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Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

A Whole New You Series, Lesson 21

Lesson Title: A New Heart

Take Home Point: Trade in your hard-heartedness for a new heart in Christ.

Warm-Up:

What is it about that certain time in a toddler's life that makes it deserve the moniker "Terrible Twos"? Perhaps it's the word, "NO!" that seems to become common. But that's only one form of stubbornness displayed. Refusing to do as they are told, or doing what they've been told not to do, are other forms of typical toddler behavior. Of course, it's a well known phenomenon that these children are simply learning to exercise their independence. The key is that they are not ready to recognize the consequences of their choices to make good decisions. Part of training a child is to help soften their heart toward others to make wise decisions within society. Obviously, it doesn't always work. More importantly, human training of a sinful heart goes only so far; it requires God to deliver the new creation heart we need to be truly sensitive to his will and ways.

Read: Exodus 4:21-25; 5:1-6:8; 7:10-13,20-24; 8:12-15,19,30-32; 9:6-7,10-12,33-35; 10:16-20,25-29; 11:1-10; and 2nd Corinthians 5:17

Observation (What happened?):

List some of the consequences of Pharaoh being stubborn and hardening his heart.

What about us is new when we believe in Christ?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why does it sometimes say "Pharaoh was stubborn" (or "hardened his heart") and sometimes "the Lord made Pharaoh stubborn"?

What does "a new creation" mean?

Insight:

A pastor of mine once said in a sermon, "The old life will not politely excuse itself from your life. It will hang on as tightly as it can as long as it can." Interesting. According to 2nd Corinthians 5:17, the old is gone. But there is one way for it to come back, and that is if I invite it back. This doesn't mean the new disappears; it means I choose which will be lived out. Do I choose to live wallowing in slavery to sin, hardening my heart toward the kind and compassionate God who rescued me? Or do I fix my thoughts on Jesus, which means I must take them off everything else? The author of Hebrews speaks of this choice in Chapter 3, especially verses 12-13: "See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness."

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What does it mean to you to be a new creation? How does it change the way you live?

Take a moment to thank God that he gives you his new life.