

Seeing the Heart

1 The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

4 Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?"

5 Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

6 When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD."

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."

1 Samuel 16:1, 4-7

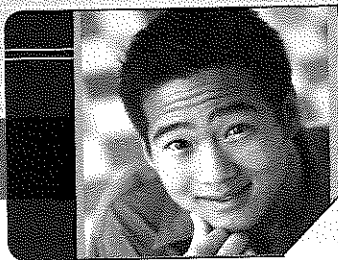
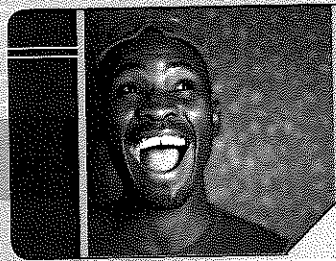
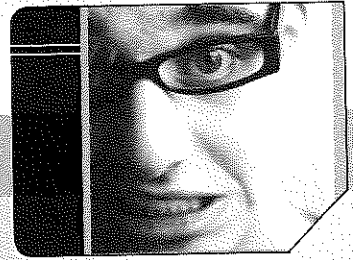
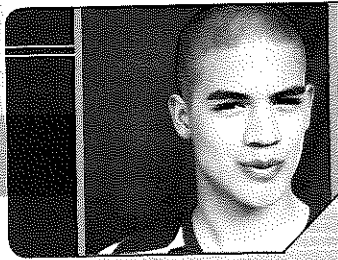
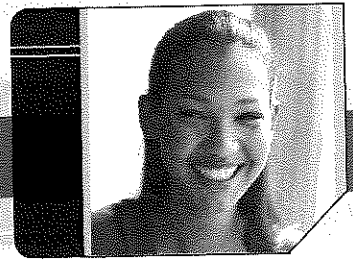


30 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;

but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

Proverbs 31:30

BEAUTY ONTEST




Heart Specialists

First Samuel 16 tells the story of God's choosing a new king to rule His people. In Proverbs 31 the writer describes the kind of woman that makes a good wife. Read those passages and answer the questions about the heart/character that God desires of both those who lead us and those who love us.

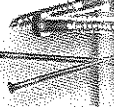
1. What characteristics did Eliab, son of Jesse, have that made Samuel think that he would be a good leader? (See 1 Samuel 16:6, 7a.) How was he similar to the current king, Saul (1 Samuel 9:2)?
2. Compare 1 Samuel 16:7b to 1 Samuel 13:14. What conclusion can you draw about the character God is looking for in a leader?
3. Notice David's occupation in 1 Samuel 16:11. Does Psalm 23 give us some ideas about the characteristics God saw in David's character? List some of the heart characteristics that David and God shared.
4. Read Proverbs 31:30a. What qualities do people often seek in a spouse?
5. According to the rest of that verse, what heart characteristic is a better indication of whether or not someone would make a good spouse?
6. Survey all of Proverbs 31:10-31. List some characteristics that result when a spouse is in awe of God.

Building Character

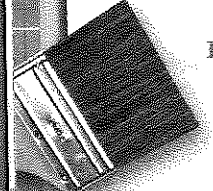
Today you've discussed the things that God sees as beautiful. Now evaluate your own inner qualities. Look at the descriptions below, and figure out which tool you need to shape your character.



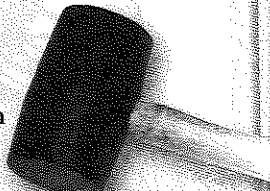
Electrical plug—You need to plug in to the true source of power—Jesus. You've been away from Him too long, and your strength is failing. Decide to build up your strength and your character by reconnecting yourself with God.



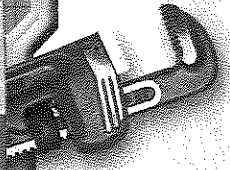
Screws and nails—You need to mend a relationship. Your character was scarred when you had a fight with someone, and the two of you were torn apart. Decide to do what it takes to put that relationship back together.



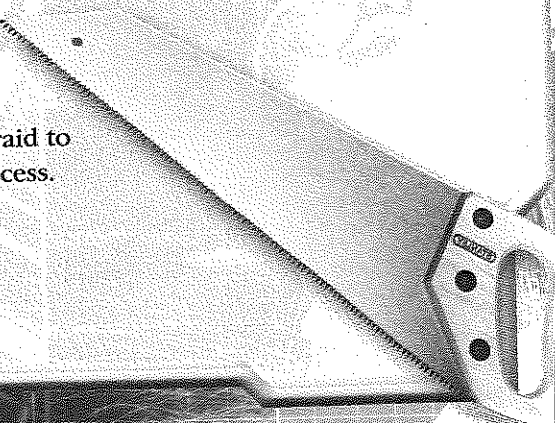
Paintbrush—You need to brighten your spirit. Negativity has darkened your inner beauty so that it's no longer recognizable. You're starting to affect others' attitudes as well. Decide to think, act, and speak positively.



Mallet—You need to build up people instead of tearing them down. You often try to make yourself look good by making fun of other people. But it's only made you look bad. Decide to encourage others rather than insult them.



Pipe wrench—You need a firmer grasp on God's plan for your life. You generally know what Christianity is all about, but what does God want specifically with you and your abilities? Decide to seek God's guidance and wisdom.



Saw—You need to cut out a sin from your life. That sin has been controlling you and disfiguring your inner beauty. Decide to get rid of it, and don't be afraid to ask someone to help you with this process.