

It feels good to have things that are new: a new car, a new set of clothes. It feels good to have things that are new. Sometimes things that are worn down can be renewed. When things are washed clean and fixed up and renovated we say that they are “good as new.” Today in God’s Word, we see that the Holy Spirit makes us new.¹ **“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10).** Today as we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, we remember that the Holy Spirit creates us anew. Today our theme is:

Ask God to Give you the Holy Spirit

- 1. To create in you a pure heart**
- 2. To open your lips in praise**

First, Ask God to give you the Holy Spirit “to create in you a pure heart.” Our passage today starts out, **“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10).** We sometimes sing these words in our worship services after the sermon. These words come from the second half of Psalm 51.

David wrote this Psalm after the prophet Nathan had confronted him about his sin with Bathsheba. Some of the Psalms have headings and the heading of Psalm 51 says, **“When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.”** Bathsheba was the wife of Uriah the Hittite. David slept with Bathsheba. Bathsheba became pregnant and David tried to cover up what he had done by arranging for Uriah to be killed in battle and then taking Bathsheba as his wife.

In our passage for today, David prays, **“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10)** When David had repented about his sin, Nathan assured him that he was forgiven. Nathan told him, “The LORD has taken away your sin.” And David believed that. But I’m sure that there were times when his sin still bothered him. David was someone with an especially sensitive conscience. One time, David felt guilty that he had cut off the corner of King Saul’s robe (1 Samuel 24:5). And now look how David had done! I’m sure that there were times when David’s spirit did not feel very steadfast. And so David prays, **“Create in me a pure heart, O God, a renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10).** David needed the Holy Spirit to remind him and assure him that his sins really were forgiven. The constant reminder that he was forgiven was the only thing that would make his spirit steadfast.² When we sing this song in our worship services, instead of “steadfast spirit,” we say a “right spirit.” Our spirits are set on the right and sure ground that our sins are forgiven in Christ.

David prays, **“Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me” (Psalm 51:11).** David needed the Holy Spirit to remind him and assure him that he was forgiven. In the Gospel for today, Jesus called the Holy Spirit the Advocate. The word can also be translated, “The Comforter.” The Holy Spirit is the Comforter who reminds us that Jesus really did take away the guilt of our sin.

When the Holy Spirit assures you of forgiveness, it doesn’t just comfort you. It makes you new. **“Create in me a pure heart, O God.” (Psalm 51:10).** At the beginning God created everything and it was very good. But then sin corrupted our hearts. We couldn’t fix this corruption ourselves. We needed God to make us new. That’s why David prays, “Create in me a pure heart, O God.”³ When you were baptized, the Holy Spirit washed you pure and clean and he also created a new heart in you. The pure hearts that the Holy Spirit creates in us

¹ I owe this insight to a sermon preached Professor Paul Wendland at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Graduation, <https://www.wls.wels.net/graduation-sermon-2/>.

² I owe this insight to Dr. C.F.W. Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, (St. Louis: Concordia, 1986, original 1897), 43-44.

³ I owe this insight to John Brug, *A Commentary on Psalms 1 – 72* (Milwaukee: Northwestern, 2004), 512.

blossom and flourish with good works like flowers in spring time. In the last verse of the Psalm David says, **“Then you will delight in the sacrifices of righteous, in burnt offerings offered whole; then bulls will be offered on your altar” (Psalm 51:19)**. In the worship service we sing the Create in Me right before we give our offering to God. Our new hearts are so thankful to the LORD for everything that he has done for us that we want to give offerings to the LORD out of thankful hearts. That’s just one of the many good works we do out of thankfulness to God.

Ask God to give you the Holy Spirit to create in you a pure heart. And, secondly, ask God to give you the Holy Spirit to open your lips in praise. David says, **“Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise” (Psalm 51:15)**. We also say this verse sometimes in our worship services. “O Lord, open my lips. And my mouth will declare your praise.” This Psalm tells us a lot about worship. In worship we hear the good news that God has saved us from our sins and we respond by opening our mouths and praising him. David says, **“Restore to me the joy of your salvation” (Psalm 51:12)**. The Holy Spirit has given us joy in our hearts and because of that joy we open our mouths and praise God. We joyfully praise God in our hymns. David says, **“My tongue will sing of your righteousness” (Psalm 51:14)**.

Not only do we open our lips to sing God’s praises in church, but we also open our lips to tell others about Jesus. David says, **“Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you” (Psalm 51:13)**. On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit gave the disciples the boldness to open their lips and speak. The second lesson for today says that they were **“declaring the wonders of God” (Acts 2:11)**. They were saying that Jesus had died on the cross for our sins and that God raised him from the dead on the third day. They said that everyone who repents of their sins and believes in Jesus has forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Ask God to send you the Holy Spirit so that you can open your lips too. Ask God to open your lips so that you can tell others, “Jesus died for the sins of the world, including mine, including yours.” Ask God to give you the Holy Spirit to open your lips in praise.

We love it when things are new and when things are made new. The Holy Spirit makes us new. He makes us new with his forgiveness. He makes us new with his power. Let’s ask God for the Holy Spirit. And that is a request that God will certainly not refuse. One time Jesus said that human fathers know how to give good gifts to their children. And if human fathers know how to give good gifts to their children, **“how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?” (Luke 11:12)** Ask God to give you the Holy Spirit to create in you a clean heart and to open your lips in praise. Amen.