

Read: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Out with the old, in with the new

Ezekiel 18:31

Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Have you ever heard someone say, “Out with the old, in with the new”? Someone might say it when a child grows out of their old, small clothes and needs newer, bigger clothes. Or a person might use the phrase when they are replacing something that is old and broken with something new.

A guy name Ezekiel, who was one of God’s prophets a long time ago, encouraged God’s people with some words that sound a lot like “out with the old, in with the new.” He said, “Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit.”

Ezekiel tells believers—out with the old. Get rid of the sin that is in your life. That is something believers like you and me still struggle with today! We regularly sin—there are times when we are unkind to a friend or family member, we are selfish, we get mad when things don’t go our way, we don’t listen to or obey our parents... and the list could go on and on. No matter how hard we try, we keep sinning, and the guilt and memories of sins that we have committed seem to stick with us.

God does what we can’t. He takes our sin and gets rid of it. It is why God’s Son, Jesus, came to earth—to deal with sin once and for all. He took all the sin in your life and took it away from you. His life, death, and resurrection from the dead was so that you could be certain that God has taken all your sins, all your failures away. They are completely gone!

Out with the old, in with the new. Ezekiel says that God now gives us “a new heart and a new spirit.” This “new heart and new spirit” doesn’t like to sin, but wants to avoid it in our lives. Because God gives us a new heart and new spirit, we will work hard to be kind to those around us, to be patient, to listen to and obey our parents... and the list could go on and on.

Out with the old, in with the new! When you see sin in your life, take it to God and know that he has taken all your sins away (out with the old). Now make every effort to let that new heart and new spirit God has put in you show itself in all you do (in with the new)!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Can you think of something that you or your family got rid of because it was old and then replaced it with something new?
- What does God do with our sin?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Why is it so hard to get rid of sin in our life?
- How does God give us a new heart and a new spirit?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Agree or disagree: If we fight hard enough, it's possible to get rid of sin completely in our lives. Explain your answer.
- Think of one thing that seems to hold you back from wanting to live with this new heart and new spirit.

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I thank you that you have taken all my sins away. Help me now to live a life free from sin. Strengthen me so that my "new heart and new spirit" will show itself in all I say and do. In Jesus' name. Amen.