

## *Habits or Heart?*

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Someone once posed some thought provoking questions: “Which would you prefer for a next-door neighbor: a person with excellent habits or a person with a good heart?” “Which would you prefer for a good friend: a person of excellent habits, or a person with a good heart?” “Which would you prefer for a husband or a wife: a person of excellent habits, or a person with a good heart?” “Which would you prefer for a child: a child with excellent habits, or a child with a good heart?”

It’s great to have neighbors who care for their property while respecting yours. It’s wonderful to have a friend who always treats you with consideration. It’s a blessing to be married to a husband who always is thoughtful and courteous, or to a wife who always is gracious in her comments and deeds. It’s fantastic to have a son or daughter who shows respect and uses good manners.

As wonderful as these things are, however, none of them compare to having a neighbor, a friend, a husband, a wife, a son, or a daughter with a good heart.

When you discuss good behavior and good habits, you are discussing the quality of a person's self-discipline. When you discuss a good heart, you are discussing the quality of the person.

God prefers deeds to creeds, love over law, and hearts over habits. Our Scriptures affirm: “The seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.” (Luke 8:15)