

You Were Born With A Heart Problem

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[0 : 00] Psalm 14. I've tried to just explain how there are a few different genres of the psalms. So what you can listen for as we read Psalm 14 initially is the type of psalm this is.

You can see in verse 1, he says, the fool is this. And so what's the opposite of a fool? It's a wise person. And so it's not talking about a person who has a mental impairment.

This comes from a king who was called a fool as he danced celebrating, praising God for God's grace and faithfulness. And it comes from an underdog army that's been called foolish and hopeless in this world, easily crushed, that had God standing in their midst delivering and proving himself to be faithful as their God.

So he's using that mockery that the people of God had received and he's proclaiming the truth about God. What is true wisdom in this psalm? Psalm 14.

To the chief musician, a psalm of David. That superscription we believe to be inspired as well. And it shows that God's covenant people were organized in their singing.

[1 : 13] They practiced, they sounded, you know, probably different than the other nations. But this was part of what it means to belong to God as he puts rejoicing and singing on the lips of his people. Just as we've begun singing today.

Verse 1. The fool has said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt. They have done abominable works. There is none who does good.

The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside. They have together become corrupt.

There is none who does good. No, not one. We all have all the workers of iniquity, no knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread and do not call on the Lord.

There they are in great fear. For God is with the generation of the righteous. You shame the counsel of the poor, but the Lord is his refuge. Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion.

[2 : 19] When the Lord brings back the captivity of his people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad. Amen. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

You may be seated. As we just read, Lord, we ask that you will rule us by your word and spirit in such a way that more and more we will submit to you.

Keep your church strong and add to it. Destroy the devil's work. Destroy every force which revolts against you and every conspiracy against your word. Do this until your kingdom is so complete and perfect that in it you are all in all.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Abby Wardell in Ogden, Utah was still a baby when she had her first open heart surgery.

She was in and out of the hospital as she got older, and when she was 11 years old, some of you are 11 or close to that now, the doctors told her that her heart, that most important muscle of the body, was only pumping at about 13% capacity.

[4 : 02] Her family had no idea this was the case. And so it came as a big shock, and they set into a time of grieving and mourning over the condition of their daughter's heart.

Well, beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, from Psalm 14, I want to preach today to you and whoever God gives ears to hear that all of us were born with a sick heart. Amen?

We were all born with a heart problem. What's the problem with your heart? According to Psalm 14, verse 1, what is the problem with your heart and mine since birth?

David says, the fool says there is no God. And where does David say this of the fool? Where is it in the fool that he wants to believe there's no God?

It's in the heart. And he makes it very clear. He's not just speaking about one individual. He's speaking about an entire category of creatures.

[5 : 12] Men and women, children, made in the image of God. And as God looks from heaven over all the earth, there is not one who has a good heart. So you and I were born with a heart that in its natural state is not a tabula rasa, as John Locke taught.

It's no blank slate. It's corrupt. It's twisted. It's inclined toward evil. Psalm 14, verse 1 says that sin, it has a place of dominion, and that's the heart.

You were born with a proud heart that wants to deny the awesome reality that you have a maker.

Your heart does not want to submit that there is a Lord, a creator over all.

Your heart and mine does not want to be accountable to God. Our Lord Jesus confirmed this powerful, fundamental problem. Matthew 15, 19, Out of your heart come evil thoughts.

This is something that every generation will admit if God gives them the grace to be humble and accept the truth. Jeremiah 17, 9 said, The heart is more deceitful than all else.

[6 : 31] The heart is desperately wicked. It's desperately sick. Who can understand their own heart? Your heart and mine, when we were born, it kept us full of blindness and spiritual ignorance.

We were born alienated from God because we were born under the curse of Adam. Romans 1, 24 and 28 says, Because we refused to have God in our knowledge, not only were we born under Adam's curse, we also refused that in the pride of our corrupted hearts, and because of that, God gave sinners like you and me up to a reprobate mind and to the lusts of our hearts to do what is wicked in God's eyes.

Do you agree we have a serious heart problem from birth? No one is exempt. No one who came from Adam. That's the problem with our heart.

And this sick heart also has several effects. The effects of your sick heart. Your sick heart makes your life corrupt. Verse 1.

The word for corrupt, it's like milk that you leave out of the refrigerator too long. You set it out in the sun. And if you're to take that and to try to put it into your mug and make coffee, you'll spit it out.

[8 : 00] That's what happens to our heart under the curse of sin. Verse 1 says, You do abominable deeds. These are deeds that are hardly able to be spoken of in God's eyes because they're so grotesque and evil.

Why is it that humans do that? It's because we have a sick heart. The effects of a sick heart in verse 1 are both sins of commission and sins of omission.

You commit a sin. You do abominable deeds. But also you omit to do what God has commanded which is a sin of omission. He says no one does good.

There's a cliché t-shirt that you can buy at any target near you and it says, Be a good person.

That's legalism. Every human being has a conscience because we're made in God's image.

Romans 1 says, We all know in our hearts and our minds what is sin. We know it.

[9 : 05] And these t-shirts say, Be a good person. Well, how good of a person do I have to be? And how do I know what's good? No one does good. Not good enough. There's no spiritual meritorious goodness that we can do.

Your sick heart affects your life. Isaiah 59 7 says, Your feet run to evil. They are swift to shed innocent blood. Your thoughts are thoughts of iniquity.

Desolation and destruction are in your highways. Watch out for a person with a wicked heart. They will destroy everything in their path.

That's a fool. It could be the most intelligent person. That's a foolish way to live your life, being ruled by your heart. So your sick heart, it also means that you will never choose to seek God if you're left in that natural state.

Look at verse 2. The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of man to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. There are none who seek after God because their hearts, ours and yours as well at birth, are so corrupt, we're inclined away from God.

[10 : 20] We will never choose to seek God. Some of you maybe are here today or in this last season of your life and you find yourself seeking after God and His truth maybe like you never have before.

That's because God, by His grace, is drawing you to Himself. He has called you away from your own fallen heart to see Him, to follow Him and to hear His truth.

Genesis 6.12 says, God saw the earth and it was corrupt for all flesh had corrupted their way on earth. You will never choose to seek God on your own.

In your sick heart, it corrupts everything you do. Look at verse 3. They have all turned aside.

Together they have become corrupt. None good.

Not even one. A triple negative. Proverbs 14.12 says, There is a way which seems right to man, but in the end it leads to death.

[11 : 25] There is a way that man thinks is right. You're following your heart and in the end it leads to death. Everything you do has become corrupted.

Finally, your sick heart makes you hate God's people. If you're wanting to know right now, maybe some of what this guy up here is trying to tell me is true.

Well, here's a quick test. Do you love the people of God? If God has given you a new heart, you will be with God's people. You will not give up meeting together.

If you feel like I don't need those people, I'm not one of them. I'm going to live my life following my own heart. You have no assurance. You have no assurance that you are part of God's people because the sick heart makes you hate God's people.

Verse 4 says, There are a people that God has set aside for himself in every generation who by his grace alone call upon his name.

[12 : 44] And this people are odd. They come together. What they do seems very odd in the eyes of the world. And the world will want to mock, take advantage, maybe in business or otherwise.

Eat up God's people like you eat bread because they're disposable. The sick heart, it makes you hate those whom God has called righteous and whose lives are being conformed to the image of Christ by the grace and the power of the Holy Spirit.

You will hate that because that's pointing to your conscience. There's something missing in my life and I can't get it together. Those are some of the effects of a sick heart according to Psalm 14.

Well, here comes some good news. Beginning in verse 5, we read of God now. David, once again in the psalm, takes his eyes off of the world, off of man.

Don't you need to do that at least once a week with God's people? And he puts his eyes on God.

And what I see in verse 5 and 6, it's the stance that God takes.

[13 : 55] It reveals God's heart. God stands with one group of people and he stands against another group of people. Look at verse 5. God is with the generation of the righteous.

But God stands against those who conspire to humiliate God's people, whom he calls the poor.

These are those who are poor in spirit, who are depending on God, not on their own strength.

God is against those who are proud, arrogant, and whose hearts are hard toward God. God stands against you in verse 6, who would shame the plans of the poor.

But God is with those, verse 5, whom he has called righteous. Another translation handles this very well. It says, God stands in the company of the righteous.

And because God stands with his people, the poor, the needy, the wretched, he's standing against those who hate his people. God stands with his people who he has called righteous.

[15 : 01] Former fools, saved sinners. Those are the people of God. That reveals his heart. Verse 6 says that God stands as the refuge for those who are poor and for those who would get devoured by the world otherwise.

God's stance reveals his heart. When our Lord Jesus took on flesh, God the Son came to earth. He did not join the elite of Israel and Jerusalem.

Even at his birth, he was always on the run. He was not to be found in the palace. He is with the poor. He is with those who need a Savior. He is with the sick, the wounded.

And he comes to show, this is my heart to save those who will need me and who will come to me humbly. Let me ask you this question as we look at the last couple verses.

If this is God's heart and this is God's stance, what do you want your heart to feel for all eternity?

What do you want your heart to feel for all of eternity?

[16 : 16] Because according to Psalm 14, your heart will experience for eternity either great terror or great rejoicing. Look at verse 5.

Because of where God stands, those alienated from God are in great terror. The Hebrew, it's fear of fear, terror of terror.

I picture David as that underdog, commander in the army, and he knows there's a moment that something changes in the battle. Now all of a sudden, we're on the offensive.

They're in terror. Remember, we were hunkered down but the tide has turned. Some of you have played sports and team sports or maybe like taekwondo or something like that. You know that moment where it turns.

Your team rallies in the third quarter and now all of a sudden, we have the confidence. We're getting those 50-50 balls. The tide is on our side. If you're among God's people, you're in the company of those God has called righteous.

[17 : 21] You don't live in fear. In the book of Acts, there's that turn. They are cowering in a building behind closed doors and then the Lord gives them the Holy Spirit and in confidence, they come out and they proclaim.

They get arrested and beaten and thrown in jail and when they're released, they come back out again in the public proclaiming the name of Jesus Christ because there's no salvation apart from Him. and the disciples die as martyrs except for John who's dipped in oil, burned, and sent to be all alone on the island of Patmos.

There is no fear in God's people. Instead, there's rejoicing. Paul and Silas behind the prison doors praying loudly so everyone can hear, singing hymns and songs and spiritual songs just like we did now, proclaiming the good news unashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There's great rejoicing. But there will be great terror for those who reject God now. For any who are ashamed of Christ in this life, they are in great terror.

For God is with His people. Verse 7 says, When the Lord restores the fortunes of His people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

[18 : 44] Psalm 14 is looking forward to deliverance coming from Jerusalem, from the temple, and David in the office of worship leader and king.

The Holy Spirit is ministering and giving him these prophetic words of a coming Messiah, a day when the fortunes will be turned, where the tide is now in favor of those with whom God is standing and His army is advancing.

He looks forward to that great day. We receive this now knowing that Christ is the Messiah. He is the one that comes out of Zion to bring deliverance for His people.

And we can also read Psalm 14 looking forward to an even greater deliverance. We look forward to that day when Christ will return. And Jesus in His own words in Mark 8 said, whoever will be ashamed of me and my words in this sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of Him when He comes in the Father's glory with the holy angels.

Do you look forward to that day when Christ will come again? Amen. Come quickly, Lord Jesus. So will you have great terror or will you have great rejoicing forevermore at Christ's return?

[20 : 03] I don't want anyone to leave here unclear about how it is that you, the worst of sinners like Paul and like I feel, can have rejoicing and confidence that I belong to God through Jesus Christ.

How can sinners like you and me, how can fools like those of us who want to say in our heart there's no God and live like a practical atheist, how can we rejoice? Especially when verse 3 says, they have all turned aside.

Together, they have become corrupt. None are good. Not even one. In God's holy, just, and faultless evaluation, there's not a single person on earth in any generation that has a heart that's good enough.

How can we rejoice? If there are none who do good, none who, who can be in the presence of a holy God and God can justly say, you are good enough, you have enough love in your heart for me, then how can we rejoice?

You and I need a new heart. The heart we're born with in our birth, it's not enough. We need God to intervene and to do something inside of us, don't we?

[21 : 23] I told you about Abby, that girl that was born with a bad heart. Her family and her collected some of the facts from her story.

They reported it this way. Her need at age 11 was listed on a Monday. She got a call on a Thursday and she said, the night before I couldn't sleep.

I just had this really strong feeling that my heart was coming. On Friday, April 13th, Abby got a new heart. It was a new beginning for her.

She said, I felt amazing. I had so much energy. I had never felt my own heart beating like that. So I thought it was working too well.

She said, it's working too well. Why is it working so well? She said, I could feel my heart beating all the way to my fingers and my toes. Some of you, that's your story spiritually.

[22 : 27] You've known your heart is broken and sick. And you also can testify, God gave me a new heart. He's given me a care and a love for Him, for His people, for the church I had no capacity for.

My heart might be working too well. I want to serve Him. I want to proclaim the gospel from the rooftops. Is this supposed to be this way? Praise the Lord. I want you to turn with me, please, before we see how God fulfills this with the outpouring of the Spirit.

See a promise. This is God's promise all the way through. Please turn to Ezekiel chapter 36.

Ezekiel 36. I'm just going to read a couple verses. You're welcome to stay there in your Bible.

Otherwise, just listen. To give you context, Psalm 14 comes from David. This is when the kingdom of God is being settled in.

Jerusalem is just conquered and becoming their capital. Not very far along in Israel's history. Well, we know the problem with national Israel. Their hearts were corrupt.

[23 : 36] They could not keep God's moral law. And their disobedience brought the punishment of God to send them into exile outside of the land. And while they're outside of the land in Babylon, God raised up this prophet, Ezekiel, and he didn't even live in Israel.

And yet, some of the most glorious prophecies about how God will keep his promise came from Ezekiel. So there are God's people in Babylon in captivity. The northern tribes are in Assyria.

What hope do they have? How will God be faithful and make all things right? In Ezekiel 36, starting at verse 26, the word of the Lord comes to the people of God.

God says, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh and I will put my spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

promise. The promise is that those who are far off, those who are foolish, those who have failed and disobeyed and rebelled against God time and time again, the Lord promises he will be faithful.

[24 : 53] He will give you a new heart. You can't come up with it on your own. He will pour out his spirit on you. In Romans 3.21, we read how our Lord Jesus Christ took on flesh.

to give you a new heart. And you receive it not by being a good person, but you receive it freely through faith in Jesus Christ for all who will believe.

Romans 3.23, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, but they are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Jesus stood in your place and in mine on the cross and he took the wrath of God against your sins and mine so that he could justly be the justifier of sinners.

He could justly, without violating the justice of God, turn around and pour out the blessings of heaven through the Holy Spirit applied to his people. And only then can sinners and fools like us rejoice.

[26 : 01] peace. I invite you to reflect and ponder how is your heart today? How is your heart today?

Have you received this promise from verse 7? Have you received the salvation that God sent from Zion, his very own son, Jesus Christ, our Lord?

has he restored you from being desperate and needy in a dire, miserable state? Has he filled your heart with rejoicing, with gladness?

Titus 3, 4 says, when the good news and the loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Christ Jesus, our Savior.

Regeneration, it's a new creation that happens inside of you. It's what Ezekiel prophesied, that heart of stone is replaced. It's spiritual open heart surgery.

[27 : 20] And a good heart is put inside of you by God's grace. There is no one with a good heart that's born of Adam. That's why our Lord Jesus Christ was not from the line of Adam.

He was born of a virgin. His heart, according to his human nature, was good, perfect, righteous. And as he puts his good, righteous heart in his people, the Father can look at this company of people, a generation, and say, I just see the righteousness of my son.

That's all I see. I dwell with such a people. This is who I stand with. Romans 3, verse 28, gives us great caution.

Because that's how God saves us, there is no room for any one of us to boast. Amen? We don't wear shirts that say, be a good person as you carry around your expensive coffee.

No. We say, repent of being a bad person by God's grace. Ask for a new heart. no room for boasting.

[28 : 35] For we hold that if you are unified to Christ, you are justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Faith does not overthrow God's moral law.

On the contrary, the new hearts inside of God's people give the power, the love that we lack on our own to uphold his law slowly, imperfectly, gradually by his strength working in us.

He doesn't give us a new heart to send us off to be licentious, to be antinomian, lawless. No, his new heart increases the love for God because he first loved us.

Ezekiel 36, 27, once again, God has kept his promise to you who are regenerated, to you who are saved, to you who have even a small faith and a growing love for Christ.

In God's words, I have given you a new heart. I have put a new spirit in you. I have removed from you your heart of stone and I have given you a heart of flesh.

[29 : 43] I have put my spirit in you and now I move you to follow my decrees and because of my son's heart in you, you are now grateful and joyful and gladly desiring to keep my love.

Abby and her family got connected with the donor family. A little boy from Colorado whose heart was donated so she could have that surgery she needed. Abby reflected that this boy lived in Colorado.

He was a little bit older than her. He played lacrosse and football. She said, I have a feeling like he enjoyed making people laugh. This person had such a huge impact on my life, she said.

And her mother agreed. The words, thank you, feel so inadequate. But there's no way to really express how you feel for someone and a family who made that kind of sacrifice.

What is that new heart of God's people? We are overwhelmed with gratitude. Our words feel so limited. Our singing feels so soft.

[30 : 56] But that's the Holy Spirit taking even our groanings and mediating it as a joyful sound to the loving heart of God in heaven. If God has given you a new heart, rejoice.

You desire to obey Him out of that humble gratefulness. Let's spend some time reflecting on Psalm 14 and the long gospel that you've heard today.

If you don't know whether you have a heart of stone still, this is the hour God calls you to respond.

By His providence, in ways I can't explain, no one else can, He causes each one to hear the gospel and to respond.

Don't go away here with a hard heart. If God is causing you to seek Him, respond in obedience with the power of the Spirit inside. Amen.