

# The New Heart

## The Narrow Road – part 2

January 12, 2025

**METAPHOR: the beach: alive, new, freshness, vibrant, beauty.**

### **DAY 1: The NEWNESS of the Christian life**

*2 Corinthians 5:17* *It anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. The old is gone, the new has come.*

- Honeymoon Christianity

1. When we become a new Christian, everything is new, fresh, alive.

2. Becoming a Christian is often like the joy of getting married and the honeymoon. A honeymoon has no responsibilities, no demands, no time away from each other, eating out every meal, no dishes and kitchen to clean, no laundry, no bills to pay, no in-laws.

3. When we first moved to southern California, with a four-year old and a two-year old, it seemed like we were at the beach, a lot. Park at Corona del Mar, lug down half of our known stuff across the Serengeti of sand and plop down at the ocean's edge. It was glorious. Temperature? 75, a nice breeze coming off the Pacific, bright sunshine, boogie boards, and sandcastles. The kids were splashing in the water, frolicking up and down the beach, a gorgeous southern California afternoon.

4. Later, we had a beautiful sunset, the sun seemingly "sliding down" the horizon behind the ocean, the array of colors in the sky—yellow, amber, orange, burnt orange, red, purple, ending in midnight blue. For dinner we cooked hot dogs over an open fire, followed by melting marshmallows for S'mores. It sure beat the 100-degree weather we left in Texas just a few weeks prior!

5. We experienced the honeymoon of southern California. One word described us: NEWNESS, the kind of newness of a child. Everything seemed fresh, new, vibrant, alive, possibilities.

*Matthew 18:3* *Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*

6. If you've become a Christian, what do you remember about the beginnings of your Christian life?

## DAY 2: A “NEW creation”

2 Corinthians 5:17 *It anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. The old is gone, the new has come.*

1. When you **first** became a Christian what did you think Paul meant by us becoming “a new creation?”

2. Perhaps, years later, you’re understanding of the “new creation” has deepened. How would you **now** describe what Paul means by us becoming “a new creation?”

- **A new heart**

Ezekiel 36:26 *“Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will ... and give you a heart of flesh.*

3. What does Ezekiel mean by a new heart?

4. What does Ezekiel mean by a new spirit?

5. What does Ezekiel mean by a heart of flesh? This is one characteristic and illustration of the new heart.

6. The heart is like the cockpit of who we are as a person. The heart is our mind, our volition, rationality, will, orientation, values, the basis of our character, and our real purposes.

Ezekiel 36:27 *“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.*

7. Ezekiel adds some of the ways the new heart will manifest itself. How does what Ezekiel says in this verse indicate some of the things that are different in the “new heart?”

8. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

### **DAY 3: Components of the new heart—part 1**

*2 Cor. 5:17* *It anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. The old is gone, the new has come.*

*Ezekiel 36:26* *“Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you...*

#### **1. Component #1: a new spirit**

*1 Cor. 3:16* *Do you not know that you are God’s temple, and that God’s Spirit lives in you?*

The Holy Spirit teaches us God’s words and ways, and reminds us what we should do, and provides a power to overcome fallen nature.

→What strikes you about this?

#### **2. Component #2: a new purity**

*Jeremiah 33:8* *I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me. <sup>9</sup> Then this city will bring me renown, joy, praise and honor before all nations on earth...*

*Isaiah 1:18* *Come now, let us settle the matter;” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.*

*1 John 1:9* *If we confess our sins He is faithful to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

→What strikes you about this?

#### **3. Component #3: A new power...**

*Ezekiel 36:27* *“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.*

*Isaiah 42:6* *I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, <sup>7</sup> to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.*

We are no longer chained to sin. We have a free choice not to sin.

→What strikes you about this?

#### **Component #4: A new identity (God’s child; God’s family; wanted),**

*Galatians 4:4* *But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. <sup>e</sup>*

*<sup>6</sup> Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” <sup>7</sup> So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.*

→What strikes you about this?

This list will be continued, tomorrow...

## **DAY 4: Components of the new heart—part 2**

...continued from yesterday...

### **5. Component #5: A new disposition; new inclinations**

To please the Lord and honor the Lord now takes priority over pleasing ourselves

*Colossians 1:9 We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, <sup>10</sup> so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God. <sup>11</sup> being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, <sup>12</sup> and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. <sup>13</sup> For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

→ What strikes you about new inclinations?

### **6. Component #6: New purposes**

*Phil 3:7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. <sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.*

*2 Cor. 5:14 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. <sup>15</sup> And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*

→ What strikes you about new purposes?

### **7. Component #7: A new life in you and through you**

*John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all man.*

New life, the life of Jesus, has been implanted in every believer!

*John 10:10 ...I came that they may have life, life abundantly.*

The life of Jesus is meant to give life to us, and, where we are dispensers of His life to others!

→ What strikes you about new life?

## DAY 5: Dangers to watch out for

1. Like any and every honeymoon marriage, eventually, the *idealism* of the new marriage is met with the *realism* of any marriage. (the same is true with a new boss, a new job, a new roommate, a new sibling, new in-laws, etc.).

2. As new Christians (and old Christians) we are not immediately transported to heaven out of this fallen world and out of components of our sin nature following our conversion to Christ. That will only come in heaven.

3. We find ourselves faced with difficult realities which we are called to confront and reflect Christ through those realities.

- **Danger #1: “The Christian life will be easy”**

*John 16:33 “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

Trouble in this life is normative.

In a difficult world, our purpose is to please Him in how we live!

*2 Corinthians 5:6 Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7 For we live by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup> We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup> So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.*

- **Danger #2: Being driven by our feelings and pleasant circumstances**

*2 Corinthians 5:7 for we walk by faith, not by sight.*

a. While we enjoy sometimes “feeling alive,” ***feeling*** alive is **not** normative.

b. “Feeling” joyful is **not** normative. God will teach us a different (and deeper) kind of joy than just the feelings of joy.

- **Danger #3: My struggle with sin is due to a lack of knowledge**

*Romans 7:24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? <sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

a. Our sin nature remains with us, even with a new heart!!!

b. God’s redemptive work, in this world, is the slow, methodical work of redeeming our heart.

4. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

## **BONUS”**

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION???

“I met the enemy,” Pogo said. “It is I.”

It seems I'm two people, both the good and bad “I.”

The good I want to do? I slough off guiltily.

The bad I shouldn't do? “Justified,” willfully!

My needs, my “self,” my plan, to these, stiff-necked, I cling.

Easily “offended,” my feelings act like king.

“Don't tell me what to do!” “Don't blame me!” Hardheaded.

‘I don't need any help!’ Stubbornly bullheaded.

I've tried loftier goals, New Year's resolutions,

Accountability, workshops and “solutions.”

But I can't change my heart! Just what can penetrate?

A new heart's what I need! And that God can create!

A new heart's purity, washed in Christ's precious blood.

A new identity, son of the King's life blood.

A new disposition, new desires, a new drive.

A new power inside, a new life come alive!

--Seth