of heart does not mean an action is right in God's eyes (Judges 17:6). If this were true a convention room filled with 25,000 Jehovah's Witnesses would be something God accepts and condones. Sincerity does not sanctify our actions. A person may be sincere but sincerely wrong in what they believe and practice. Only truth can sanctify a person's conduct in life (John 17:17). Truth is the measuring stick for what is right and wrong – not relativism, existentialism, pluralism, mysticism, hedonism, or any other ism that is being promoted today in the culture of the world system.

Isaiah 8:20

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

The principle or axiom of 1 Samuel 16:7 has always been true. God is looking for a pure heart and one that is free from hypocrisy. The outward physical stature of a person does not matter in relationship to his inward purity and personal relationship with God. Actually, David was good-looking too (1 Sam. 15:12) but he still looked too young for any major service, especially the position of the King of Israel. So, in 1 Samuel 16:7 God is reminding Samuel that He is not concerned about the outward physical stature of a person's body. He is concerned about the purity of a person's heart and personal walk with God.

Of course, any truism can be carried too far. Many Christians today are misusing this Bible passage in order to sanctify their own rebellious actions. They are taking it out of its intended context to promote and sanctify their own questionable conduct. Most Christians only know about 1 Samuel 16:7 but forget about 1 Samuel 15:23: “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.”

God hates our rebellious actions which run contrary to His holy plans and purposes for our lives. Do you really want to hear the truth? Here it is. God never looks upon our rebellious ways with His favor or blessing. He categorically despises every sinful action that we do. Let's stop fooling ourselves. God is holy (1 John 1:5) and He sees every sinful thing that we do for everything lies naked and open before God (Heb. 4:13) and He never approves of any wrongdoing (Deut. 12:31; Ps. 11:5; Prov. 8:13). Many times we try and bring God down to our own level so we can somehow escape the reality of our own sinful depravity or living. But God expects that our own personal choices and actions are in accordance with His holiness and standards.

1 Peter 1:15-16

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

The Bible passage in 1 Samuel 16:7 has absolutely nothing to do with God refusing to look on the sinful acts committed by the body. To use this passage to teach that God never looks on the outward actions of a person is to abuse and misuse the teaching of the Bible. It's handling the Bible deceitfully (2 Cor. 4:2). The passage is teaching that God does not look on the *physical stature* of a person. It says nothing about God bypassing the actions and conduct of Christians. God does not look on the *stature* of the human body, but He does look on the *sin* committed by the body.

1 Samuel 13:14

"But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee."



LORD. help me to obey.
with a good attitude.
right away. all the way.
every day.

Saul was disobedient. God brings the skeletons out of the closet! God must call us out when we are disobedient, when we use our bodies for sinful purposes.

1 Samuel 15:23

“For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king.”

Yes, 1 Samuel 16:7 teaches a very important lesson. A person’s heart must be pure and right before God. This is the main point of the passage. God wants purity of heart (“blessed are the pure in heart” - Matt. 5:8). However, to read other things into the text which imply that God never judges the actions of His children or brings their conduct into question is an absolute absurdity. God not only demands purity of heart but also purity in conduct which pertains to the body.

1 Timothy 4:12

“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word (*what we say*), in conversation (*how we live*), in charity (*what we love*), in spirit (*what we desire*), in faith (*what we believe*), in purity (*what we do*).”

A Misguided Conclusion



Wrong teaching leads to wrong conclusions. Therefore, the conclusion that says God only looks upon our hearts, but never looks upon the outward appearance of our bodies, or what we do with our bodies, runs contrary to Bible revelation. It is a misguided conclusion that has no Scriptural basis. The Bible says

we can use our bodies to commit outward or external acts of sin that God is displeased with (“Every sin that a man doeth is without the body” - 1 Cor. 6:18). This verse tells us that God is looking at more than just the heart! The Bible teaches that we sin with our bodies when we engage in sexual sin or some other particular sin which misses the mark of God’s holiness.

Paul is talking about the *effects* of sin in this verse. Every sin that a Christian commits, including sexual sin, is done through the vehicle of the human body (“Every sin that a man doeth is without the body” - 1 Cor. 6:18). In other words, we use the body in some way to commit the crime against God. However, sexual sins cause a person to sin “against his own body” in some unique fashion. Sexual sins not only use the body but desecrate the body in a specific way that other sins do not.

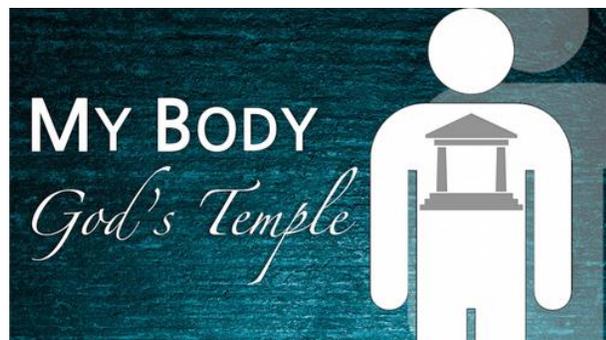
Paul is drawing a distinction between the effects that sexual sins and other sins have on the body. Sexual sins use and shame the body in a different way than other sins. When a Christian does sin sexually the entire body becomes desecrated in a distinct way. This is because we allow an alien bond to be formed (1 Cor. 6:15-16) outside our marriage to Christ (Rom. 7:4) when we permit another person or intruder to be joined to our bodies. The appalling truth is this. The sex act desecrates our intimate and spiritual bond that we are to have only with Jesus Christ. The result of sexual sin is that it touches our spiritual and emotional being from within (“spirit” – vs. 17 - the total personality of an individual) which Christ alone is to possess and control. As a result, our body becomes linked to another person other than God.

This is why 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 adds:

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”

This verse tells me that God is not merely looking at the heart. He is also looking at how we use our bodies which are described as His temple, Our bodies as Christians are comparable to a dwelling place or holy shrine of God. We have God's life

indwelling us. This is the wonder of the ages! God lives within me (Gal. 2:20). I have a living spiritual union and relationship with God that the



unsaved world does not possess. The point is this. God dwells in our bodies which means we cannot freely use them to commit sexual sin for this desecrates our union with God. God lives within our body in the person of the Holy Spirit. We have a spiritual bond and relationship with God. Therefore, when we commit sins, especially sexual sins, we desecrate the body by creating an alien bond with another person outside our marriage or spiritual union we have with Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 6:15).

The Bible teaches that we sin against our bodies by allowing particular people or other objects to control our bodies instead of God, which steal away our allegiance to God, and keep us from following His holy will for our lives (Rom. 12:1-2). In short, we sin against our bodies when we allow them to be used for unholy or unwholesome practices. Since our bodies are indwelt by a holy God (“the temple of the Holy Ghost” – vs. 19) and owned by God (“ye are not your own” - vs. 19) we are to use them in a way that reflects His holiness, and which allows them to be under His authority and control instead of sin. When we use our bodies in this way, we “glorify God” which means we bring honor and respect to God by reflecting His character of holiness and righteousness through our bodies. In other words, we represent who God is by our actions and conduct in life.

God owns us and has the right to control our lives. The fact that God indwells our bodies means that we should use our bodies for His holy purposes and allow God to control them – not sex, sin, and Satan. God has redemptive rights over our bodies (“ye are bought with a price”). Jesus died on the cross and purchased us from the slave market of sin. He paid the fine for us so we could be released from sin’s slavery and Satan’s evil clutches. I am purchased and set free (redeemed) by Christ’s blood. Therefore, God owns me lock, stock, and barrel. Dearly beloved, we have been bought at too high of price to go on living the same way!

The point is this. God’s Word clearly tells us that we can sin with our bodies. It teaches that God not only looks at our hearts, but also at what we are doing with our bodies. The Bible also says we can use the members of our body “as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin” (Rom. 6:13). Let us never forget this. God is concerned with what we do with our bodies. This verse tells us that God is looking at more than just our hearts. He is looking

at how we conduct ourselves and what we do with our bodies. We must learn the secret of yielding to God for victory instead of yielding to sin. When we are tempted to sin, we must stop and yield our bodies to God.

1 Thessalonians 4:4 declares:

“That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.”

Here is another verse reminding us that God looks upon the actions and conduct of our bodies. The expression “vessel” refers to our body. The Lord expects us to maintain a sanctified vessel or body that is set apart for His holy purpose and a body that brings honor to God’s character. The reason for possessing a clean vessel is stated in 1 Thessalonians 4:7: “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.”

Whatever happened to holiness? We talk about it but then turn around and *look* like the world in the way we dress, *sing* like the world in the way we worship, and *talk* like the world in our conversations with people.

Another modern myth of contemporary Christianity is that God can use anything. This certainly is not true. Do you know why? It’s because God is holy (Lev. 11:44). Therefore, God can never use sinful practices or rebellious music for His glory and purposes (1 Cor. 10:31). Can God use crack cocaine, child molestation, and pornography for His glory? God receives no glory in these things. It’s ludicrous to conclude that God can use anything. Let’s stop this senseless and fruitless chatter, or “vain jangling” (1 Tim. 1:6). Furthermore, God wants us to express His holy likeness in our day to day living and conduct. Dear friend, holiness is a command to be obeyed, a course to be followed, and a commitment to be kept!

2 Corinthians 7:1

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

In the previous chapter God gave the promises of fellowship with Him when we seek to live a holy and consecrated life (2 Cor. 6:17-18). In view of these promises we should seek to clean up our lives both inwardly and outwardly.

The “filthiness of the flesh” refers to the fleshly body we live in (sins committed through the vehicle of the body) whereas the “spirit” refers to inner person (how we think, what we like, our affections and desires on the inside). The Pharisees cleaned up the outside of the cup and forget the inside (Matt. 23:25). In Matthew 23:27 Jesus compared the inside of their hearts to “dead *men’s* bones” (a rotting corpse and flesh). God wants His people to clean up their lives both outwardly and inwardly. Both are important to God. A pure heart and pure lifestyle work hand in hand. You might shine your shoes on the outside but be dirty on the inside. God is looking for a complete cleansing.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

God is concerned about the body. We should live “blameless” which means without rebuke, above reproach, or with no legitimate ground for accusation. Why? So our bodies will not be sinning when Jesus returns. We should not be caught with our hand in the cookie jar when Jesus comes back to rapture His saints out of this world. The word “wholly” is actually speaking about every part of your being or different aspects of personhood.

Who are you? In view of Christ’s return God wants us to be pure in “spirit” (our *private* relationship with God – how we fellowship and communicate with God), “soul” (our *personality* - who we are inwardly in relation to our affections, desires, will) and “body” (our *performance* - what we do outwardly with our bodies). In every way we should be striving to live a holy and exemplary life, both in word and deed (Col. 3:17) and be holy in all manner of living (1 Pet. 1:15).

First Samuel 16:7 certainly is not teaching that God never looks upon the outward appearance of His people nor renders judgment on the way they dress, live, and conduct themselves.

Zephaniah 1:8 says:

“And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.”

God concludes that certain apparel is strange to Him. What an up-to-date statement this is for today's modernized and culturally correct Christian who wants to dress immodest like the rest of the world. These people were dressing like the heathen and showed no difference in their dress and manner of living. God did not approve of this kind of lifestyle. He looked down upon His people and said they were rebellious in their dress and mannerisms. This Bible verse tells me that God does see the disobedient dress and actions of His people. God looks on something other than just the heart.

Many Christians today are dressing in the same apparel of the heathen, which is suggestive, seductive, and sinister. Dads and mom's ought to be teaching the children about this manner of strange dress today so their young people do not succumb to the pressures of paganism (Jer. 10:2) and the pride of the present age (1 John 2:16).

1 Timothy 2:9 is still in the Bible:

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array."

1 Corinthians 11:14 commands:

"Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?"

This Bible passage tells me that God does indeed look on the body. He does not exclusively look on the heart. A man once asked me, "Pastor, how long is long?" This is not even a valid question. The Christian man should always seek to represent masculinity in the best possible light (Phil. 3:10). The ladies should also represent Biblical femininity (not feminism!) in the best possible light and wear their hair longer.

1 Corinthians 11:15

"But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for *her* hair is given her for a covering."

Yes, God is concerned about how we use our bodies and what we represent with our bodies. Long hair on men has always been a sign of rebellion and long hair on women a sign of submission to authority.

Many will use the “God only looks at my heart” argument to excuse their own willful sinning with their body. This is why we have long-haired, rebellious, effeminate hippies singing in contemporary Christian rock bands, swinging their hips around in front of people, and entertaining Christians in worldly music that caters to the flesh instead of the spirit (Rom. 8:4). Yes, God looks at the heart, but He also looks at our bodies and sees when we are using our bodies for sinful and fleshly purposes. Let’s stop deceiving ourselves!

1 Peter 3:3-4

“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”

Peter is warning against excess and the externals over the internal “hidden man of the heart” (the spiritual control center where we respond God’s life and nature). Peter is saying this; if the inward heart is right (“a meek and quiet spirit”) the outward body (“outward adorning”) will eventually correct itself. The conduct (how we act) and the heart (how we think) actually work together. The inward is to govern the outward. Therefore, as my heart gets squared away with God, my body will get squared away with my heart (1 Pet. 3:3-4).

If my heart is right toward God my dress, appearance, and conduct will not demonstrate disrespect and irreverence toward God. My body will eventually catch up with my heart so I can glorify God in my body (1 Cor. 6:20). For the most part, you cannot separate what's on the inside from what's on the outside. The external is often a reflection of the heart. Let us also remember that *character* always comes before *conduct*. This is because *who* we are determines *what* we do. What we *believe* will determine how we *behave*.

A Mask of Deception



Yes, it's true that God looks on the heart. However, what God sees in the heart and what man sees can sometimes be totally different (Prov. 17:3; 21:2; Acts 15:8) This is because man can become deceived by his heart or the inner control center of his being and existence. The heart can become a place of deception.

Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

The human heart, untouched by grace, which is left to the drives and impulses of the old nature is naturally wicked. This is why we can be deceived by the heart. Some Christians will say, "I'm following my heart." This can be very dangerous, especially since the heart can be deceptive. We need to follow the Word of God and bring our heart under the authority of truth which is the true critic of the thoughts and motives of the human heart (Heb. 4:12). Our heart can be trusted only when it passes the test of God's Word. Popular religious trends and cultural beliefs should be checked carefully against the Word of God for they are almost always certain to be wrong.

Hebrews 3:10 states:

"Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways."

The word "err" speaks of being led astray from the right way into wrong patterns of living through errant teaching and philosophy.

Christians want God to look upon their hearts but what does God see when He looks down into the deep crevices and cracks of the human heart? Many times He sees error and corruption. He sees Christians who have believed a lie and who have erred in their hearts by allowing lusts and sins to control them (Ps. 81:12; Isa. 44:18; Matt. 19:8; Rom. 16:18; Heb. 3:8, 15). Your

heart may be wrong and in need of purifying or cleansing (James 4:8). When we believe in error and follow the current of the culture, we end up erring in our hearts. This means we wander and stray from the right way. We are led away into error.

Here is the bottom line. Your heart may be deceiving you (Jer. 17:9). On the other hand, your heart may be sincere, even when your actions might be wrong. This may be due to your level of spiritual growth and maturity (2 Pet. 3:18). Lastly, you may be committing sin out of willful ignorance (Numb. 15:30; James 4:17). All these scenarios are possible, but one thing is certain. God never approves of sin. Period. Habakkuk 1:13 reveals this about God: “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.” God never looks upon sin with His approval. Never!

A Major Question

Is your heart right before God? Some suggest that this is the primary question which must be asked before engaging in any activity. However, the major question that must be asked is this. Is your conduct or experience Biblical? “What saith the Scripture?” (Rom. 4:3). Does your conduct or decision comply with the Biblical commands and principles of God’s Word (2 Cor. 6:14-17)? Only when our actions are approved by God’s Word (2 Tim. 3:16) can we be sure that our heart is right before God. When a Christian looks at his heart before looking at his actions and obedience, he is living on sinking sand and deception (Matt. 7:26).



Christians need to examine their hearts by examining their living and “prove all things” (1 Thess. 5:21) before they can genuinely discern the nature of their hearts. *Truth should confirm the heart – the heart should not confirm truth.* Similarly, we don’t measure truth by experience, but experience by truth. When the heart gives the final approval of what is true, the result is existentialism or false knowledge (1 Tim. 6:20). It leads to relativism and every man doing that which is right in his own eyes (Judges 17:6; 21:25).

Christians are saying today, “It’s right for me” or “It does not seem wrong for me.” Or worst of all – “It can’t be wrong if it feels so right.” None of these are viable options when it comes to living for God. The measuring stick for truth is not a person’s feelings or personal choices. Truth is not flexible like a rubber band. Truth is not what feels right to you but what God Almighty says concerning your personal actions and decisions. Christians are to live their lives by God’s unchanging commands and moral principles.

We are not to live in the so-called gray areas of life. We are called upon to walk in the light (1 John 1:7) - not gray areas! Jesus said, “Thy word is truth” (John 17:17; 2 Tim. 2:15) - not your heart or feelings. Only when the absolute standard of truth (the Bible) approves our actions or conduct can our hearts be freed from impurity, deception, and hypocrisy.

Yes, it may be true. God might need to purify your heart.

James 4:8 is a command to Christians:

“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.”

David’s prayers should become our own.

Psalms 139:23

“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts.”

“Search me, O God, and know my heart today;
Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray.
See if there be some wicked way in me;
Cleanse me from ev’ry sin and set me free.”

Psalms 51:10

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”

A rather unusual sight in Cairo, Egypt intrigued author Bradford Abernathy, who told about it in his book “450 Stories From Life.” While visiting in an Egyptian home, he saw a servant give a pitcher of water and a rug to a boy

who lived there. The lad washed his hands, his feet, his face, his neck, his ears, and his arms. He went through the entire ritual three times. Only then did he kneel upon the rug, bow his head to the floor, and begin to pray. Although a ritual, it depicts the need for spiritual cleansing of the heart so our lives (what we do with our bodies) will truly glorify God (represent His character and ways) and so everything we do might count for eternity (2 Cor. 5:10).

“In my life, Lord, be glorified; be glorified.
In my life, Lord, be glorified today.”