

# A Refined People | Zechariah 13 | 4/19/15

- Jesus Christ - the fountain that washes away sin and impurities | Zechariah 13:1
  - **Read Zechariah 13:1**
  - Jesus Christ is the fountain that has been opened up on the world.
  - This fountain is the true living water of God.
    - John 7:37-38
      - “On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone is thirsty, he should come to Me and drink! The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flow from deep within him.”
    - **This living water will wash away the sins and impurities of those who receive it and will grant them eternal life.**
  - This fountain that cleanses our sins was His blood that was poured out with His death upon the cross.
    - The cleansing blood of Jesus Christ
      - 1 John 1:7
        - “But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, **and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.**”
    - The blood of Jesus was the perfect sacrifice that removed our sin.
    - This fountain was poured out for everyone who would believe.
      - John 6:40
        - “For this is the will of My Father: that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”
        - It doesn’t matter you race, your ethnicity what sins you had previously committed. God plan of redemption was for the whole world for all of those who would believe.
      - Perfect example of our new unity in Christ
        - Ephesians 2:17-22
    - This happens in a believer because of God’s grace, through our faith in Jesus Christ.
      - Ephesians 2:8
        - “For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God’s gift”
    - This is the new covenant relationship that we now have with God.
      - The fountain that washes away our sin has established the new covenant relationship that we now have with Christ.
      - Jeremiah 31:31-34
      - God’s teaching will now be in the heart of man because of the Holy Spirit. This was not possible before. Jesus had to die on the cross for God’s Spirit to come upon man.
      - Because of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus we have been cleansed and can now receive God’s Holy Spirit.
        - This was not possible for us to receive before because we were not cleansed.
        - **However now that Jesus has wiped away our sins and deemed us justified we can now have God’s spirit living within us.**

- The Christian is an unfinished product that contains impurities.
  - Sometimes one might think that after we are saved and become a Christian that we are then a finished product. We are saved going to Heaven so that's all that needs to be done.
  - While that is true for our Salvation that is not the case when it comes to the hearts and minds of a Christian.
  - In fact our Salvation is just the beginning. There is still much work that God will do in the hearts and minds of the Christian.
  - **The fountain that washed away our sin is Jesus Christ and he will work in our hearts to wash out all of the impurities.**
  - We go to God broken but he restores us.
    - One might think well I'll go and get right with God once I have myself put together, when I quit all of my major sins and I start living my life right. Then I will get right with God.
    - That is actually backwards, we instead need to go to God when we are broken regardless of how bad we are.
    - **Because God will sanctify the Christian and cleanse them of their unrighteousness.**
      - **One does not have to do this BEFORE coming to Him.**
    - **This work is called sanctification**
      - When we come to God he will begin working in our hearts through the Holy Spirit to purify us and make us more like Him.
      - Sanctification is a continuous process we will never be fully complete until the day that we go to Heaven.
      - But God is continually working in our hearts to purify us until that day.
  - **What impurities do people have that they feel makes them unworthy to come to God?**
- God will do the cleansing and He will give us a new heart that desires to be obedient.
  - Ezekiel 36:25-27
    - "I will also sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you: I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will place My Spirit within you and cause you to follow My statutes and carefully observe My ordinances."
  - God does the cleansing we do not have to be clean before we go to God. He will do this in the hearts and minds of all true Christians through sanctification.
  - He will find the evil and the impurities that are within us and begin to remove them. He desires that we become more like Him.
  - We however must also be obedient in allow God's cleansing to take hold.
  - **What impurities or "idols" is God removing from our lives?**
  - **Do you think they all go away immediately or do some take more time?**
    - **If they take more time then why? What prevents them from being removed quickly? Is it us? Is it God?**
- Results of the cleansing
  - The new heart and spirit
    - This new heart and spirit allows us to think differently.
      - This is true and it even happens right after one becomes saved and received the Holy Spirit.

- **I heard the testimony of a child once** that had recently become saved and her exact words were “I feel so clean now”.
      - This child felt the change in her heart, the change that came when the Holy Spirit entered and made her heart His sanctuary.
      - This is what happens in all of us, Jesus Christ will begin to clean out the filth and the sin the impurities that are within us.
  - This new heart gives us a new perspective on life.
    - Now being cleansed and with God working on our impurities we have a new perspective on life a new outlook.
    - No longer do we lack hope in the future, but we look forward to it because we know that in the end we will be spending an eternity in Christ.
    - We also have a newfound purpose in life, because as Christians we realize that God has called all of us to do His good works.
      - Ephesians 2:10
        - “For we are His creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them.”
      - We cannot begin to understand our purpose in life until we have received the Holy Spirit, until we have become a Christian.
      - Then God in His perfect timing will reveal His plan to us, we simply need to be obedient.
    - We will desire to be obedient
      - With this new heart along with God’s Holy Spirit we will desire the things of God, those that are good and holy and we will despise the sin and the evil that we previously desired.
      - We will desire to obey God’s commands. While we will still sin we will have a newfound desire to obey God.
- The cleansing and removal of the false prophets | Zechariah 13:2-6
  - **Read Zechariah 13:2-6**
    - This passage reflects on a prophesy of Zechariah that there will be a time when God will remove the false prophets, teachers and religions from the land.
    - This is a time when true Christians will be able to discern the false prophets and teachers and remove them from their presence.
    - The false prophets will be scared for their lives and deny that they taught lies.
    - This is a glorious time when the truth of God clearly outweighs the lies.
    - **There will be a time when the entire world will see the truth through the lies.**
  - God desires to purify the world from the false teachers who lead people astray, who lead them away from God.
    - While because of sin in the world there will always be false prophets, religions and beliefs.
    - However having been purified and having the Holy Spirit living within us we can discern the truth from the lies.
    - There are numerous reasons why we have false beliefs and prophets, but at the root of it all is Satan.
      - Satan will do anything he possible can to turn man away from truth and point him to a lie.

- That is his chief goal is to fill the world with lies as to cloud the mind and judgment of man so that they will believe lies.
- These false beliefs originate from the sinful desires within the hearts of man.
  - 2 Timothy 4:3-4
    - “For the time will come when they will not tolerate sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, will multiply teachers for themselves because they have an itch to hear something new. They will turn away from hearing the truth and will turn aside to myths.”
  - Scripture makes it perfect clear where these false beliefs, these false teachers come from. It originates from the sin that is within our hearts.
  - Man desires their sin so what better way to make them “OK” than to make everyone believe that a lie is actually truth.
    - **We see this in society today where lies are spread and the morals of our society are being twisted into thinking that numerous forms of sin and evil are actually good and OK.**
- A false prophets is really a wolf (Satan) in sheep’s clothing.
  - Matthew 7:15
    - “Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves”.
  - Satan will disguise himself in many ways all to deceive man and he is very successful.
  - There will be those who see Jesus Christ and find out that they were not true Christians.
    - Matthew 7:22-23
      - “On that day many will say to Me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in Your name, drive out demons in Your name, and do many miracles in Your name? Then I will announce to them, ‘I never knew you! Depart from Me, you lawbreakers!’”
  - **Do you think that your new heart (along with the Holy Spirit) allow you to discern from the lies in the world?**
- A holy refinement | Zechariah 13:7-9
  - **Read Zechariah 13:7-9**
  - As Christians God continually refines us to make us better.
  - He wants us to be the best Christian that we can possibly be.
  - Refining can come in my different forms and happen at different times in our lives.
  - However in a lot of cases refinement may take trials and tribulations, which can work out our impurities.
    - While that may be hard to understand at times we see that according to Scripture that it is in fact true.
    - These trials are for our refinement to make us better not worse.
  - Jesus is the shepherd that was stricken and so will His sheep be also.
    - Zechariah 13:7
    - Jesus Christ was stricken upon the cross for the sins of man. He suffered and died unjustly however it was all for a holy purpose.
    - However we being the sheep are not immune to this, in fact we too will suffer as Christ suffered.
      - John 15:20-21

- “Remember the word I spoke to you: ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will also keep yours. But they will do all these things to you on account of My name, because they don’t know the One who sent me.”
- 1 Peter 2:21
  - “For you were called to this, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in His steps.”
- Romans 8:16-17
  - “The Spirit Himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God’s children, and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—seeing that we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.”
- We will suffer as Christ suffered, however we will also be glorified as Christ was glorified.
- While no one enjoys a trial or a time of hardship, we must always look to see what we can learn during these times.
- A Christian who leans on Christ in these times will always be refined and become a stronger Christian because of it.
- In fact we are to take great joy in our trials
  - James 1:2-4
    - “Consider it a great joy, my brothers, when you experience various trials, knowing that the testing of our faith produces endurance. But endurance must do its complete work, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.”
  - **The joy is knowing that as we are refined we become better Christians, so our hope is knowing that in the end we will be better than when we began.**
- Refining through our obedience.
  - We can also be sure that through our obedience to God that we will be refined.
  - If we obey the commands of God and we strive to live the life that He has called us to then we will continually becoming more like Christ everyday.
  - Everything that God desires for us is to make us better Christians to be more holy and Christ like.
- Refining through our service
  - If we are being obedient to God then we will also serve God.
    - Ephesians 2:10
      - “For we are His creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them.”
  - These good works will refine us and will squeeze out the impurities.
  - By being filled with the Spirit and the good works of God we won’t have room for the impurities of our selfish desires.
- Results of the refinement
  - Through refinement God uses our sufferings to allow us to help others
    - 2 Corinthians 1:3-7
  - As Christ has comforted us during our affliction we too will understand how to comfort others.
    - It is because of the comfort that we received from God during our times of trouble that we learn how to comfort others.

- We having seen the love of God poured upon us can see how we as Christians can share this love of God with others.
- Through refinement Jesus teaches us how to love others more like Him.
- We can share our hope with others
  - We get through the tough times of life because of our hope in Jesus Christ.
  - Being refined and having to put our trust in Jesus we can be more prepared to share this hope with the lost and dying in the world.
  - It is this hope that gives us life and it is this hope that will save the lost.
  - **We being Christian understand that when we call out to God that He will say we are His people.**
- How have you seen God's refinement in your life?
- Has the results from your refinement allowed you to help others?