

SERMON SERIES: *Starting Point*

SERMON TITLE: *New Heart Ver. 2*

SCRIPTURE: Ezekiel 36:25-27

DATE:10.3.21

BIG IDEA:

Only through the Gospel do we receive a new heart.

1. The Heart: What is it?

- The heart is the inner, invisible part of a person that does all of the person's thinking, feeling, judging about right and wrong, and decision making.
- Your life starts in your heart. It is the command center of your life and it is who you really are deep down in...at the most fundamental level. Beyond your physical characteristics, your heart is what makes you, you. [Proverbs 4:23](#)
- There is 1:1 correlation regarding the quality of the fruit a person's life produces and the quality of their heart. [Luke 6:45](#)

2. A New Heart: Why is it needed?

- The human heart is not just a little wicked but desperately wicked, so wicked in fact, that it can't even be fully known. [Jeremiah 17:9](#)
- The human heart is deceitful above all things. [Jeremiah 17:9](#) In other words, there is nothing in all of creation, barring Satan who is the Father of lies, that is more deceitful, more misleading, more concealing of and misrepresenting of the truth than the human heart.
- Modern culture promulgates the belief that our hearts are good and the only real evil in the world are those who stop us from following our heart and the only real sin in life is failing to follow your heart.
- The wickedness of the human heart is seen in the atrocities humans commit.
 - Our hearts are such that given the right conditions, they are capable of immense evil.
- The wickedness of the human heart is seen in the good humans know they should do but don't.

- We see the wickedness of the human heart in children.
- We see the wickedness of the human heart in its opposition to God.
- English theologian, John Owen, spoke about the deceitfulness of the human heart back in the 1600s states that the human heart:

....abounds in contradictions. Sin has laid such a hold on the faculties of the heart that it has corrupted all of them causing them to act in ways outside their created order and harmonious workings. The mind was designed to discover truth, the emotions and affections to set themselves on the beauty of the truth and the will to perform the truth out of love for God. But sin has entered and a beautiful creation has been seriously marred. We still have all these faculties but they seldom function according to their design. Sometimes the affections get the sovereignty, that is, they run off into sin and only later the mind recognizes the error. At other times the will refuses to love and obey the truth the mind discovers. There are also times in which the mind is too weak to investigate truth even though the emotions are crying out for it, the will is waiting for it, and the conscience is demanding it. The mind and the reason were in perfect subjection and subordination to God and his will....That being disturbed by sin, the rest of the faculties move cross and contrary to one another. The will chooseth not the good which the mind discovers; the affections delight not in that which the will chooseth; but all jar and interfere, cross and rebel against each other. This we have got by our falling from God.¹

3. A New Heart: How do we get it?

- Because the human heart is so deceitful and wicked and is so quick to justify and commend it's actions, humans, left to their own resources, will not think that they need a new heart.
- For those who think they need a touch up job of the heart, many turn to either the self improvement industry or to religion.
 - The self help model requires you to use your deceitful and desperately wicked heart to direct the growth process which is a recipe for failure.
 - Religion tells a person that if they do certain things in a certain way they'll experience change and live a good life.
 - Religion either leads to deflation if you can't measure up to the advice or ego inflation if you think you are having some success.

¹ <https://bible.org/seriespage/3-seat-sin-heart>

- Christianity is the answer...for it provides a solution that no other religion or self help guru provides.
 - The answer that Christianity provides is this:
 - God can, as Ezekiel 36:26 states, take out your stony, stubborn heart, give you a tender responsive heart, and put a new Spirit in your heart that will allow you to know God intimately and follow God's life giving ways.
 - Why can God perform heart surgery on us?
 - Because of what Christ has done.
 - Christ died for all the sin that your deceitful heart committed so that you could be forgiven, reconciled to God, adopted into his family, and be the recipient of a new heart that is alive to God in which Christ by the Holy Spirit dwells and empowers change.
 - With Christ living inside of us by his Spirit, he begins the heart surgery process that lasts for a lifetime. And he leaves no part of our heart untouched. God cleanses our heart's...
 - Intellectual activity
 - Emotional activity.
 - Moral activity.
 - Volitional activity.
 - We have a role in the continued growth of our new heart.
 - Even with a new heart and God living in us by his Spirit, we are still capable of sinning. And so we must put forth effort into setting our mind on Christ and the Gospel through his Word. We must put forth effort into developing new habits of righteousness. We must put effort in putting off the old and putting on the new not to earn salvation but to work out the salvation we have already been given. We will have to put on new patterns of thinking and behaving that at first we will be very clumsy at. We will have to think about it and struggle with it. The good news is that the patterns of thinking and feeling of a new heart can actually become second nature to us. Why? Because God's Spirit is mysteriously working in us for it to be so. We are no longer alone. In fact, we'll actually come to find that God is doing the heavy

lifting fueling our effort and ensuring that it is fruitful, for the good work God has started in us, he will bring to completion.

4. A New Heart: Why should you want it?

- It allows you to love God with all of your heart, mind, soul, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what ways have you experienced the deceitfulness of your own heart? In what ways have you experienced its wickedness?
2. What are the primary ways in which people are being deceived by their wicked hearts today?
3. In what cultural channels do you find the message that our hearts are good and that we should follow them most prevalent? Church, business, education, the social sector (health care, non-profits), arts & entertainment, government or media?
4. Why can't self help strategies and religion change the heart to function as God designed it to?
5. How does a person receive a new heart from God?
6. What is the difference between a heart of stone and a heart of flesh?
7. How does a person partner with God to grow their new heart?
8. What is God saying to you and what are you going to do about it?