

The Reality of the New Heart
Ezekiel 36:26
Parker 873 B
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Welcome to our program. Now today I'm going to be preaching from the book of Ezekiel in the Old Testament, the prophet Ezekiel. If you'd like to follow along in your bibles, I will be preaching from Chapter 36 and my main text is verse 26, Ezekiel 36:26. The title of the message is "The Reality of the New Heart." What I want to talk to you about is the work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of his people, the salvation of sinners, when he gives a new heart. This is being born again by the spirit.

If you've followed this program before, you may have heard me mention what we call the three "R"s of salvation. The three "R"s are this:

1. Number one is **ruined** by the fall. That's our fall in Adam and when Adam fell the whole human race, that's who Adam represented, fell in Adam. **Romans 5:12** - *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"* And that means death and that death can be seen in various ways. I mentioned this in another message how Adam did not die physically immediately, but the process of physical death came into existence right then. Back in Genesis 2:17 when God told Adam he says you can eat of all the fruits of the trees of the garden except one: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And remember he said in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die. Well literally that means dying you shall die. In other words, you shall die and the process of physical death when we talk about death we can talk about legal death. That's

condemnation: the sentence of guilt and condemnation. But we can also talk about spiritual death. Adam spiritually died in the day that he dishonored and disobeyed God and ever since then all of Adam's posterity are born spiritually dead. Now that's what the Scripture says. When the apostle Paul addressing the believers in the church at Ephesus in **Ephesians 2:1**, he says, "*And you hath he quickened,*" literally mean being made alive "*who were dead*" spiritually dead "*in trespasses and sins;*" And then we can talk about eternal death too. That's why we need to be saved from sin because the wages of sin is death.

2. So ruined by the fall and then secondly, **redeemed** by the blood that's the second "R". That's the redemption of Christ. That's the work of Christ on the cross to save his people from their sins, to save them from death, to save them from the grave and hell, to save them from eternal damnation. What Christ accomplished in putting away the sins of his people by his death on the cross. He paid the redemption price. He established righteousness whereby God could be just and justify the ungodly. He, who went to the cross, that perfect sinless son of God, was made sin. The sins of his people were charged to him in order that they might be made the righteousness of God in him; that they might have righteousness charged to them.

3. And so that's the redemption by the blood and then as a result of that we come to the third "R" and that's **regeneration** by the holy spirit and that's the new birth. That's where the Holy Spirit applies the life of Christ that came out of his death, the redemptive life, he applies that redemptive life to each and every one of God's elect in each successive generation. And that's what Christ was talking about in John chapter three when he said you must be born

again. You see the life of God's people, that life, which spiritual life, by which we are raised from the dead spiritually in the new birth and that life comes from the death of Christ. Because he died we lived and that life manifest itself, evidences itself, in that new heart and that's a convicted heart. But we'll look at that.

Over in Ezekiel chapter 36, he's talking to Israel. You know, Ezekiel prophesied in the days of the Babylonian captivity and Israel Judah, the southern kingdom, they were in captivity in Babylon and he speaks of this. He says in verse 21 (he's prophesying here, this is God speaking through Ezekiel) he says, *"But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went."* **Ezekiel 36:21** Wherever they went. Now he's talking to a rebellious people and he says I had pity on this rebellious people for one reason and it had nothing to do with them. It was for his holy name, his glory. Why did God do what he did during this time to the nation Israel? Well it was for his own glory and it was ultimately for the salvation on his people, spiritual Israel, out of every tribe, kindred, tongue and nation, Jew and Gentile. He says in verse 22, *"Therefore say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went."* **Ezekiel 36:22** He says, *"And I will sanctify my great name,"* (God's going to distinguish himself, he's going to set himself apart) *"which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes."* **Ezekiel 36:23** In other words, God's dealings with this rebellious nation is going to set him apart and sanctify him, honor him, before the eyes of the heathen.

And here's what he says in verse 24, he says, *"For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land."* **Ezekiel 36:24** Now they were in captivity in Babylon but there going to go back to their own land and they would stay there until about A.D. 70 when they were dispersed. And then he says in verse 25, listen this, he says, *"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."* **Ezekiel 36:25** Now what is he talking about there? Well spiritually speaking, this is a prophecy of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the second "R," redeemed by the blood. This sprinkling, this clean water is the blood of Christ that washes away all the sins of all his people. This is the justification of God's people in Christ: the establishment of righteousness, the sprinkling of the blood and sometimes it is typified by water. Now this was not fulfilled in the nation Israel in the land of Canaan, but it is fulfilled in spiritual Israel. Now some people deny that, but I want to tell you something: some people say well it's future for Israel, well let me tell you something: if that's true, it's still going to be the salvation of sinners under the headship and by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's not going to be in the old covenant. The old covenant is gone. The old covenant has passed away: that which was old has vanished away. It's been replaced, they call that replacement theology, but that's what the Bible says: that we're under the new covenant in Christ.

Now that old covenant, it was given to a rebellious nation. They did not have a heart for God as a nation and that old covenant was a testimony to the sinfulness of man. Paul twice, once in Romans and once in Galatians, answers that question: why was the law given? It was never given to be a way of salvation because man cannot be saved or

justified by deeds of law. It was given to expose our sinfulness and our depravity and the impossibility of salvation based upon our best efforts to keep the law. It was given as a schoolmaster to drive them to Christ. So this is fulfilled, not in the nation Israel, it's fulfilled in the nation of spiritual Israel: all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. So he says Christ is coming to die and that's that sprinkling of clean water upon you. That's the application of the blood of Christ, to all for whom he died. *"For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* **2 Corinthians 5:21** That's the ground of salvation right there. That's the ground of justification. Now as a result of Christ accomplishing his great work on the cross of Calvary out of his death comes life for his people, spiritual life, the new birth. You see the work of Christ for his people on the cross is the ground and cause of salvation. The work of the Holy Spirit in the sinner in the new birth is the result, the fruit, the effect. He said it this way in John chapter twelve, he said and if I be lifted up, that is on the cross, and do the work of redemption, finish redemption, put away my sins, he said, I will draw all unto me. That drawing here is the work of the Holy Spirit and that's what's described in verse 26. He says, *"A new heart also will I give you,"* (now that new heart is the work of the Spirit) and then he says, *"and a new spirit I will put within you:"* (that's spiritual life, that's regeneration, that's the new birth) and he said, *"I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."* I will take away that hard heart that doesn't believe and resides in ignorance and is incensed against God and rebellion. And I'll give you a heart of flesh. Now the flesh there doesn't mean what flesh means sometimes. Sometimes flesh means sinful, the sinful flesh. Paul spoke of that in Romans seven, the warfare of the flesh and the spirit. And so he's

not saying I will give you a heart of sin. We've already got that. We're born with a heart of sin, that's the hard heart, the stony heart. He said I'll give you a heart of flesh, that's one that's pliable that one that will bow to God. And then he says in verse 27, he continues on with that. He says, *"I will put my spirit within you,"* that's the Holy Spirit I believe. In other words, he's going to give us spiritual life, that's what it says: a new spirit I will give you. And then he said I'll put my Spirit within you, that's the Holy Spirit who resides within each and every one of God's people. And he said, I'll *"cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."* **Ezekiel 36:27** Now that doesn't mean we will be sinlessly perfect in ourselves and keep the law. That means that we'll follow Christ. That's what his statutes and his judgments are all about. That means we will war with the flesh in our spirits and we'll seek to be like Christ not in order to be saved, but because we already are. And the cause of this is not man's will or man's determinations. He said I will *"cause you to walk."* That's the walk of fame. It's the obedience of faith and then he says in verse 28, *"And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."* **Ezekiel 36:28**

Now it's true that the nation Israel was going to go back to their homeland, the land that he gave to their fathers, but that was still temporary. But the land that spiritual Israel dwells in is the land of God's grace. It's the heavenly city Jerusalem, not an earthly city. And they dwell there in Christ. Well let me talk about the reality of the new heart. Now he says back here in verse 26, *"a new heart also will I give you."* First of all, what is the heart? When we speak of the heart, when the Bible speaks of the heart, what is he talking about? Well back here in Jeremiah 31:31, I want you to see this. Now Jeremiah prophesied years before Ezekiel. In fact

Jeremiah prophesied right at the time that Judah was taken into captivity, beginning to be taken into captivity, in Babylon. Ezekiel came later, he was in Babylon and he prophesied during that time. But Jeremiah prophesies of the coming of the new covenant, the coming of Christ. And here's what he says: he says, *"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah."* **Jeremiah 31:31** Incidentally by this time the house of Israel had been destroyed in the northern kingdom and Judah was about to go into captivity. So what's he talking about a union of Judah and Israel? He's talking about a union of spiritual Israel under Christ. And he says, *"Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt;"* In other words this new covenant is not going to be like that old covenant that he made at Sinai. He said, *"which my covenant they break,"* they broke that covenant. You see Israel under the old covenant is an example of man, all men, me, you, all of us by nature under a conditional covenant. If salvation were conditioned on me then I wouldn't have salvation because I know I would break the condition. I wouldn't keep it. You see the new covenant is the covenant that is conditioned on Christ and he never breaks that covenant. He keeps all the conditions. You see, that's salvation by grace. And he said, *"although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord."* **Jeremiah 31:32** God joined himself to Israel for 1500 years. But look at verse 33. Now we're talking about the new heart. He says, *"But this shall be the covenant that I will..."* Notice all the "I will"s here: "I will," "you shall." That's the way the covenant of grace works. He says, *"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts..."* Now the heart here is called the "inward parts." Sometimes in the New

Testament, for example, it's called the inner man. Sometimes it's called the mind. Sometimes it's called the Spirit too. And he says, "*I will write it in their hearts;*" (the law) "*and will be their God and they shall be my people.*" **Jeremiah 31:33** He says, "*And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them...*" All of them are going to be given a new heart. Not just some of them, all who make up spiritual Israel. And he said, "*I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.*" **Jeremiah 31:34** This new heart, this inward parts, what's he talking about here? What is the heart? The heart is made up of the very inner being of man. It's the mind, it's how we think, it's the affections, it's what we love, it's the will, it's the motivation. That's what the heart is. It's not this organ pumping blood in our bodies. Sometimes we point here for the heart because that's symbolic of the inner man. But this heart, he said in Ezekiel 36 "A new heart will I give you." What is this new heart? Well, it's a new mind. It's a new affection, it's a new knowledge, it's a new will, it's a new motive, it's a new everything. It's everything that the Holy Spirit does in bringing a sinner to know his sin. In that sense it's called a broken heart, a contrite heart, a repentant heart. The Bible says the sacrifices of God are a broken and contrite heart.

Over in the book of Romans chapter 2, Paul spoke of it as the circumcised heart and listen to what he says in **Romans 2:28**. He says, "*he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:*" This is not a fleshly thing. It's not a physical thing. You see, religion can reform a man. It can clean up the outside, but only the Holy Spirit in the power and life of Christ can give a sinner a new heart. And he says, "*But he*

is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter;" (not in the physical law) *"whose praise is not of men, but of God."*

Romans 2:29 The circumcised heart. Now in physical circumcision what was that? It was a physical sign of their connection with Abraham, physically. It was the cutting away of the filth of the flesh. Well in spiritual circumcision we could say that it is a *spiritual* side of a *spiritual* connection with Abraham and it represents the cutting away of the filth of the flesh in this sense: it brings the sinner, the Holy Spirit brings a sinner to see his sinfulness and his depravity and the utter impossibility of salvation, of righteousness, of forgiveness, of eternal life and glory based on my best efforts to keep the law. You see, when I see that I'm a sinner and deserve death - if God gave me what I deserved and what I've earned it would be eternal death and my works will not save me. When I see in repentance with a broken heart that I'm a sinner, I need mercy. That's, spiritually speaking, the cutting away of the filth of the flesh. Paul described in Philippians chapter 3. He said in verse seven, *"what things were gain to me,"* (those fleshly things that were gain to me and he lists all those things: his religion, his attempts to keep the law. He thought they recommended him unto God, those things of the flesh. He said, now *"I count"* (those fleshly things) *"but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."* **Philippians 3:7-8a** That's the cutting away of the filth of the flesh, that's repentance. That's what that is. He said, I *"do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law,"* That's flesh. That's got to be cut away. That's what drew out my heart at one time; that hard heart that was incensed against God. It was a self righteous heart. It was a legalistic heart. It was a heart of unbelief. It was a dark heart. It dwelt in ignorance and it dwelt in self

righteousness and that's cut away. That I may *"be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ,"* (even) *"the righteousness which is of God by faith:"* **Philippians 3:8b-9** That's the heart that he's talking about. Over in Romans chapter six, Paul speaks of the redemptive work of Christ on the cross as the ground of salvation, the ground of justification, the work of Christ for us. And he says as a result of that in verse 17 he says, *"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin,"* That's the hard heart, that's in unbelief. He says, *"but ye have obeyed from the heart..."* (that's the new heart) *"that form of doctrine"* (that form of teaching and preaching) *"which was delivered you."* **Romans 6:17** Literally, which you were delivered to. You see, that's what the holy spirit does in the new birth, when he gives a new heart. He brings a sinner under the preaching of the gospel of God's grace in Christ, the preaching of the cross. And whereas one time it was foolishness to the me (that's the old heart, that's the hard heart) now it's the wisdom and power of God. Now it's my life. That's the new heart. That's the new spirit.

And he says, *"Being then made (liberated) free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."* The servants of Christ and him crucified. **Romans 6:18** All of this is the power of God unto salvation. Paul spoke of his brethren according to the flesh, the Jews. And he said, *"...they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."* **Romans 10:2** That's the old heart. That's the ignorant heart. He said, *"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness,"* (there's the hard heart, there's the old evil heart). He said, *"...have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."* **Romans 10:3** You see, it's not the heart of flesh that's

pliable, that'll bend to God, they won't submit to the righteousness of God. What is the righteousness of God? He said in Romans 10:4, *"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."* **Romans 10:4**

There's the new heart. Bowing to Christ and his righteousness imputed as the only ground of my salvation and acceptance before God. And he says in Romans 10:10, *"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness."*

Romans 10:10a Now how do you believe unto righteousness? You believe in Christ. You rest in him. You hold him up as your only hope with the hymn writer,

"My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness; I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ, the solid rock, I stand all other ground is sinking sand."

That's the reality of the new heart. That's the new spirit and if the Holy Spirit indwells you and the Bible teaches it this way, if Christ dwells within you by his spirit and by his word, you see that's what you'll say. That's the new heart. That's the love of God shed abroad and written indelibly, cannot be erased, upon the heart of the inner man, the mind, the affections, and the will. Over in the book of **Hebrews 10:18** again he begins speaking of the redemptive work of Christ as the only ground of salvation. And he says, *"Now where remission (forgiveness) of these is, (where these sins are put away) there is no more offering for sin."* If Christ put my sins away, I don't need anything else. I just need him, he's my all in all. So he says in verse 19 as a result of that, *"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,"* (there's the new heart: the heart of faith, the heart of assurance. Where we have boldness, confidence, to enter into the holy presence of God, on what ground? The blood of Christ) *"By a new and living way, which he had consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to*

*say, his flesh;" (his humanity) **Hebrews 10:19-20** "And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart" (an honest heart, a convicted heart, a broken and contrite heart, a heart of faith in Christ, a heart of love: love to Christ and his truth) "in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," (a legal conscience). **Hebrews 10:21-22** You see, that's the reality of the new heart. I hope this message has helped you to understand these Scriptures. If you would like to receive a copy of this message, just listen to the announcer and he'll give you the information you need to order. The title of this message is "The Reality of the New Heart." And I hope you'll join us next week for another message from God's Word.*