



5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Gen 6:5)

The preacher of Ecclesiastes correctly observed that there is nothing new under the sun. *"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.* (Eccl 1:9-11) The Word of God bears the same nature as its Author - it is therefore timeless being both historic, contemporary, and eternal in meaning and application. The heart of man has not grown more naturally righteous since God uttered those words back in Genesis 6:5. In fact, we have grown more ingenious in our wicked ways.

There are fundamentally only two kinds of the heart man - the natural heart that thrives on darkness; and the new heart that has come under the sovereignty of Almighty God. *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.* (Ezek 36:26) We will examine these two very different hearts in today's devotion, and ask the question: "Which kind of heart do you have?"

THE NATURAL HEART:

1) The Heart is Naturally Wicked:

As we saw in Genesis 6:5, the natural heart of man is bent on evil continually. Like the jungle lion that tears at its prey without mercy, it is the nature of the heart of man, inherited from our ancient father, Adam, to always devise and enact wickedness. There is nothing that a man need do to deserve hell. That is the place to which he is going without a super-natural rebirth of the heart in God.

2) The Heart is a Gatherer of Evil.

If the evil of its nature is not enough, it goes about to gather more wickedness to itself. *"he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it."* Psalms 41:6 (KJV) His mental and conscious faculties are constantly devoted to improvising more evil: *"every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."*

3) The Natural Heart is of Little Worth:

"the heart of the wicked is little worth." Prov 10:20 (KJV) It is worth even less than a little since a heart that remains apart from God will suffer an eternity of misery.

4) The Natural Heart is Perverse:

How well we know this truth when we witness our own beloved nation, for the first time in human history, dignifying homosexual marriage by its laws. "*A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised.*" Prov 12:8 (KJV) Despised not only in the annals of history, but despised by himself, too, America is today engrossed in a great self-hate. The desires of the nation have become suicidal, and that is what our national policies lead to today. We stagger as drunken men!

5) The Natural Heart is Proud:

Pride is the greatest of all sins for it is the parent of all others. Of the seven sins that the Lord hates, pride comes FIRST! "*These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*" (Prov 6:16-19) What was the great sin of Lucifer that led to his being cast down from Heaven? "*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.*" (Isaiah 14:12-15)

6) The Natural Heart is willingly Deceived:

"*a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?*" (Isaiah 44:20) Many nominal Christians run from one name-it-and-claim-it church to another with itching ears to hear a new thing; but that new thing is not a new thing at all - it is merely the same old lies and errors that God warned us about. "*Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*" (1 John 2:18) Our Church (AOC) is particularly acquainted with the charlatans who have often claimed allegiance to God and our Church, and then tried to still away our treasure. These are the antichrists made reference to above and here: "*They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*" (1 John 2:19)

7) The Natural Heart not only is Deceived, but Deceitful:

"*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*" (Jer 17:9) Not only does the natural heart deceive others, but it deceives also itself. "*And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*" (2 Thess 2:8-12) There is a growing pleasure in America even in the unrighteousness of others!

THE NEW HEART:

1) The New Heart converted to Christ is, first of all, a BROKEN HEART!

It was broken once by its own shame ere coming to Christ, but continues to be broken by the wickedness in the world about it. "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*" (Psalm 51:17) If we deposit our treasures in Heaven, our hearts will also attend those treasures. "*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*" (Matt 6:21)

2) The New Heart is a Clean Heart:

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalm 51:10)

We can, in no wise, clean our own hearts of the filth that has gained mastery therein; but the Holy Ghost can clean house and vanquish the evil that was there. That right spirit that is renewed in us is the Holy Spirit that comes to dwell in our hearts.

3) The New Heart is a New Creation!

The natural heart is already dead (as dead as a door nail), and can do nothing to renew itself - it is a work of the Grace of God that imparts life.. *"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."* (Ezek 36:26) Instead of a condemnation under the Law written on Tables of Stone, God's Law is written in the tender flesh of the New Heart in the ink of Love.

4) The New Heart is filled with the Love of God:

"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:5) Reminder lest you may begin to think that you have earned that love that is shed abroad in your heart - a gift cannot be EARNED! It is placed in our hearts free gratis by the Holy Ghost.

5) The New Heart is a Heart of Abundant Peace:

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." (Col 3:15) Walking into many churches today, we might wonder at the lack of the rule of peace. But if we are One in Christ, we will be One with one another, and peace will rule in our churches without division.

6) God Places a Melody in the New Heart:

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col 3:16) By the way, there are no rock or heavy metal tunes that can identify as a melody. According to the Oxford Dictionary, a melody is defined as "a sequence of single notes that is musically satisfying." Most modern music does not have a "sequence of single notes that is musically satisfying." They are comprised of a series of multiple, contrasting notes that are both deafening and sensuous. Unholy desires are aroused by unholy musical scores.

7) The New Heart is the Temple of God:

God will not live in the natural heart because it is laden with sin, and God will tolerate no sin. However, He comes to abide in the New Heart to become its Sovereign and Ruler. *"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,"* (Eph 3:17) The New Heart is His Temple: *"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."* (2 Cor 6:16) The New Heart is no longer conformed to the world, but transformed by the renewing (making new) of the mind. *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."* (Romans 12:2)

After a sober self-examination, which Heart do you have - Natural or New?