

II. The Heart



The human heart – the centre of consciousness,
intention and decision.

- There is a close correspondence between ‘heart’ and ‘spirit’(= communion with God)

‘Create in me a clean heart, O God;
put a new and right spirit within me.’(Psalm 51:10)

- The heart belongs to God who made it and knows it.

‘YHWH moulds every heart’(Psalm 33:15).

‘Human beings look to appearances, but YHWH sees the heart’(I Samuel 16:7).

- We must go to the heart and follow it

‘Heed the counsel of your own heart, for no one is more faithful to you than it is. Your soul often forewarns you; it is better that seven watchmen perched on a watch-tower. You must also beg the Most High to guide your steps in the truth’(Sirach 37:13).

‘More than all else, keep watch over your heart, for there are the wellsprings of life’(Proverbs 4:23).

‘May Yahweh grant you your heart’s desire’(Psalm 20:4).

- Yet the heart on its own can be unwise

‘The person who trusts his own heart is a fool.

The one whose ways are wise will be safe’(Proverbs 28:26).

‘Do not listen to what the prophets are saying: they are deluding you, retailing visions from their own hearts, and not what comes from the mouth of YHWH.’

(Jeremiah 23:16).

‘Out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander ...’(Matthew 5:19).

- Insincerity of heart and hypocrisy

‘A glaze applied to an earthen pot: such are the smooth lips and wicked heart’(Proverbs 26:23).

‘Though they outwardly flattered him and used they tongues to lie to him, in their hearts they were not true to him, they were unfaithful to his covenant’(Psalm 78:36-37).

- A hardened heart must be broken ('contrite'),
an adulterated heart purified.

‘Create in me a clean heart, O God’(Psalm 51:12).

‘You will not scorn this crushed and broken heart.’

(Psalm 51:16).

- Setting our heart on God

‘If you start searching once more for Yahweh your God,
and if you seek Yahweh with all your heart, you will find
him’(Deuteronomy 4:29).

‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.’

(Matthew 5:8).

- God is close to the heart that looks to him

‘Yahweh is near to the broken-hearted’(Psalm 34:18).

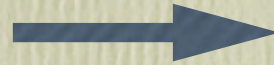
‘Yahweh sent me to bind up hearts that are broken’
(Isaiah 61:1).

‘God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts,
crying “Abba! Father!”(Galatians 4:6)

Revelation



Heart



speaks to



heart

Philippians 2:1-5

‘If there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:6-11

Being in the form of God, he did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death –even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Compassion

See

Judge

Act

He saw was moved with **compassion** and ...

‘A leper came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, “If you choose, you can make me clean.” Moved with **compassion**, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, “I do choose. Be made clean!” (Mark 1:40-41)

Compassion

See

Judge

Act

He saw was moved with **compassion** and ...

‘Jesus saw the crowd; and he had **compassion** for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things’(Mark 6:34).

Compassion

See

Judge

Act

He saw was moved with **compassion** and ...

‘When the Lord saw the widow, he had **compassion** for her and said to her, “Do not weep.” Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you, rise!”(Luke 7:13-14).

Compassion

See

Judge

Act

He saw was moved with **compassion** and ...

‘A Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with **compassion**. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him’(Luke 10:33-34).

Compassion

See

Judge

Act

He saw was moved with **compassion** and ...

‘While he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with **compassion**; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him’(Luke 15:20).

The Jesuit Teilhard de Chardin gives expression to sentiments that would be shared by many holy women and men from any number of the religious traditions that enrich our human family by contributing to what Justin Martyr calls ‘a symphony of salvation.’

‘Those with a passionate sense of the divine cannot bear to find things about them obscure, tepid and empty, when they should be full and vibrant with God.

They are astonished by the number of people linked in the unity of the same world, who are not yet fully kindled by the flame of the divine presence (The Divine Milieu page 144).

There was a time when they thought that they had only to stretch out their hands in order to touch God to the measure of their desires. Now they see that the only embrace capable of enfolding the divine is that of all mankind opening its arms to call down and welcome the fire. The only subject capable ultimately of mystical transformation is the whole family of mankind forming a single body and a single soul in love' (The Divine Milieu page 144).

McAuley, James (1917-1976) : Faith (01/05/76)

I know that faith is like a root
That's tough, inert and old;
Yet it can send up its green shoot
And flower against the cold.

I know there is a grace that flows
When all the springs run dry.
It wells up to renew the rose
And lift the cedars high.