



What does God do with a heart of stone?

Ezekiel 36:26

I will give you a new heart and a new spirit, I will take your petrified heart out of your body and give you a living heart in its place.

Ezekiel 36:27

I will give you my spirit and make sure you live by my laws and obey my rules.

In this text we read that God takes the initiative. He will change the heart of stone for a living heart. Instead of a heart of stone, He will give His Spirit.

How can we respond when God shows that our hearts are made of stone?

1 Pet 2: 4-5

Join him, to the living stone that was rejected by men but chosen by God for its preciousness and let yourselves also be used as living stones for the building of a spiritual temple.

We are asked to join the living stone, and accept that we are like Jesus, chosen and precious.

What is a heart of stone?

- A numb heart
 - Stone is dead. It doesn't feel. It has no relationship.
 - In relation to people and God it is then not possible to really feel and know.
 - Love is difficult to receive, both from God and from people.
 - Because of this there is a disturbance in the normal functioning in relationships with others and God.
- Defense Mechanism
 - Because there have been painful experiences in the past, you will build a wall around your heart and your feelings, so that you will not feel the same pain.
 - You consciously choose not to allow others into your heart. You do not want to risk being hurt again.
- Anesthesia
 - Emotional injury numbs your heart, just like an arm being torn off. In the moments after that you don't feel anything.
- Hideout
 - We believe building a wall around our hearts will protect us, but it leads to loneliness and isolation.

How is a heart formed of stone?

- Parents who keep yelling at each other and at the child, especially at a young age.
- Siblings who regularly humiliate, beat, or reject, especially when it is unjust.
- Refrain from giving proper care, attention and love to a baby.
- Especially at a young age the child is open to learn trust and healthy dependence is formed, however, if this is constantly damaged, the young child will not trust and wrong dependent relationships can be formed.
- If you were not able to defend yourself enough, you will develop a self-defense system. For example, if your father who is much stronger beats you all the time, you can't defend yourself. But you can withdraw inside your heart, so you don't feel the pain.





What are the consequences of a stoney heart?

- Difficulty in receiving and giving love and affection.
- Isolation from others.
- Numbness of affection and sincere love, both in relation to God and people
- No one seems to love you.
- Behavioral patterns that negatively affect relationships.
- New pain is seen as confirmation of what you believe, new stones of protection are being formed.
- Act as if everything is going well and you cannot be hurt.
- One will make inner vows, more about this in the next chapter.

How do I recognize a heart of stone in myself?

- Do I keep people at a distance?
- Do I protect myself?
- Has difficulty asking for help and wants to solve everything himself.
- Hardened emotions.
- Difficult to show emotions to others.
- Pretends to be another person.
- You can serve others, but find it difficult when others want to serve you
- Look down on those who do show emotions as being weak or immature.
- Are unable or unwilling to communicate well with loved ones and leaders.
- Not experiencing God at all; He seems far away.

Steps to Recovery

1. *Recognize that you have developed a heart of stone*
2. *Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where the greatest pain is; think of events or feelings*
3. *Ask forgiveness for the hardening of your heart*
4. *Ask God the Father to soften your heart and give His Holy Spirit so that your heart becomes flesh*
5. *Perhaps now is also the time to forgive those who have hurt or hurt you*

PRAYER



Thank you for Jesus. You are my living stone. Jesus you rose from the dead and You are alive.

Thank You that I can join You and that Your life comes into my heart.

Thank You Holy Spirit for wanting to turn my heart from stone to a heart that is alive.

Jesus, I allow You to change my heart of stone, to heal my pain that I want to hide, heal and restore.

Jesus, I recognize You as my physician.

Holy Spirit, I receive Your quickening spirit so that I can experience my emotions normally again and that I can feel love, give and most of all receive it.



I forgive those who hurt me, who neglected me, who rejected me.

Forgive me for my sinful reactions that have kept me away or hurting others who wanted to give me love.



Father, I now give myself to You and receive Your Fatherly love. I open my heart to You. I choose to be connected with You and others who love me.

Amen.