

 A person may think their own ways are right, but the LORD weighs the heart. Proverbs 21:2
What does this mean?

 Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment." John 7:24
This means?

 **What should you do if you suspect someone else is acting out of wrong motives?**
How can you tell?
Is it your job to figure out what someone else's motives are?
When might it be your job?

Most of us think we are better judges of peoples motives than we are. It is easy to be wrong. It is easy in our wrongness to become judgemental.

 On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts. 1 Thessalonians 2:4
What is pleasing people?
Why is it dangerous?

When it comes to motives, we should remember we are human beings not human doings. Who we are is important not just what we do. We have got to get the heart right.

 Solomon was a great king. God appeared to him and promised him whatever he would ask for. He asks for wisdom, but in the end this wisdom does not help him. He let too many other loves into his life. Not just his foreign wives and the foreign gods that they encouraged him to worship. He seems to have let the love of power, wealth, opulence, ego and position, turn his heart from God. He is the classic example of the kind of wisdom that cannot save 1 Cor 2:4-5. In the end his heart let him down, it was not whole, willing or devoted, at least not for the right things. Somewhere down the line Solomon was tested and found wanting. He did not have his father's heart.

 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it. Proverbs 4:23
What are you guarding your heart from?
What things are likely to divide our hearts?

 **Read 2 Chronicles 25:1-2**
Does this matter?

This leads us to the question what is in your heart?

 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24
Why does David pray this?

 David also prayed:
Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Psa 51:10 NIB)

How will you purify your heart and get rid of bad motives?

According to the above recognising and asking God to change your heart. Seeing from God's perspective and from that of other people your actions impact might help. Refocus on what is important. Refocus on God. Think Kingdom of God. Think the glory of God. We need to put aside the self-seeking part of our nature. We need to be humble even in our own thinking.

 The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live. Deuteronomy 30:6
I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. Ezekiel 11:19

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An undivided heart

 "And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every desire and every thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever. 1 Chronicles. 28:9

These words were spoken to Solomon by his father David. They echo a prayer that David prayed for himself.

Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name. Psalm 86:11

In both cases they are ironic. If there is anyone in the bible that had an undivided heart it was king David. On the other hand if there was anyone in the bible with a divided heart it was Solomon.

 **What is an undivided heart?**
What is a divided heart?

A divided heart is about the different things that we love or that call for our attentions. David seems oblivious to this. Everything David did he did with a whole heart. He worshiped with a whole heart, went to war with a whole heart, he sinned with a whole heart and he repented with a whole heart. At times David was whole-heartedly wrong – but he was always whole-hearted

To be whole hearted means to.....

-  Give it all
- be enthusiastic
- Not to hold back
- not to be insincere
- not to be duplicitous

To be halfhearted means to....

 [Empty box for notes]

 **What does it mean for us to be half hearted?**
Which would you rather be?
How was Solomon half-hearted?

 www.freedom.gen.nz
studies@freedom.gen.nz
Pastor Ray Moxham

To be whole hearted also means to act out of good motivation. Anything that we do can be done for a variety of reasons some good and some bad. Different motivations pull us in different directions and lead to a divided heart. We want to serve God but we also want other less noble things.



Lets look at Davids Advice to Solomon.
What does it mean to acknowledge the Lord ?
Serve Him means to?
What is a willing mind?
What is devotion?



God searches the heart.
That means He sees our thoughts and desires. Our motives as well as our actions. It is easy to do the right thing for wrong reasons. It is also possible to do the wrong things with good intentions. God understands the motives behind our actions. It is possible to hide our motives and intentions from others, but it is not possible to hide them from God.



For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. 1 Corinthians 3:11-13

What is this passage saying?
Everyone can tell the difference between gold and straw. But in this passage you can't, at least not from outward appearances. It is only fire that shows the quality of each persons work.

This will take place on the day when God judges everyone's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares. Romans. 2:16

Does it matter what our motives are as long as we do what is right?
We would tend to say yes but Paul faced this issue – what conclusion did he come to?



Read Philippians 1:14-18
What were the good motives
What were the bad motives?
What did Paul consider important?

How do you preach out of envy and rivalry?
Does this mean that motives are unimportant?

If God tests motives then they must be important to Him.
It is not enough to do the right thing – we have to do the right thing for the right reasons.

How will you know what your motivations are?



Is fearing your motives are wrong an acceptable reason not to do something we know to be right?
What are the issues?
Are our motives ever 100% pure?

We would like to say yes, but most of the time our motives are mixed. Even though our desires are good there will be a bit of self interest leaking in the background. You can be sure that the enemy will concentrate on this in an attempt to stop us from serving God.

When we do things for God what wrong motives can we have?



What are good motives to serve God?



What are the dangers in doing things for the wrong motives?
Do our motives effect how we do thing?
Do we do things better when we do them from right motives?

Most of the time this is true. It is always true that when we do things from the wrong motives we do the differently. This is inevitable because our motive tends to indicate our goal or our desired out come.



Take cleaning the floor!
If my motive is to look good how will I clean the floor?
If my motive is to solve my guilt over some past sin how will I clean the floor?
If my motive is to get something from God how will I clean the floor?
If my motive is to worship God how will I clean the floor?
Can you tell from the state of the floor which is my motive?



It is a good idea to examine our own hearts and work out what are motives are. Often the person who suffers the most when we act out of bad motives is ourselves. We fail to find joy in what we do and we do not end up reaping the reward we had hoped for 1 Cor 9:17.

Bad motives lead to deadworks. Things done from guilt usually backfire.



How is God likely to act if you do the right things for the wrong reasons?
Will it be blessed?
If we find we have wrong motives what should we do about it?



Repent
Pray David's prayer
Ask God to change us.
Focus on good motives.

Things done from guilt usually backfire.

Some verses to consider.



Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. Luke 9:47
Jesus still knows what you are thinking.
Jesus still cares about how you are thinking.
Jesus will still confront you with your wrong thinking so that you can change.

In the above passage what was the disciples wrong thinking?
How did Jesus confront it?



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 man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7

What does this mean?
What implications does it have for us?



The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests the heart. Proverbs 17:3
What does this mean?
How does the metaphor work?
How does God test our heart?
God knows what is in our hearts. Often we don't.