

Title : The heart of the matter

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The most important resource in any church

Proverbs 4:23 Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. (NLT)

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.(ESV)

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it. (NIV)

It is the heart that defines us, not the externals

Matthew 15:8-9 (ESV) ⁸“This people honour me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; ⁹in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”

It is the heart that defines us, not the externals

Matthew 15:18-20 ¹⁸But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. ¹⁹For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”

We are in the dispensation of the restoration of the tabernacle of David

Acts 15:15-17 Saul was trapped in a world of externals. David lived from the inside out.

It is the heart that defines us, not the externals

1 Samuel 15:22 And Samuel said, “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.”

It is the heart that defines us, not the externals

Psalms 51:16-17 “For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise”.

Our journey as a church family has been a journey of the heart

Why do I do what I do?

Why am I in the town I'm in?

Why am I part of this church family?

How do I view my brothers and sisters?

Who/what determines how I feel about myself?

Where do I look when things do not turn out the way I expected/wanted?

From the external structure to the heart

Being One

John 17:20-21 (ESV) ²⁰“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” I have seen great growth in our unity not based on uniformity, but a bond of the spirit rooted in the cause of Christ to see the lost saved and discipled. I have seen great growth in our reconnection with the rest of the Body of Christ. There is much more that awaits us.

“In Essentials Unity, In Non-Essentials Liberty, In All Things Charity” Rupertus Meldenius, circa 1627?

From the external structure to the heart

Known for love

John 13:34-35 ³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” *I have seen a new standard that Christ has established in our midst in the way we love and support each other. We still have much to learn...*

Do I love my brothers from my heart?

From the external structure to the heart

Sound of the harvest

Luke 15:4-7 ⁴“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? ⁵And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbours, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance

Our unity with one another and our love for one another, will draw others to us (attractional).

Our passion to be like Christ and to be with Christ, will propel us to others (missional).

Unity, love and passion.

The heart of the matter

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart, Hear me.

From the desire of being esteemed, Deliver me.

From the desire of being loved, Deliver me.

From the desire of being extolled, Deliver me.

From the desire of being honoured, Deliver me.

From the desire of being praised, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being preferred to others, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being consulted, Deliver me.

From the desire of being approved, Deliver me.

From the fear of being humiliated, Deliver me.

From the fear of being despised, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of suffering rebukes, Deliver me.

From the fear of being calumniated, Deliver me.

From the fear of being forgotten, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being ridiculed, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being wronged, Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being suspected, Deliver me, Jesus.

That others may be loved more than I, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be esteemed more than I, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be chosen and I set aside, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be praised and I unnoticed, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be preferred to me in everything, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it. <http://www.turnbacktogod.com/litany-of-humility/>

Where is my heart hiding behind activity (spiritual/physical/social)?

Where have I drifted from my brothers and sisters in this family?

Where have I dishonoured/drifted from the rest of the Body of Christ?

Am I ready to hear what the Lord of the harvest wants to tell me?