

Cleansed, Transformed, Sealed

by Raymond Golsworthy

The sermon presents the Christian Gospel as a promise of divine healing, renewal, and indwelling, where God cleanses, transforms, and seals us through the blood of Jesus and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:33, Ezekiel 36:25-27, Luke 18:13, Romans 3:19, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 John 1:7

Topics: "Spiritual Renewal", "Holy Transformation"

Description

Raymond Golsworthy preaches on the beautiful outline of the Christian Gospel found in Ezekiel 36:25-27, where God promises divine healing, renewal, and indwelling to those who seek Him. The passage highlights the need for recognizing our sinfulness, the transformation that occurs through genuine conversion, and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit in believers' lives. It emphasizes the profound change of character and behavior that comes from surrendering to God and allowing Him to work within us, ultimately leading to a new heart, a new spirit, and a life guided by God's statutes.

Transcript

"I will sprinkle clean water upon you." Ezekiel 36:25

"A new heart also I will give you." Ezekiel 36:26

"And I will put My Spirit within you." Ezekiel 36:27

In these three consecutive verses from the Old Testament we have a beautiful outline of the Christian Gospel. Although written nearly 600 years before Christ, they clearly portray, and sum up the message which, centuries later, the Apostles of Christ carried out to the nations. First we notice there is...

A promise of divine healing

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean" (verse 25). This, of course, is our first need when we begin to approach a thrice-holy God. Like the leper of old, we can only cry out, "Unclean, unclean!". But this is where it all begins, an awful sense of our own personal sin and defilement, and a cry to God for mercy. (See Luke 18:13)

A very important Bible truth needs, perhaps to be mentioned here. It is not always recognized that the Ten Commandments were designed, first and foremost, to bring about this result. They were given to show us our defiled condition and to provoke us to seek God's answer, which is in "the redemption that is in Christ

Jesus" (See Rom. 3:19,20; 5:20; Gal.3:24; Eph.1:7). Anyone who has squarely faced up to those commandments will surely plead 'guilty' on each count. But the marvel is that God has already "opened up a fountain for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech.13:1), and the ultimate truth is that "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Thank God, then, for "this promise of cleansing", all in the Christian Gospel, and nowhere else. "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." Praise God for that. Then, there follows...

A promise of divine renewal

God Himself declares, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you : and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh" (verse 26). Here is a divine renewal indeed, better called, perhaps, 'divine transformation. This refers to that profound change of character and behaviour which follows every true and genuine conversion. And, as with the cleansing, so with this, God is the One who does it! The Bible says: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). That, we would say, is the glorious truth as God sees it, but it soon begins to be realised, and enjoyed, by the individual himself. We begin to see that the death of Christ was not only His death, but our death also. And the resurrection, too, was not only His, but ours as well, for we died and rose in Him! Thus, in our own actual experience, we find an 'old way of living' (and an old source of living) progressively 'dying out', and something blessedly new coming in to replace it. All this is the Lord's doing, as He patiently applies the cross to our surrendered hearts. And it is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes.

It is of note that our text particularly stresses that the change will mainly be seen in the area of our own natural hardness (Ezek. 36:27). God takes away "the stony heart" and gives us "an heart of flesh"; in other words, a new 'tenderness' begins to appear in our behaviour. How welcome this should be to all of us. The natural man is so hard! We are so critical of others, and we are so fixed and final in our often-dubious 'opinions'. How we should praise God when we find His own gentleness and meekness beginning to replace all that, and being evident to others as they observe our behaviour! This, and much more, is included in the promise: "A new heart also will I give you". Finally, in our passage, there is...

A promise of divine indwelling

"I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes" (verse 27).

This, surely, is the crowning marvel of all! And, again, it is God who does it. He causes the Blessed Holy Spirit to enter into the inmost spirit of those who come to Christ for cleansing. And thus our actual physical bodies become what Paul describes as "temples of the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 6:19). It all seems too wonderful to be true, but the whole Bible teaches it, and thousands upon thousands testify that it does happen when sinners come to Christ. Our consciousness is that "something entirely new" has entered into us, but the simple fact is that God Himself has come in, and 'sealed us' as His own property, His own "peculiar treasure" (Eph. 1:13; Ex. 19:5; 1 Peter 2:9). As we said, few of us realise what has happened, or understand it, at first, but that truly is what has taken place; our Almighty Maker has entered into us, making us His 'home'!

But we should notice, too, the stated purpose for which God enters into us. The promise reads, "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes" (verse 27). This again is untold mercy; God entering in to be our Enablement for walking in His ways, and carrying out His holy will. We might add that it is in this way that God's law becomes "written in our hearts" (Jer. 31:33). God Himself is there, bringing

into us His own desires, and, from within, being our ever-present enablement to fulfill them! What a promise, indeed; "I will put My Spirit within you".

Looking back over our three verses, we can only exclaim, "What a glorious gospel this is for people like ourselves!" God's own "good news", clearly intimated in the Old Testament, and then fully revealed in the New! We ask you, reader: "Have you experienced this full salvation? Have you felt your need of cleansing? Is your character being changed? Has your body become a temple of the Holy Spirit?"

We assure you, this complete Gospel is for you. Do not delay. Come to Christ now. He will cleanse you; He will renew you; and He will come and indwell you with His Spirit. All praise to His wonderful Name!

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