

Sunday Celebration (January 25, 2009)
"Introducing the New Covenant"

"Walking in Newness of Life" (Pt. 1)

INTRO ... Symptoms of a Disorder

- *Is your Spiritual Life filled with Undiagnosed Symptoms?*

... Is there a sense that your Walk Just Isn't Working Right?

Dr's Visit Form:

- Inability to Grow & Change?
- Stagnancy?
- Diminished Passion/zeal?
- Reduced Radicalness?
- Boredom?
- Increased appetite for Temporary/fleshly pleasures?
- Lethargy in the Fruit of the Spirit? (Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Self-control, etc.)

... *What Are You Doing to Try to Fix Your Condition?*

Ez 36:16-27 ... God's Radical Cure

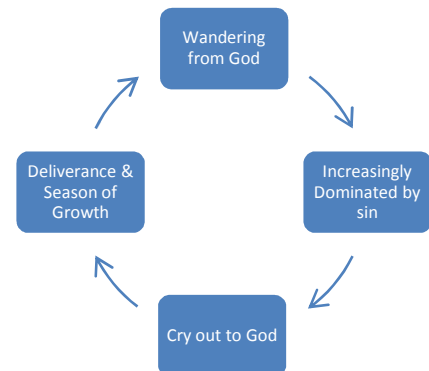
God's People and their History of Failure ... v. 16-21

● **The Historical Precedent:** The People from Sinai (1450 BC) to this day in Ezekiel (~600BC)

Ex 24:8 "Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient."

Ex 32:1-8 ... (Less than 40 days later)

The plot: (1) the Israelites do what is evil in the sight of God; (2) God allows the nation to be conquered and oppressed by a neighboring nation; (3) the people cry to God; and (4) God sends a judge to deliver them. Then the cycle repeats itself. (ESV Study Bible introduction to Judges, p. 437)



Joshua, Judges, 1&2Kings/1&2Chronicles ... Observing the Familiar Pattern of Failure

Does That Pattern Describe Your Christian Walk?

● **The Anatomy of Turning Away...**The Stuff Out There IS ATTRACTIVE to

What's In Here

- **God's Warnings & Our Awareness...** Deut 6:4-7, 10-14
- **"People do what they want to do"...** So WHAT HAPPENED to ISRAEL?
...People turn aside because they WANT something else MORE than they want God.
- **The Epicenter of Turning Away is IN THE HEART**
Gen 6:5-6 The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
Matt 15:8-19
James 1:13-15 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.
14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.
James 4:1-2 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.

God Vindicates His Great, Holy Name

● **By Making a New Covenant**

The Language of Ezekiel is the Language of the New Covenant

Jer 31:31-34

Heb 8:6-8...13 (a new covenant based on BETTER Promises)

v. 12 ... "I will remember their sins no more"

Ez 36:25 "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols."

1Jn 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness"

v. 7 ... The "Fault" of the First Covenant

Rom 8:1-3 "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do."

- The Fault in the Old Covenant was the Sinfulness of Man—our INABILITY

... For the New Covenant to Work, something in US is going to have to change!

"The problem with the Mosaic Covenant was that it was written on tablets of stone (Ex. 31:18). If anything was written on the hearts of God's people, it was only their sin: "Judah's sin is engraved with an iron tool, inscribed with a flint point, on the tablets of their hearts." (Jer 17:1). With the New Covenant, however, God solved the problem of the sinful heart by giving his children new hearts and new minds. According to Calvin, the New Covenant 'penetrates into the heart and reforms all the inward faculties, so that obedience is rendered to the righteousness of God.'-- Philip Ryken, "Jeremiah and Lamentations", p. 469

🕒 By Making a New People

NOTE: It's Not Enough that the "PAPERWORK HAS CHANGED" ... If I'm the same person with a Covenant that's Different, then I'm destined to the SAME HISTORICAL PRECEDENT OF FAILURE!!

Ez 36:26-27

○ **A New Heart**

*But forgiveness and cleansing is not enough. I need to be new. I need to be transformed. I need life. I need a new way of seeing and thinking and valuing. That's why Ezekiel speaks of a new heart and a new spirit ...Here's the way I understand those verses: To be sure, the heart of **stone** means the dead heart that was unfeeling and unresponsive to spiritual reality—the heart you had before the new birth could feel. It could respond with passion and desire to lots of things. But it was a stone toward the spiritual truth and beauty of Jesus Christ and the glory of God and the path of holiness. That is what has to change if we are to see the kingdom of God. So in the new birth, God takes out the heart of stone and puts in a heart of flesh. The word **flesh** doesn't mean "merely human" like it does in John 3:6. It means soft and living and responsive and feeling, instead of being a lifeless stone. In the new birth, our dead, stony boredom with Christ is replaced by a heart that feels (spiritually senses) the worth of Jesus.*

John Piper

○ **A New Spirit**

"when Ezekiel says in verses 26 and 27, "a new spirit I will put within you. . . . And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes," I think he means that in the new birth, God puts a living, supernatural, spiritual life in our heart, and that new life—that new spirit—is the working of the Holy Spirit himself giving shape and character to our new heart." John Piper

New Creation ... 2Cor 5:14-17 ... New Creation

New Motivation ... New Inward Workings and Impulses

Gal 4:6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

Rom 5:5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Rom 8:15-16 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

Phil 2:13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Heb 13:20, 21 "Now may the God of peace ... equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight

"The new birth is the coming into our life of the Holy Spirit to create a whole new array of desires and loves and yearnings and longings. And when these desires are stronger than the opposing desires of the flesh, then we are "walking by the Spirit." For we always act according to our strongest desires. Therefore, "walking by the Spirit" is something the Holy Spirit enables us to do by producing in us strong desires that accord with God's will. This is what God said he would do in [Ezekiel 36:26, 27](#) 'A new heart I will give you and a new spirit I will put within you . . . I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes.' Thus when we "walk by the Spirit," we experience the fulfillment of this prophecy. The Holy Spirit produces in us desires for God's way that are stronger than our fleshly desires, and thus he causes us to walk in God's statutes." John Piper

Ez 36 meets Man's Historical Precedence with God's Sovereign Determination to Vindicate His Holy Name THROUGH and IN US!!