

The Heart

I'm certain that all of you have heard the story before. It involves the choice of David to serve as king of Israel instead of Saul. Saul, you remember, had failed to do what God wanted him to do in his campaign against the Amalekites. And because of this, Samuel, the prophet of God, rejected Saul as king and was given instructions by God to anoint a new king. In I Samuel 16, Samuel thinks he has the perfect replacement for Saul. Eliab, Jesse's oldest son, evidently looked the part. Samuel even thought to himself: "surely the Lord's anointed stands before the Lord." But God sets him straight. And it is what God says to Samuel that will be the basis for this article. God said:

"Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. THE LORD DOES NOT LOOK AT THE THINGS THAT MAN LOOKS AT. MAN LOOKS AT THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE, BUT THE LORD LOOKS AT THE HEART." (I Samuel 16:7)

God was looking for a man after his own heart, at least that's what Samuel says in I Samuel 13:14. He was looking for a man with His qualities. And he found that man in David.

Aren't we a lot like the people of Israel in that respect? Don't we have a tendency to look at the outside to judge people rather than consider important what's on the inside? Truth be told, it's what's inside that counts. At least that's what God said in the passage above. So what are we to do? We are to fill our hearts with positive emotions that will lead to positive results. After all, Jesus said the "pure in heart" will see God. Isn't that our goal?

Here's what Paul says we should allow into our inner being:

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things." (Philippians 4:8)

And what will come from the heart that will produce the positive results that please God?

Purity--**Matthew 5:8, I Timothy 1:5, II Timothy 2:22**

Gentleness and humility -- **Matthew 11:29**

Forgiveness -- **Matthew 18:35**

Love -- **Matthew 22:37, I Peter 1:22**

Unity -- **Acts 4:32**

Faith -- **Romans 10:10**

Obedience -- **Ephesians 6:6**

Sincerity -- **Colossians 3:22**

Possessing the pure heart that God desires for us will cause us to be well pleasing to Him. The qualities that we are told to incorporate in our personalities come from God, take root in our hearts, and manifest themselves in good works.