

# Pursuing The Heart of God

## 1 Samuel 13:13-14

*And Samuel said to Saul, “You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the LORD your God, with which he commanded you. For then the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought out **a man after his own heart**, and the LORD has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.”*

- **What does it look like to be a man or woman after God’s own heart?**
- **Let’s look at David's Psalms to get a glimpse of his heart.**

## 1. One who pursues the heart of God... delights in and obeys God’s Word

### *Psalm 119:9–16*

*9 How can a young man keep his way pure? 10 By guarding it according to your word. With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments!*

*11 I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*

*12 Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes!*

*13 With my lips I declare all the rules of your mouth.*

*14 In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.*

*15 I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.*

*16 I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.*

### **Examine:**

- David sees God’s Word as protection against sin.
- Obedience flows from *delight*, not duty.
- He treasures God’s commands (“I rejoice... as one rejoices in great riches”).
- God’s Word is internalized (“hidden in my heart”), not just heard.

*“Nobody ever outgrows Scripture; the book widens and deepens with our years.”*

— Charles Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David* (on Psalm 119)

- God's instructions to future kings were to treasure and obey His Word.

*Deuteronomy 17:14-20*

**14** “When you come to the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,’ **15** you may indeed set a king over you whom the Lord your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. **16** Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the Lord has said to you, ‘You shall never return that way again.’ **17** And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold.

**18** “And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by [c] the Levitical priests. **19** And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, **20** that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.

- King Saul put himself above God’s word, and David humbled himself below God’s word.
- Healthiness flows downstream from biblical faithfulness.
- A healthy church is a biblically faithful church, a healthy pastor is a biblically faithful pastor, and a healthy family is a biblically faithful family
- When we stray from the word, we stray from God Himself.
- *Pursuing God’s heart means delighting in and obeying God’s Word*

## **2 . One who pursues the heart of God... repents quickly and sincerely**

*Psalm 51:10-12, 16-17*

**10** Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

**11** Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

**12** Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

**16** For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. **17** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

- David doesn't excuse his sin; he confesses it.
- He asks for a *clean heart*, not just forgiveness but repentance.
- He values a restored relationship with God above any earthly relationship.

*“When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said ‘Repent,’ He intended that the entire life of believers should be repentance.”*

— Martin Luther, *Ninety-Five Theses*

- *Pursuing God's heart means running toward Him in repentance.*

## **2. One who pursues the heart of God... desires God's presence above everything else**

*Psalm 27:4*

*One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.*

- “One thing I have asked...I will seek” David had a singular focus.
- He longed for God's presence more than success, safety, or victory.
- His pursuit was relational, not transactional.

*“God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.”*

— John Piper

- Is the presence of God your “one thing”?
- A man after God's heart seeks God mainly for who he is, not for what He can give.
- Create intentional time to *be with God*, not just to make requests.
- *Pursuing God's heart means prioritizing His presence over everything else.*

## **4. One who pursues the heart of God... trusts God in every season**

*Psalm 23:1–4*

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

*2 He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.*

*3 He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness or his name's sake.*

*4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

- God leads in both green pastures *and* dark valleys.
- David doesn't deny difficulty—he declares trust in it.
- Confidence comes from *who God is*, not circumstances.

*“Faith is deliberate confidence in the character of God...”*

*— Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest*

- Where are you struggling to trust God right now?
- Are you only confident when life feels stable?
- Practice declaring the truth about God even when emotions disagree.
- When things get confusing, and we feel despair, ask yourself, what do we know to be true?
- Pursuing God's heart means trusting Him, even when you don't understand what he's doing. Trust the process.

## **5. One who pursues the heart of God... invites God to search and shape their heart**

*Psalm 139:23–24*

*Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!*

*24 And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!*

- David asks God to examine him deeply.
- He is open to correction and growth.
- He wants alignment, not just approval.

*“When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.”*

*— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship*

- When was the last time you asked God to search your heart?

- Are you defensive when convicted, or receptive?
- Make space for God to reveal attitudes, motives, and habits.
- *Pursuing God's heart means being willing to be changed by Him.*

## **6. One who pursues the heart of God... lives with continual gratitude and worship**

*Psalm 103:1*

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!*

- David commands his own soul to praise God.
- He intentionally remembers God's benefits.
- Worship is a choice, not just a feeling.
  
- Aren't we glad that God's love for you endures forever!

*"Though our feelings come and go, God's love for us does not."*

— C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

- Do you regularly reflect on what God has done?
- Is your worship dependent on your mood?
- Build habits of gratitude (journaling, prayer, speaking it out).
- *Pursuing God's heart means living with an attitude of gratitude and choosing worship in every season.*

## **7. One who pursues the heart of God... puts their faith in Jesus Christ.**

***Acts 13:16-23***

*So Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said: "Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen. 17The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. 18And for about forty years he put up with<sup>b</sup> them in the wilderness. 19And after destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance. 20All this took about 450 years. And after that he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. 21Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. 22And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found*

*in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.' 23Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised.*

- David was an imperfect man who pursued the heart of God.
- But we ultimately look to Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith, who not only shows us the heart of God but transforms us into His likeness through the power of the Holy Spirit.
  
- *Jesus had no sin, yet He bore ours.*
- *Jesus always pleased the Father.*
- *Jesus is the Word made flesh.*
- *Jesus lived in perfect worship.*
- *Jesus trusted the Father, even in suffering.*
- *Jesus surrendered completely, even to the cross.*
- Jesus rose in victory and has made a way in faith for us to become children of God
- Only through Jesus Christ can anyone truly pursue the heart of God.

### **Conclusion:**

A person who pursues God's heart is not:

- Perfect
- Always strong
- living a life free of suffering

But they are:

- **Disciples of Jesus**
- **Quick to repent**
- **Hungry for God's presence**
- **Trusting in difficulty**
- **Open to correction**
- **Consistently worshipful**

### **Reflection:**

Which of these areas is strongest in your life right now?

Which one is God inviting you to grow in?

What is one practical step you can take this week to pursue His heart?

*Don't aim to be perfect; aim to be responsive to God.*

*The heart God desires is one that keeps coming back to Him.*