

Oaks-West Church of Christ

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June 28, 2020

Create a Clean Heart

by George Slover

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:13) "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." (Psalms 51:10)

The verse above contains two of 18 separate petitions found in this Psalm. David is appealing to a God of mercy, loving kindness, and righteousness to forgive him. He is filled with sorrow over the sin he has committed. David, motivated by this deep regret, is not only asking for reconciliation, but for a change of heart.

In this petition "heart" or "spirit" are used interchangeably. The Bible reveals that man is a dual being of body and soul. For there to be a change on the outside, there must be

a change on the inside. "Heart" and "spirit" refer to the inward essence of man. David is requesting a change of emotion, will, and desire.

"Create" ("bara" is the Hebrew) is the same word found in Genesis 1:1: in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The word "bara" means to create something out of nothing. David is asking for a heart transplant. He wants a new one. He is tired of the old emotions and desires. "Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel 18:31)

The same the life-giving Spirit who created the world is able to give the penitent a new heart. However, God does not deal with human robots. He gives them a choice.

Create a Clean Heart ...

Through his word (1 Peter 1:22; James 1:18; John 6:63) he beseeches, warns, and instructs. When the word is received God uses his creative power to renew the heart. When God's word has accomplished its mission it provides a life of sacrifice and service acceptable to God. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1)

Dear reader, God wants to give you a new heart. That's what David asked for. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Cleaving to Christ

By George Slover

"When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord." (Acts 11:23,24)

Early Christians, forced to leave Jerusalem because of persecution, came preaching the Lord Jesus in Antioch. Some of these exiles were even sharing Christ with the Gentiles. When this good news came to Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas to confirm these new souls.

Barnabas was just the one qualified for the

job, for he was a good man. The quality of such a teacher would include one of conviction. He was a firm and steadfast believer. Though there is some dispute here, some of the manuscripts suggest Gentiles were among the new converts. This presented a challenge to Jewish Christians. (Acts 10,11) Barnabas was the kind of individual that would be perfect for the delicate job of bridging the gap between Jews and Gentiles, and to encourage these new disciples.

Some six to seven years had passed since the death of Stephen. However, the persecution at Jerusalem caused the message of God to spread to other regions. When Barnabas arrived at Antioch, and mingles with the disciples, he witnesses the fruit of God's grace.

Prior to the arrival of Barnabas, followers of Christ had come from Jerusalem to Antioch preaching the Lord Jesus. Those who received the message "turned to the Lord". Now, one more step is necessary. Having received Christ, they must resolve to cling to him.

Even in such an atmosphere of gladness, Barnabas knew of the temptation to turn back to the world. This is a world that is hostile to the cause of Christ. Apathy coupled with persecution could entice these Christians to fall away. They must cleave to the Lord.

Have you, dear reader, basked in God's grace? Have you received the blessings of Christ? If so, hang on to Christ. One day he will give you eternal blessings.

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.



Upcoming Ladies' Bible Classes - cancelled until further notice.

Services for June & July - For the months of June and July, we have decided to recombine the services. We will meet for **one** service at 10:45 a.m. There will **not** be a Bible class or evening service, and there still will **not** be a Wednesday evening service. We will re-evaluate toward the end of July. Thank you for your support and encouragement as we make these difficult decisions! --DT for the elders

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.



Please remember the following individuals in your daily prayers:

June Owens
Jack Wilson
Jerry & Nancy Richardson
Karen Hallmark
Shirley Perkins' brother, Leon
Morgan O'Hair
Dinah Williams
Joy Ulrich
Anne Stanberry
Kevin Barth
Lisa Trammel

And continue to pray for each other

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

We have many that face challenges on a daily basis and need your prayers as well.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

