

# Summer 2020



## 1 Samuel 16:7

7 ... The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

### Reflection

Over Summer at A Year With Jesus our daily devotions are a little shorter in length. We're spending six minutes or so each day, five days a week, working through

some of people's favourite verses from the Bible. The passages that we've selected are ones that many people have chosen to commit to memory and we're encouraging you to do so as well. To this end we're repeating each day's passage quite a few times during each talk with the hope that by committing them to memory they'll be a blessing to you as you carry them through life.

Today's passage comes from the Old Testament book of 1 Samuel, right at the point where Samuel is about to anoint the boy David as the future King. In it, Samuel teaches us about God but also about humankind. 1 Samuel 16:7,

7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his

height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

The part of this verse that has become a memory verse for so many Christians is found at the end,

The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

The Bible has much to say about the human heart which very often is more than just the seat of our emotions and more like the control centre of our whole person – rational and emotional – our minds and

hearts combined. Jeremiah 17:9 sets the tone for the wayward nature of the human heart in saying that,

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Deceitful and beyond cure, in another famous verse from the Old Testament God promises us a new heart with the coming of the Holy Spirit,

26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. Ezek 36:26

And so on becoming a Christian our fallen, deceitful and wayward heart of stone is

replaced with a new heart. Proverbs 4:23 says of our new heart,

23 Above all else, guard your heart,  
for everything you do flows from  
it.

In our verse today we see God not looking at the outward appearance, as we so often do, but instead peering into David's heart. A couple of chapters earlier in Samuel we read that David is a man after God's own heart. And here, as Samuel anoints him to be the future King over God's people, God reiterates these sentiments,

People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

And yet, despite this glowing endorse-

ment, later in his life David succumbs to temptation and treads a path that leads to adultery and murder. After these events, in Ps 51:10, we read David's prayer of repentance. In it he prays for his heart. David prays,

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Our verse today asks two questions of us that I'd like you to consider this morning. Firstly, are you overly concerned with your outward appearance, the image you project to people? This is an easy trap to fall into in the currents of our culture which exalt body image, fashion and lifestyle. And yet our passage says that God isn't overly concerned with the house that you live in

or the car that you drive or what you look like in the mirror. Instead, God would have you work on your heart because,

People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

Those wise words from Proverbs again; if you're setting some New Year's resolutions right now, why not place these words from Proverbs at the top of your list:

23 Above all else, guard your heart,  
for everything you do flows from  
it.

## **Think & Pray**

How is the state of your heart? Are its thoughts and motivations and driving pas-

sions pure? Are you a person after God's own heart? Spend some time meditating over the state of your heart this morning. And then pray for God's help. Thank him for taking away your heart of stone and breathing new life into it by the power of his Holy Spirit. Thank him that our hearts have been cured and that they can now be wise and are no longer always deceptive and deceived. Pray David's pray,

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

And pray that God would continue to transform us from the inside out by the power of his Holy Spirit so that we would be like him, always remembering that,



People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.