

## **Stone or Flesh?**

### **Ready:**

“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.” – Ezekiel 36:26-27

### **Set**

Specific physical characteristics usually define the players that are good in their chosen sport. Granted, there are always exceptions, but ordinarily, high-caliber players playing the same sport tend to have similar physical attributes. For example, someone tall and lanky is typically identified as someone who plays basketball or volleyball. Someone large in size and muscle may be guessed to play on the line for a football team.

Sometimes, outside appearances give way to where our athletic talents are. It's not as easy to tell the inward condition of someone's heart, mind and soul. This reminds me of someone in athletics called a “gentle giant.” They look tough and mean from the outside, but inside, they are as kind and soft as a teddy bear. Their heart condition is unknown until you interact with them and discover through words, actions and spirit that their heart is “made of flesh.”

A heart made of flesh is the biblical term used in Ezekiel to describe a heart that can feel, enjoy, is open to the movements of God, and is easily moldable by the Holy Spirit. A heart of stone is the exact opposite. It's an unmovable, unchanging heart with little room for love to live. It's a heart that resists the movements of the Holy Spirit in favor of its way of viewing the world.

God promises that He can and will remove our heart of stone and place a new heart of flesh within us. The choice is ours if we let the Holy Spirit move us closer or further away from Christ. Examine your heart today and see if it lends more toward a heart of flesh or stone. Decide today that though people may see first what's on the outside, you leave them remembering how your heart works.

### **Go**

- What are some more attributes of a heart of flesh? What about stone?
- Looking inward, where do you see your heart right now?

### **Workout**

Matthew 5:8

2 Corinthians 5:17

## **Overtime**

“God, You gave us Your Spirit as our Guide and Helper. It’s easy to look past the condition of our hearts to focus on the outside. If things in this world are causing our hearts to be like stone, remove them from our lives. Place a heart of flesh in us and help us to love Your kingdom with a new heart. Amen.”



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