

Have one beautifully wrapped gift with junk inside and one ugly gift with candy or something nicer inside.

Which of these gifts would you prefer to receive? Why? Let's see what is inside.

This is a good example of how God looks at us. We can only see the outside of a person and their actions, but God can see their hearts and the motivation behind what they do.

There is an example of this in the Old Testament. God decided to appoint a new king over Israel because King Saul was not listening to Him anymore. Saul began to do what he wanted and took credit for all the good.

So God sent the prophet Samuel to anoint a new king from the sons of a man named Jesse. When he saw the oldest son, Samuel thought he had to be the one because he was likely tall and strong. However, God said, *“Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not a man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”* (1 Samuel 16:7)

God chose the youngest of the sons of Jesse (David) to become the next king. This was very unusual in those days, as the oldest son was expected to receive the most blessings. But David was “a man after God’s own heart” (see 1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22)

We can be a person after God’s heart as well.

So #TargetPractice: What does it mean to be a person ‘after God’s own heart’?

Basically it means loving God, repenting when making mistakes, and trying to follow His will, rather than being perfect.

Let’s look at David as an example to see how we can be a person after God’s heart.

- **David loved God and trusted Him.** We could see this when David was a shepherd watching his father’s sheep. He was able to protect them from a lion and a bear when he probably shouldn’t have been able to. Also, he was willing to stand up against Goliath when everyone else was afraid. (1 Sam 17:34-36) He was ready to defend God and trusted God to help him defeat Israel’s enemy.
 - How can you show love for God and trust in Him?
- David desired to do what God said (in other words **obey God**). He accepted the position as king even though that was likely a scary thing. He challenged Goliath even when all the soldiers and the current king were afraid to do so. He chose to not kill King Saul when the opportunity arose, even though King Saul was trying to kill him.
 - How can you obey God?

- David **wasn't perfect**. He made some really big mistakes, but he **quickly confessed** when he realized his mistake, **asked for forgiveness**, and trusted God even when David suffered consequences from his mistakes. He was **humble**.
 - How can you repent from mistakes you make?

Loving God above all else (submitting to God's reign)

Focusing on following God's will (abandoning self-rule)

Repenting when we make mistakes and accepting consequences (turning from sin)