

God Looks at the Heart

1 Samuel 15:1-16:23 Prejudice is simply prejudging a person before we even get to know that person. We often make up our minds that we are not going to like a person simply because of his outward appearance. God warned Samuel when he went to anoint a new king of Israel not to look at the outer appearance of the man. He instructed Samuel to anoint one of the sons of Jesse. As each of Jesse's sons passed by, Samuel knew the Lord had not chosen any of those seven sons. He asked Jesse if all the sons were present, and Jesse told him that the youngest was tending the sheep. His name was David. When David appeared on the scene, he was very good looking and had a beautiful countenance. God, however, did not choose David because of his outward appearance. He chose him because He knew David's heart. David had a heart after God.

Treasures in the House

Proverbs 15:5-7 Is your house filled with treasures? I remember visiting a home in New Jersey and our host showing us all the treasures he had collected from his travels all over the world. There were paintings, statues and every kind of bric-a-brac, each representing a country he visited. I thought to myself, This man's life is wrapped up in his treasures and travels.

The Tongue

Proverbs 15:4 You have heard the phrase, “Divide and conquer.” When there is division of any kind that disturbs unity, we are much more vulnerable to the enemy. The enemy does not have to use mighty weapons against us in order to divide us. Instead, he uses the mightiest member of our body, our own tongue, to divide and conquer. Death and life are in the power of the tongue. James tells us the tongue is like the rudder on a ship and the bit in a horse’s mouth; this tiny member of our body has the power to control our whole body.

0 That Men Would Praise the Lord

Psalms 107:1-43 A grateful heart is one of the keys to a joyful life. If we look carefully at the moments of our day, we will always see things worthy of our praise. This psalm lists many reasons to praise the Lord. If we do not see His hand in the moments of our lives, then we can praise Him for His very character and His works. Praise comes before worship, and one of the roots of this word is “worth.” God’s character and works are always worthy of praise. Praise is the first step we have to take when we enter His presence. Let’s look the steps the priests had to take to enter the holy of holies in the tabernacle.

I Need Some Bread

John 6:22-46 I'll never forget hosting a Russian Jewish lady on her birthday. The table was set with the finest china, and fresh flowers provided the centerpiece for the table. All the food was presented well, and I felt everything was near perfect. The moment I sat down at the table after much diligent preparation in the kitchen, the guest of honor said in her heavy Russian accent, "I need some bread. Where is the bread?" She sincerely felt she could not even begin her meal unless bread was on the table. I later found out why she was desperate for bread. Her hands were arthritic, and she used bread to help push things on her fork. Often she would just forget to use the fork and raised her food to her mouth on pieces of bread.

Leanness When We Lust

Psalms 106:13-31 All mankind has three things in common. We all have three major lusts in our souls: the lust of the flesh (seeking to fulfill our five senses in an overindulgent way); the lust of the eye (greedy longings in the mind that can cause greed and covetousness; pornography is caused by this lust); and the pride of life, which is trusting our own resources and ourselves more than we trust in God. All of these lusts are located in our souls—our minds, wills and emotions. These three lusts are the buttons Satan is constantly pressing with his seducing spirits. James tells us that God never tempts us, but we are led astray by our own lusts. The devil cannot make us do anything. We first have to open the door to him through one or more of these lusts.

Envy

Proverbs 14:30-31 This proverb says that envy is rottenness to the bones. Envy is a sin that brings only evil consequences. Some sins are a pleasure for a season, but of course, sin always births death in our lives in some way. The Bible tells us that the person who commits adultery kills his own soul. It may be years before we reap what we have sown, but beware, our sins will find us out. If we do not confess our sins and turn from them, there will be eternal consequences also. We will not lose our salvation unless we commit the sin of denying our faith in Christ, but we will lose some rewards in heaven if we do not deal honestly and openly with our sins here on earth. When we confess our sins, God is faithful and just not only to forgive our sins, but also to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We can go to heaven with a clean slate if we have not hidden iniquity in our hearts by refusing to confess our sins and turn from them.

None Holy As the Lord

1 Samuel 1:1-2:21 It was not until this morning that I realized I have been singing often in my private worship time Hannah's song. When Hannah brought Samuel to the temple to lend him to the Lord as her thanks to God for the conception and delivery of this precious son, she prayed a powerful prayer that acknowledged the sovereignty and power of God: "There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God" (1 Sam. 2:2,

KJV).

The Fear of the Lord

Proverbs 14:26-27 This proverb tells us that the fear of the Lord will give us strong confidence, and our children will have safety because they have a place of refuge. One of the major problems in America is that our children are not being taught to fear the Lord. I just recently taught an eight-week study on the fear of the Lord, and we learned that the fear of the Lord is not caught; it is taught. Parental instruction in the Word of God seems to be waning, and we are reaping the consequences. We see the shootings in the high schools in America, and recently there was even one in the first grade. We learn in this proverb that the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life and keeps us from the snare of death.

Spirit of Truth

John 4:5-42 Immediately after Jesus told the woman of Samaria that she had five husbands and that the man she now had was not her husband, she changed the subject. She saw that this Man knew well her history, but she was not willing to go into it with Him. She proceeded to ask Him a theological question. How like human nature. When someone is getting too close to the truth in our own lives—our own sin and shortcomings—we want to change the subject. The woman asked Jesus where He believed was the correct place of worship. The answer Jesus gave is revealing. “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when

you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him" (vv. 21-23).