

Proverbs 16:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weighth the spirits.

Analysis

Human self-assessment is unreliable—we judge our ways pure while God weighs spirits (motives, intents). This exposes self-deception requiring external, objective evaluation by God's word and Spirit. Reformed theology emphasizes total depravity affecting even our self-knowledge, necessitating divine illumination.

Historical Context

Levitical priests weighed offerings to ensure proper portions. God similarly weighs hearts with perfect accuracy, discerning mixed motives humans rationalize away.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do you combat self-deception about the purity of your motives?
2. What does God's word reveal about your heart that you tend to overlook?

Interlinear Text

רֹוחׁ וְתַּחַת־ | וְתַּחַת־ | רֹוחׁ וְתַּחַת־ |
כָּל־ דְּרָכִי אֲשֶׁר־ בְּעֵינֵי יְהֹוָה | בְּעֵינֵי יְהֹוָה |
כָּל H3605 All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes weigheth the spirits
דְּרָכִי H1870 H376 H2134 H5869 H8505 H7307

!הָתָה:

but the LORD

H3068

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 21:2 (References Lord): Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.

1 Samuel 16:7 (References Lord): But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

Luke 16:15 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

Proverbs 30:12 (Parallel theme): There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.

Jeremiah 17:10 (References Lord): I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Psalms 36:2 (Parallel theme): For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful.

Proverbs 24:12 (Parallel theme): If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?

Proverbs 5:21 (References Lord): For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.

Isaiah 26:7 (Parallel theme): The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

Proverbs 16:25 (Parallel theme): There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org