

Heart Transplant

Scripture Reading — Ezekiel 36:22-28

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove ... your heart of stone." Ezekiel 36:26 —

"I guess I was born that way--that's just the way I am." Some people say things like this to claim that any tendency is okay as long as you were born with it. They figure you can't help the way God made you.

If you are stubborn or hot-tempered, you might claim that's just a family trait. If you grew up having homosexual desires, you might say that means God wants you to act on your impulses.

Such thinking ignores a basic teaching of the Bible. There is more to each human being than divinely created innocence. We are created in God's image with many marvelous capabilities, but we have also been born with a fallen, sinful nature. Sin twists our identity and personality from our very first moments of life. The fact that some of my desires and habits go back as far as I can remember does not make them right. I was born with a stone-cold heart, and my natural tendency is to center on what I want rather than on what God wants.

I can't change the way I am. But God can change me. God's Spirit has given me a heart transplant. I was born sinful, but through God's work I have been born again. I have a new life and a new identity in Jesus Christ. Now I don't need to make excuses for the way I was born. Instead I must live like someone who has been born again.

Prayer

Lord, I have never been innocent. Help me to stop making excuses. I leave my hard heart at the foot of your cross, and I rejoice in the new heart you have given me. Amen.

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