

DEVOTIONAL #7

TITLE: CLEAN SLATE

Today's devotional is brought to us by Bethany Baird (Celebration Church).

When many of us think about a new year, we invariably think about a clean slate. A new year represents a chance to part with the sticky past and to embrace future with hope.

It's interesting that we see a new start as a *clean* slate. We all value having clean homes, clean teeth, clean workspaces. Cleanliness is important – but sometimes even more important than we realize. Have you ever heard the phrase “*clean house, clear head*”? Time Magazine published a study stating that clean homes are a necessity to physical and emotional wellbeing (I can see my OCD husband nodding his head in agreement!).

A clean, clear space represents an uncluttered life – a life that's able to focus and think about what's important, rather than internalizing the stress of dirty socks under the bed and piles of paper on the desk. Cleanliness can represent a kind of freedom.

Scripture also repeatedly emphasizes the importance of cleanliness. Before Jesus appeared on the scene, God's people had to conduct numerous cleansing and sacrificial rituals to rid themselves from the stain of sin. But King David reminds us that more than outer cleanliness, God desires a clean heart:

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

David reminds us how deeply God loves us – enough to look at the deepest, darkest places of our hearts and to clean out the junk.

God doesn't just do this for David; He cuts to the heart of so many of our well-loved Bible characters. When Joshua crosses into the promised land, the Israelites face seeming defeat before the men of Ai because one man – Achan – disobeyed God. And in that moment, Joshua says to Achan,

My son, give glory to the LORD God of Israel and give praise to him. And tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me (Joshua 7:19, ESV).

Sometimes what gives glory to God the most is our honest repentance before Him – a heart that seeks to be clean.

What a beautiful reminder of how gentle God is with our vulnerability. And what an awesome thing that the moment we come to him, asking for a clean heart, He's there. He wants to see you start your new year with a clean heart – a clean slate.

Blessings,
Bethany Baird

Pray

Dear Jesus, I thank you that you love me so much that you died so that I can be cleansed and purified from sin and unrighteousness. I ask right now that you would one again cleanse me from anything that is holding me back in moving forward in my relationship with you. I repent from things in my life that I've held onto that serve no good purpose for me. I desire to live rightly and walk faithfully with you in the days ahead. I confess that I love you God, but I'm so grateful that you loved me first! In Jesus name, amen.