

The Backsliding Heart

March 19, 2017

Ezekiel 16:1-6 NASB

1 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

2 "Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations

3 and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem, "Your origin and your birth are from the land of the Canaanite, your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.

4 **"As for your birth, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water for cleansing; you were not rubbed with salt or even wrapped in cloths."**

5 **"No eye looked with pity on you to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you. Rather you were thrown out into the open field, for you were abhorred on the day you were born."**

6 **"When I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you while you were in your blood, 'Live!' Yes, I said to you while you were in your blood, 'Live!'"**

- *Being thrown into an open field is to be nothing more than worthless garbage or trash to be discarded, having no value.*
- *God loved us when we were worthless in our own sin, filth and blood, of no use, gain or service, possessing nothing good.*
- *God loved us unconditionally, not for any merit of our own nor any benefit to Himself, but simply because of Who He is and for who we are.*
- *God's love for us never has been and never will be contingent upon our performance or perceived value.*

Romans 5:6-8 NASB

6 For while we were still helpless (*asthenēs* - impotent, without strength, feeble), at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Ephesians 2:8-9 NASB

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ezekiel 16:7-12 NASB

7 "I made you numerous like plants of the field. Then you grew up, became tall and reached the age for fine ornaments; your breasts were formed and your hair had grown. Yet you were naked and bare."

8 "Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine," declares the Lord GOD.

9 "Then I bathed you with water, washed off your blood from you and anointed you with oil."

10 "I also clothed you with embroidered cloth and put sandals of porpoise skin on your feet; and I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk."

11 "I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands and a necklace around your neck."

12 "I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head."

- *Through every season of life and every mile of the journey God is actively and intimately involved in every detail and circumstance guiding our path, always nurturing and always providing.*

Psalm 37:23-24 NASB

23 The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way.

24 When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, Because the LORD is the One who holds his hand.

- *There was nothing this woman could take credit for or claim as her own.*
- *All that she had become and possessed was because of the unconditional goodness and grace of God.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 NASB

17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

Ephesians 2:10 NASB

10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

John 15:5 NASB

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

Hebrews 13:20-21 NASB

20 Now the God of peace...

21 equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Ezekiel 16:13 NASB

13 "Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey and oil; so you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty."

Our lives are to be marked, permanently stamped, with a supernatural excellence, which is both notably and obviously beyond all and anything we could produce on our own by human effort.

Daniel 1:19-20 NASB

19 The king talked with them, and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's personal service.

20 As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm.

2 Corinthians 4:7 KJV

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency (hyperbolē - a throwing beyond, beyond all measure, exceeding, excellence, superiority) of the power may be of God, and not of us.

1 Peter 2:9 NASB

9 *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

Ezekiel 16:14- NASB

14 **"Then your fame went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of My splendor which I bestowed on you,"** declares the Lord GOD.

15 **"But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer-by who might be willing."**

One of the worst (if not the worst) forms of spiritual suicide is to take credit for God's work in your life and claim it as your own, as if you were the origin.

Deuteronomy 8:11-14 NASB

11 *"Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today;*

12 *otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them,*

13 *and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies,*

14 *then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*

Deuteronomy 8:16-18 NASB

16 *"In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end.*

17 *"Otherwise, you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.'*

18 *"But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.*

Acts 12:21-23 NASB

21 *On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and began delivering an address to them.*

22 *The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!"*

23 *And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.*

Ezekiel 16:16-21 NASB

16 "You took some of your clothes, made for yourself high places of various colors and played the harlot on them, which should never come about nor happen."

17 **"You also took your beautiful jewels made of My gold and of My silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself male images that you might play the harlot with them."**

18 "Then you took your embroidered cloth and covered them, and offered My oil and My incense before them."

19 **"Also My bread which I gave you, fine flour, oil and honey with which I fed you, you would offer before them for a soothing aroma; so it happened,"** declares the Lord GOD.

20 **"Moreover, you took your sons and daughters whom you had borne to Me and sacrificed them to idols to be devoured. Were your harlotries so small a matter?**

21 **"You slaughtered My children and offered them up to idols by causing them to pass through the fire."**

This woman (Jerusalem) took what was given to her by God, to be used to bring God all the glory, and she consumed God's gifts on her own lusts to bring the glory to herself.

She loved the gifts and benefits more than she loved the Giver (if she even had any love for the Giver).

By pursuing the gifts and the benefits, the love for the Giver dies.

Professed Christians serve God today, not because they love Him, but because:

- *They want to avoid the consequences of sin, especially Hell.*
- *They want the benefits of a morally clean lifestyle.*
- *They want to break self-destructive habits and addictions.*
- *The Church is a stage and venue where they can exalt themselves before others.*
- *People in the Church treat them nicer than the world. Churches are safer.*
- *Churches are good places to find friends and spouses.*

2 Timothy 3:1-5 NASB

1 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

Ezekiel 16:22 NASB

22 **"Besides all your abominations and harlotries you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare and squirming in your blood."**

Ingratitude clearly and loudly identifies the heart that has forgotten God by assuming that the good in his life is of his own design, power or piety.

Deuteronomy 8:2 NASB

2 "You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not."

Luke 17:15-18 NASB

15 Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice,

16 and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine--where are they?

18 "Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?"

Ezekiel 16:27-30 NASB

27 "Behold now, I have stretched out My hand against you and diminished your rations. And I delivered you up to the desire of those who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, who are ashamed of your lewd conduct.

28 **"Moreover, you played the harlot with the Assyrians because you were not satisfied; you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied."**

29 **"You also multiplied your harlotry with the land of merchants, Chaldea, yet even with this you were not satisfied."**

30 **"How languishing (*amal - exhausted, weak, feeble, to droop*) is your heart," declares the Lord GOD, "while you do all these things, the actions of a bold-faced harlot."**

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 NASB

10 All that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor.

11 Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.

"There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God the Creator, made known through Jesus Christ." Blaise Pascal (19 June 1623 – 19 August 1662), a famous French mathematician and philosopher

Ezekiel 16:32-34 NASB

32 **"You adulterous wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband!"**

33 **"Men give gifts to all harlots, but you give your gifts to all your lovers to bribe them to come to you from every direction for your harlotries."**

34 "Thus you are different from those women in your harlotries, in that no one plays the harlot as you do, because you give money and no money is given you; thus you are different."

Matthew 22:37-38 NASB

37 And He [Jesus] said to him, **"YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND."**

38 **"This is the great and foremost commandment."**

Revelation 2:1-5 NASB

1 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:

2 **'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false;**

3 **and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary.**

4 **'But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.**

5 **'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place--unless you repent.'**

Psalms 65:4 NASB

4 **How blessed is the one whom You choose and bring near to You To dwell in Your courts. We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Your holy temple.**

Psalm 16:11 NASB

11 You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Philippians 4:11-13 NASB

11 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.