

Connecting Church and Home

Quarter 2, Week 7 :: A New Heart and a New Spirit

Treasure Story: Ezekiel 36:16-38

Sometimes it can be hard to understand why people do the things that they do. People can be motivated by good things, such as love, humility, and compassion, but they are more often than not motivated by bad things, such as greed or lust. God, however, is so much higher and better than us. He is motivated by the highest and best thing possible—His own glory. In today's Treasure Story from Ezekiel 36, God makes a promise to restore His people. This promise is not motivated by any goodness in the people themselves. In fact, the sin of the people has resulted in their demise and exile from the land. God makes it clear that the mercy and grace that He is going to show them is because of His desire to make His name great. God knows that when His name is glorified, His people are blessed with His goodness and mercy.

Connect

"God's interest is to magnify the fullness of His glory by spilling over in mercy to us."
– John Piper

There is great comfort in knowing that God dispenses His goodness to us based on His glorious name and not our merit or lack thereof. If receiving good from God were based on our faithfulness, our state would be helpless indeed. This does not give us license to live as we want, however. The Apostle Paul made it clear in Romans 6:1-2 that we should never sin so that grace may abound. Instead, we are to live lives that are holy not to earn God's favor (which is impossible), but because we have already been shown God's favor in Christ. Here are a few suggestions for how to discuss God's holiness, grace, and mercy with your children:

- **Just Because I Love You:** Talk with your children about why some people choose to love others. Tell them that some people love others because of the benefit they get from loving that person. Remind them that God does not love us that way. He loves us because He is good and because He chooses to do so. Tell your children that your love for them is the same way. Make sure they know that the reason why you love them is because of the love God has shown you.
- **Unexpected Grace:** Find an occasion where you can do something special for your child, such as taking them out for ice cream or to an appropriately selected movie. When they ask you why you chose to do this, tell them it is because you wanted them to experience grace. Explain that you wanted them to experience something good not because of something they had done, but just because you wanted to do it. Share with them how God's grace is like that. He shows us His grace because He is good and because He chooses to do so.

My Mission As Parent

- Remember the love that God has shown you, not because of anything you have done, but because of who He is. Show that kind of love to your children and point them to Him.
- How secure do you feel in God's love? Does your security wane when you sin? How does this dynamic affect how you view your children when they sin?
- How often do you pause to stop and thank the Lord that He acts according to His name and not because of our sin?

Prayer Points

- Glorify the Lord for acting according to His holiness and love and not according to our sin.
- Pray that the Lord will remind you that His glory is our highest good.
- Praise the Lord for being faithful to us even when we are not faithful to Him.