

**Clean Hearts**  
**H.I.N.T.S**  
**March 3, 2018**

**How do we get a clean heart?**

Only by God's work of salvation through Jesus Christ:

- We are born with hearts that are unclean.  
Genesis 8:21 "...for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth." Here, the word translated "youth" signifies the beginning of life – childhood/infancy. Proverbs 22:15 "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him."
  
- We are dead in our trespasses and sins and our sin nature rebels against God.  
Ephesians 2:1-3 "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."
  
- We need a Savior to take our heart of stone and give us a new heart of flesh.  
**Praise be to God! We can be made clean!**  
Ezekiel 36:25-26 "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."  
  
John 3:3 "Jesus answered him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.'"  
  
2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."  
  
John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"  
  
John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

**The Gospel in a nutshell:** We are born lost in our trespasses and sins. We are deserving of hell and in need of a Savior. God in His great love and mercy gave His Son to be the perfect, sinless sacrifice for our sins. No other work or sacrifice would do. He chose to save us, not because we deserved it...but because He loved us and chose to adopt us and make us His very own! Christ died to save sinners!

“The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...” 1 Timothy 1:15

Now you have been made clean – you are new – you are no longer a slave to sin – you are securely His! However, you still have a sin nature and an enemy of your soul (Satan). So...

## **How do we maintain a clean heart?**

Our part: Walking in obedience to our Lord.

God’s part: His incredible mercy in saving us, and his incredible power working in us and sanctifying us.

Salvation is not merely belief in God. It is a transforming work of the Holy Spirit and produces fruit (good works, obedience, and attitudes that are evidence of His working in us). So to clear up some possible confusion...

Those who are truly saved have been made new and have a new heart that wants to obey their Lord. However, we still battle against our sinful nature while we remain in this world.

God wants us to obey him and gives us all we need to maintain a clean heart before him. Our salvation is secure. God sees us as clean through Christ, but also calls us to live holy lives that are “pleasing and acceptable to him.” An obedient life is evidence of true saving faith.

1 John 1:6 “If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.”

1 John 2:4 “Whoever says ‘I know him’ but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him...”

What is Lordship Salvation?

*John MacArthur, whose book “The Gospel According to Jesus” lays out the case for lordship salvation, summarizes the teaching this way: “The gospel call to faith presupposes that sinners must repent of their sin and yield to Christ’s authority.” In other words, a sinner who refuses to repent is not saved, for he cannot cling to his sin and the Savior at the same time. And a sinner who rejects Christ’s authority in his life does not have saving faith, for true faith encompasses a surrender to God. Thus, the gospel requires more than making an intellectual decision or mouthing a prayer; the gospel message is a call to discipleship. The sheep will follow their Shepherd in submissive obedience.*

James 2:14 “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?”....James 2:17 “So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

James 2:19 “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe – and shudder!”

Matthew 7:23 “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.’

If you have assurance that you belong to Christ, then you are free to obey Him and maintain the clean heart he has produced in you!

*“Your performance doesn’t determine your standing in Christ; your standing in Christ determines your performance. Good works are the necessary result of salvation (Eph. 2:10), but they don’t save you or keep you saved. That’s God’s work.” – John MacArthur, Drawing Near*

**Good News! God is faithful to help us maintain a clean heart!!**

Philippians 2:13 “...for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

- Through his Word

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.”

2 Peter 1:3-4 “His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, <sup>4</sup>by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

How did Jesus respond when tempted by Satan? With Scripture! (Matthew 4:1-11)

- Through Prayer & Praise

Mark 14:38 “Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak.” – The words of Jesus

I Thessalonians 5:16-18 “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

- Through Fellowship with Other Believers

Hebrews 10:24-25 “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

- Through Spiritual Armor

Ephesians 6:10-18 “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication...”

*Remember, we have an enemy of our soul. Satan can't have us if we belong to Christ, but he will fight hard to rob us of our joy, peace and purity. We are in a spiritual battle, BUT God has given us all we need to fight against our foe. We have the armor of God – it already belongs to us through Christ. All we need to do is choose to use it.*

- Through the Holy Spirit

John 14:15-16 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, event the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him for he dwells with you and will be in you.” Helper = Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor, Counselor, Strengthener.

- Through Trials

James 1:2-4 “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

John 15:2 “Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”

Hebrew 12:5 “And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? ‘My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.’ ...Vs 10-11 “...but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”

Psalm 66:10 “For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried.”

*Not all trials are a chastisement in response to our sin (consider Job), but whether for chastisement, or for testing and refining, all trials are for our good and from our Father who loves us. If you are a child of God, you will experience trials – but you will also experience His strength to sustain you and the sweet and precious fellowship that comes from clinging to Him. There’s no better place to be than on our knees before the Lord, seeking His face, completely dependent on Him.*

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ’s sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.”

*The Greek word for “comfort” is related to the familiar word paraclete, “one who comes alongside to help”, another name for the Holy Spirit. – Paul was saying that God came to him in the middle of his sufferings and troubles to strengthen him and give him courage and boldness. – John MacArthur commentary*

A clean heart is, first, a transforming work in us by the power of the Holy Spirit when we are saved, and an ongoing work as He helps us fight against our flesh, enabling us trust Him and obey Him.  
This is true freedom!