

## **“Give Me your heart, my son” (Prov.23:26)**

When Mussolini wanted to invade Abyssinia just before the start of the Second World War, England and France tried to pacify him by offering him a big part of the North African desert. The dictator responded with these proud words: “I am not a collector of deserts!” He wanted the capitol, Addis Ababa! There is a tragic spiritual lesson to be learnt from this piece of history. So often we try and appease God and we treat Him as if He is a “desert collector.” We do not denounce Him, but neither do we fully commit ourselves to serve Him whole-heartedly. We offer Him the arid edges of our life. We are under the impression that our external activities, like going to church on a Sunday, reading a piece from a daily devotional, supporting the latest fund-raising project, and getting married and buried in church, will satisfy God. I suppose you know that He cannot be satisfied by a policy of compromise? He wants your “Addis Ababa.” He wants your heart. He wants that part of your life which determines the deepest qualities of your being! Jesus said: *“But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile a man.”* (Mat.15:18). *“For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart”* (Mat.12:34).

It is at this point where the Word of God causes a crisis in each person’s life. It confronts you with: *“Give Me your heart...and I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh...and I will put My Spirit within you...I will save you from all your uncleanness”* (Ezek.36:26-28). It is also here where religious “new year’s resolutions” differ from what God wants to do in the heart. As time goes by, good intentions wear off so that the real “self” surfaces again. On the other hand, the work of the Holy Spirit in my heart causes a miracle which influences the way I treat my family and other people around me. It influences my work, my play, my joy and my sorrow. It affects how I live and how I die. It is the result of not only giving God my “Addis Ababa, but my whole “Abyssinia.” It is the result of an unconditional surrender to Jesus Christ.

How do I give my heart to God? It must be a spontaneous sigh that comes from deep within. “God in heaven, I give you my heart! Forgive me for clinging to it for so long. Forgive me for every wrong thing that I have committed in my life. Come and stay in Me by your Spirit and make me a new person! Thank you for Jesus who bore my sin. In Jesus Name I pray, Amen.

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