



What is written on your heart?

READ JEREMIAH 31:31-34

The Lord promises a new covenant with the people, since they have broken the old one. In this covenant, God makes all the promises. This new covenant will be written on the hearts of the people, and the instructions will be deep within them. The people will not need to teach their neighbors or relatives anything, because everyone will already know God. The Lord promises to not only forgive sin and wickedness, but to forget it, also.

REMEMBER: Jeremiah 31:33

"I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts."

MORE TO CONSIDER

Theologian Robert F. Capon said this: "In Jesus' death and resurrection the whole test-passing, brownie-point-earning rigmarole of the human race has been canceled for lack of interest on God's part."

In other words, God isn't keeping score. God has wiped the slate clean, and let it all go for the sake of love and relationship.

How do we reconcile a promise like that with the upheaval in our country this week? How can we claim a covenant that writes love on all of our hearts while our country explodes in hatred? Particularly when some of that hatred claims to be based in religion?

Is it enough to sit back and know ourselves to be loved? Is that the end result that God has in mind with this promise? Or are we compelled forward, into something more? If so, what? What exactly is written on your heart?

NEXT WEEK: Daniel 6:6-23

WONDER

DAY 1: Are there some things in our lives that we should hold on to? Are there others we should let go? How do we know which is which? What happens when we hold on too tightly? What happens when we let go too soon?

PROGRESS

DAY 2: Why does God make a new covenant? Did God make a mistake the first time? Is this about God changing God's mind, or the Israelites' growing understanding of who God is? Is God changing, or is God pulling us forward into better understanding of what's been there all along?

SURPRISE

DAY 3: What kind of relationship do we have with God if we are punished for unfaithfulness? Is it based on love and freedom, or rules and fear? Do we often live as though God operates in a system of rewards and punishment, even while we proclaim grace and love? Why?

LOVE

DAY 4: Will God let go of anything standing in the way of relationship with you? Will God do the same thing for your enemies? Why? What sort of God is this?

SURPRISE

DAY 5: Why does God make all the promises here? Are we unfaithful, unable to keep the promises we make? Do you think God finds us unfaithful in the aftermath of this contentious election? What is God's response to those marginalized in the days following the election? Are you heeding the covenant written on your heart, and the instructions found deep within you? How?

SURPRISE

DAY 6: Google "racism since election" and scroll through the increasing lists of threatening behavior. How does this new covenant make any sense in our country today, as children everywhere wake up in tears? Does the notion that a covenant is written on our hearts seem like fiction? Are we all truly behaving as though we know God already, like the promise claims? Is the promise really shaping us?

RELATIONSHIP

DAY 7: How are you living this new promise, sharing the love that God has freely given you? Could we make a similar covenant with each other? Would it move us toward Jesus-like love and inclusion? Do you think God would have us try? How do we begin? Why is it difficult?