

GOD HAS WRITTEN ON OUR HEARTS

“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.” (Heb 8:10)

This quotation regarding the new covenant, as you probably know, comes from Jeremiah (Jer. 31:33) and is also repeated in Heb. 10:16. To understand the new covenant is also to understand the new birth, and vice versa. The subject before us, therefore, is not irrelevant, but is at the heart and core of Christianity. The versatile Greek language is quite precise. It can refer to a writing in progress, like the writing of a book, that takes place over a long period of time. Or, it can refer to something written one time, that has been completed.

The Greek word translated as “write” in this verse is “epigrapho”, and literally means to “write upon”. It is used in Mark 15:26 to refer to the written charge against Jesus - that he was “The King of the Jews”. It is used in Matt. 22:20 to refer to the “inscription” that was written on a coin. It is used in Acts 17:23 to refer to an “inscription” written on an idol: “To an unknown god”. It is used in Rev. 21:12 referring to the names of the 12 apostles that were written upon 12 gates. Obviously, these examples do not refer to a writing in progress. Nobody constantly updated the inscription on the cross of Jesus, the writing on a Roman coin, or the writing on a pagan idol, or the writing on the gates of heaven. So also, in the process of conversion God writes a message on our hearts that does not need to be updated, revised, or changed.

There is a remarkable analogy to be made between our “new birth” in the Spirit, and our “old birth” in the flesh. Permit me to quote from a booklet by Gary Bergel and Dr. C. Everett Koop.

“You began when the sperm cell from your father met and united with the ovum (egg) cell from your mother. During this act of conception or fertilization, the two cells became a single living cell YOU began. A unique individual, you never existed before in the history of the world and you are not entirely like either of your parents nor are you entirely like any of your ancestors. When conceived, you were so tiny that you could not be seen with the naked eye . . . As the nuclei of the ovum and sperm unite during the first hours of fertilization, they bring together twenty-three chromosomes from the mother and twenty-three chromosomes from the father. These chromosome sets carry some 15,000 genes from each parent cell. In these first quiet hours of human conception, the genes, like letters of a divine alphabet, spell out the unique characteristics of the new individual. The color of the eyes, hair and skin, facial features, body type and certain qualities of personality and intelligence are all determined by this genetic coding . . .”

The unborn child, of course, has a lot of growing to do. Even though this “divine alphabet” spells out the unique characteristics of the new individual those unique characteristics need to be nurtured and developed. Our DNA, however, is given to us at the time of our conception and does not change. Even though we can advance in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man we cannot change our basic nature, that is, our DNA. **THAT’S WHY WE HAVE TO BE BORN AGAIN!**

Christians have been “born again”, not of corruptible seed, but of the incorruptible, even the Word of God that lives and abides forever (1 Pet. 1:23) In our first birth we received the “image” or “likeness” of our earthly father, in our new birth we receive the “image” or “likeness” of our Heavenly Father (1 Cor. 15:49). Or in the words of Jeremiah God puts His laws in our minds and writes them on our hearts. Yes, we can grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but no, we cannot change that new identity we received at the time of our conversion.

The late John Wesley was said to have preached 3,000 sermons on the subject: “You Must Be Born Again!”. When asked why he spoke so often on the same subject, he responded: “Because you must be born again!” As you put down this paper and return to the day’s activities, nothing should be more critical or important than opening your mind and heart to the writing of God.