

## WHY GOD WANTS YOUR HEART

### Intro:

- Eze. 36
- The people defiled the land with uncleanness.
- So God destroyed the land as punishment for idol worship and the other usual culprits.
- God says he isn't going to let them return for their sake, but for the sake of his own name.
- God will cleanse the people with water sprinkled on them, give them a new heart and a new spirit to replace the old, and put his spirit in them to make sure they follow his laws.

The heart, according to the Bible, is part of man's spiritual makeup. It is the place where emotions and desires begin; the heart drives the will of man towards action. However, the heart of man as described in the Bible is primarily a spiritual organ that drives man's behavior.

God wants to give to us a new heart and a new spirit. Because our old heart is hard like stone and our spirit is happy to exist independently from God.

Read Ezek. 36:26-28

1. **To exchange:** Eze 36:26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.
  - a. Our heart is naturally hardened to the things of God. It seeks its own desires. It is fraudulent, crooked, deceitful, and polluted. It is also desperate and incurably wicked.
    - i. Our Old Heart separates us from God: Jeremiah 17:9-10 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? "I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."
  - b. Our New Heart unifies us with God and God's people. How important is it for you and your leadership in the church to be on the "same page" as God? How important is it for Christians all over the world to be unified though the blood of Jesus?
    - i. Eze 11:19 And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,
  - c. Transition: We want to believe that people, in their hearts, are essentially good and that they must be coerced or victimized or provoked into bad behavior. However, Jesus said the opposite: that sins like evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and foolishness, actually originate in the heart of man (Mark 7:21-23). Humanity has a heart problem, and needs a heart transplant. Only God brings the renewal to our hearts. The new heart God gives us is capable of receiving a new intellect, new wisdom and new understanding. You and I are not able to perform this kind of heart surgery. But God can.

2. **To empower:** Eze 36:27 And I will put **my spirit within you**, and cause you to **walk in my statutes** and be careful to **obey my rules**.
  - a. God's spirit: God will our out freely and abundantly His Spirit
    - i. the Holy Spirit of God, which is the immediate principal cause of that change of an old heart into new, and of hard into soft
    - ii. The change is:
  - b. Walking in His statues/Obeying His rules: Be willing; and able to keep the judgments, and to walk in the statutes of God, which is, to live in all holiness.
  - c. Jesus is our example of living in all holiness.
    - i. We are to "walk as He walked"
    - ii. Love God completely
    - iii. Love our neighbor as ourselves
  
3. **To establish:** (v.28) Eze 36:28 You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and **you shall be my people**, and **I will be your God**
  - a. We should never seek satisfaction living in a world that is at enmity with God.
    - i. I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, declares the Lord." (Jeremiah 31:14)
  - b. We are Gods' people
    - i. We cannot waiver in identifying with God.
    - ii. Quote: "Christian selfhood is not defined in terms of who we are in and of ourselves. It's defined in terms of what God does to us and the relationship he creates with us and the destiny he appoints for us. God made us who we are so we could make known who he is. Our identity is for the sake of making known his identity." - Jonathan Parnell is the lead pastor of Cities Church in Minneapolis–St. Paul
  - c. No other god is permitted.
    - i. "You shall not make idols for yourselves or erect an image or pillar, and you shall not set up a figured stone in your land to bow down to it, for I am the LORD your God. (Leviticus 26:1)

**Outro:** Because our hearts are so vulnerable with must allow God's Holy Spirit to be our only line of defense for guarding it.

"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

- Your heart is extremely valuable.
- Your heart is the source of everything you do.
- Your heart is under constant attack.

Our spiritual life begins in the heart, and it begins with God.