

ISSUES

IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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Are We Paying Attention to the Heart?

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3 Reflections

Orville C. Walz, President

4 Editorials

6 Nurturing Hearts for Service: Implications for Ministry

by Carl Toelke

10 Worship and the Heart

by Paul J. Grime

15 "Heartfelt" Worship Takes Courage

by Peter Prochnow

18 Teach to the Heart!

by Marvin Bergman

23 Book Reviews

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reflections

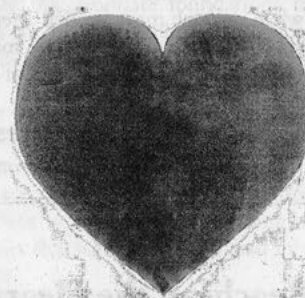
One of my favorite stories in Holy Scripture is the account of the two followers of Jesus on their way to the village of Emmaus on Easter Sunday afternoon. Not knowing who He was, they were joined by Jesus on the walk, and He asked them to explain their conversation. As they lamented all that had occurred, with their hopes dashed by this Messiah who was going to redeem Israel, Jesus began teaching. He said, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke 24:25).

Today when worshippers are searching for experiences described as exciting, when educators are examining the role of the affective domain in the teaching-learning process, when congregations are attempting to inspire higher levels of enthusiasm in service and witness, the role of the heart can be seen as central in the ministry of congregations. This edition of *Issues in Christian Education* examines Biblical perspectives on the heart and explores implications for us in worship, teaching, and service.

Mary E. Moore observed that just as the human heart pumps blood to keep the brain alive, and the brain sends signals to regulate the heart, so teaching that is alive involves an integration of the heart and the mind. In the last 30 years in this country there has been a 560 percent increase in violent crime, a 400 percent increase in illegitimate births, a quadrupling in divorce rates, and a 200 percent increase in the teen suicide rate. Sin has its origins in the heart. The Biblical perspective is obvious: if necessary change is to occur, it must happen in the heart. Carl Toelke points out, "We know that motivating and nurturing the heart for service means more than merely jump-starting and maintaining a muscle to pump blood. More exercise and less cholesterol do not guarantee hearts for service."

As you read about implications of Biblical perspectives on the heart in worship, teaching and service in this edition of *Issues*, look to Jesus Christ, our Master Teacher. Luke tells us that the Master Teacher was effective. "And they said to one another, 'Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scripture to us?'" (Luke 24:32). May this edition help to open our eyes and hearts to the important ministry to which God has called us!

Orville C. Walz, President





editorials

Teaching to the Affective Domain

WHAT DOES IT MEAN when Lutherans leave Lutheran congregations complaining that they are not being spiritually fed? It may mean the complainers have found that messages coming from their Lutheran pulpits lack a certain reality factor. That is, the messages are true and are doctrinally accurate, but the presentation of them fails to make contact with actual lives being lived—lived not in the abstract, but upon the dusty, potholed roads of real towns peopled by troubled folk. When reality is missing, mature Christian faith does not develop.

Research conducted by Search Institute of Minneapolis and reported in 1990 raised important questions regarding the development of integrated or mature Christian faith and practice among Lutheran youth. Most troubling was the realization that lack of development leads to attrition. As things presently stand, our number of youth confirmations represents only 57 percent of the number of baptisms fourteen years prior. Another noticeable percent of youth walks away from their congregations following confirmation and before the first anniversary of high school graduation.

Six Protestant denominations, including the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, had agreed upon behaviors which characterize mature Christian development. While 42 percent of one denomination's seventeen-to-eighteen-year olds exhibited such patterns, only two percent of Lutherans of the same age exhibited these patterns. Fresh research was later undertaken by the LCMS among only LCMS subjects but did not produce statistically significantly different results. Knowledge scores among Lutherans are consistently high, while evidential behavior scores can be alarmingly low.

Since 1991, a group of us has been examining the hypothesis that strengthening our skill teaching (and preaching) to the affective domain of human learning could aid in diminishing LCMS membership loss. Aid Association for Lutherans was good enough to provide a grant, enabling us to begin an exploration of our hypothesis. Dr. Kenneth Ellwein, executive director of Orange County Lutheran high school in Orange, California, offered his school as an experimental site. He later reported that the switch to dual focused religion education in his classrooms (i.e., cognitive and affective) coincided with a 15 percent increase in retention. While none of us was willing to infer a direct cause and effect relationship, our interest was piqued.

What would be the long term benefits to people, congregations and institutions within our Synod, we asked ourselves, if attrition from Sunday worship, Bible classes and the like could be reduced by 15 percent? Encouraged by early results, our team of Concordia faculty and Dr. Ellwein determined to pursue the affective domain of human learning in its relationship to spiritual instruction.

What is the affective domain of human learning and development? This illustration may be helpful: On our full-time faculty at Irvine are two men who smoke. That is two out of a total of 55 or so. Both are in their fifties. Both hold Ph.D.'s. Both are among the most sought-out professors on campus with classes regularly oversubscribed. Both know at the deepest levels of the cognitive domain the risks associated with smoking. Both are under constant peer pressure to quit. Yet they persist in smoking. Why?

Despite the libraries of documented evidence at our fingertips regarding the dangers of smoking, thousands of non-smokers become smokers every year. What influences them to do so? The fact of the matter is that human beings do not make value decisions on the basis of cognition alone. The process involved in the forming of values and the behaviors which proceed out of those values are part and parcel of something beyond mere acquisition of information. They are part and parcel of the affective domain of human learning.

The academic question—Could strengthening our skill teaching to the affective domain of human learning aid in diminishing LCMS member-

ship loss?—implies that education aimed at influencing the value formation process can be deliberate, that such influence can be intentionally designed and implemented in parochial day schools, confirmation classes, high schools, colleges and Sunday sermons. Such instruction recognizes that knowledge acquisition and value formation are related but are not synonymous.

Also implied is that such deliberate, intentional education in the affective domain of human learning rarely occurs. We who design instruction, whether for the classroom or the pulpit, faithfully and deliberately address cognitive development and all too frequently regard affective development as accidental to our effort. Many teachers and pastors are of the opinion that if an application is made or an illustration offered within a lesson, that is teaching to the affective domain. It may be, and then again it may not be. It is often nothing more than teaching to the third level of the cognitive domain.

The cognitive domain is where I think. The affective domain is where I live. If I complain that I'm not being spiritually fed in my present congregation, I am, in fact, saying that the messages are missing my affective domain. The sermons may be deeply intellectual and always doctrinally sound, but they are not hitting my targets; I am not identifying with them. Therefore, I label them irrelevant. This is a particularly sensitive issue for youth, whose patience with what they find irrelevant is less than is true for most adults.

It is important that we understand and appreciate that the affective and cognitive domains of learning are linked. One cannot deal with the affective domain void of cognitive substance. One can deal with the cognitive domain without regard to the affective domain, but not without serious impact upon the learning that occurs. The two domains are dependent upon each other.

While never giving an inch of ground with respect to the Bible's clear teaching that faith is a gift which comes only through the working of the Holy Spirit in the hearing of the Word and the reception of the Sacraments, we look forward to the day when through more studied attention to the affective domain of learning, we might become more apt tools through whom that Word is proclaimed.

Ray Halm, President

Concordia University-Irvine

Reaching the Heart

UNDERSTANDING LEARNING IS critical to reaching the heart of the learner. Three domains—cognitive, affective, psychomotor—are equally important for all learning, but especially for learning the Faith. Knowledge without value and action is

sterile and pompous. When educators fail to plan for integrating the three domains into curricula and schools, students and society suffer horrendously. For many decades curriculum guides, course syllabi, and lesson plans have stated that behavioral growth in knowledge, attitudes, and skills is their intended outcome. Quite frequently, one domain has been emphasized with some secondary emphasis upon one or the other, but which excludes the third.

Luther defined belief in Christ as knowledge, acceptance, and trust in Him as our personal Savior. The twelve-year old boy Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. I do think that it is accurate to understand Luther and Luke to mean that learning and teaching the faith involve all three domains. However, proper understanding and use of the affective domain significantly contribute to the complete development of the human intellect. "Teaching from the heart to the heart" implies that the sender's "self" touches the receiver's "self." Such touching affirms human worth and connects us to other people. Honest, valid sharing of "self" should couple appropriate information, leading to a self-regulated pattern of overt behavior. The affective domain is a primary vehicle toward healthy personal and social mental health.

The Gospel of John uses the intimate term "know" to describe the relationship of Jesus to the Father and to believers. The term describes transmitting knowledge in an open, personal manner. Personal expression best communicates the closeness of the Father to the Son and to believers through Christ. The affective domain unites knowledge with self. No separation of mind and heart or of teacher and student is possible if this aspect of human intellect is activated. To evaluate what we and others really know requires observing what they accept as true by acting upon it.

Identifying what an individual feels at any given moment is the best identifier of the central agenda or need of the individual at that time. Feelings are transitory and therefore by themselves are inappropriate foundations for faith. Feelings are part of thinking and learning and cannot be ignored in ministry.

Why is the affective, such a vital, powerful element of human learning, so frequently suspected and ridiculed? In part because feeling, emotion, and attitude are sometimes treated as a separate domain apart from cognitive content. Effective learning and thinking necessarily require that learners are touched by all three domains.

Confessional Christians are often skeptical about the reliability of emotion and feelings in worship, doctrine, and faith. I agree with the necessity for remaining steadfast in the Word. I am also persuaded that we must understand learning and learners if we are to be effective witnesses and teachers.

Jesus modeled an alertness we must have to detect the human tendency to hear and understand the Gospel compartmentally, thus fostering only a partial commitment. Jesus taught from His heart, the recognizable authority in His teaching.

Can people be taught for affective growth? In the 1950's we believed that attitudes and values could be taught by effective use of the cognitive domain coupled with a positive example of attitude and values by the teacher. Since then we have spent much time and energy emphasizing the importance of relationships and have learned more about the process of teaching values, attitude, and character. Today, most theorists agree that demonstration by significant peer and cross-generational models is still highly effective. We have also learned that description, discussion, and engaging activities reinforce modeling which, in turn, enhances learning.

We need structures which deliver relational and behavioral information within maintained communities. Families, classes, youth groups, Bible classes, clubs, special interest activity groups, and worship groups provide such communities.

Eugene Oetting

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Are We Paying Attention to the Heart in Ministry?

THERE WAS A GIRL who was chronically ill and was usually bedridden. But her wealthy mother was so depressed by the daughter's illness that she took lengthy trips abroad. However, she would send the girl lavish gifts periodically.

On one of the girl's birthdays she sent a beautiful, expensive vase. But the daughter threw the vase aside and cried out, "Oh, Mother, I don't want any more gifts! No more flowers, no more vases, no more trinkets! Mother, I only want you! YOU!"

Jesus said, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30).

God calls us to give our whole heart to Him. But do we? As a student, did I study as hard as I could for that test, or did I do just enough to get by? Do I give my classmates my "all"?

As a teacher, did I prepare enough for that class, or did I just "wing it"? Whatever your ministry may be—at church, in the home, in the workplace—are you giving your whole heart to it? The question is: Am I living for self or for God? Often you and I need to turn, to change from our self-centeredness and hesitancy to give our whole heart to Christ. When the Lord says, "My son,

give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways" (Proverbs 23:26), we are to lovingly respond, "With all my heart. . . I will obey your commands!" (Psalm 119:145)

And this matter of handing over our whole heart to Christ is at the very center of the Christian faith. "For we know that our old self was crucified with Him (that is, with Christ) to do away with our sinful body, so that we might not be enslaved to sin any longer. . ." (See Romans 6:1-11).

As Paul said, "For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3, Moffatt). Catherine Marshall noted, "The Christ of the cross isn't going to become real to you until you come to terms with this hard core of reality at the heart of Christianity. How could He be real to you when you—not He—are still at the center of your life?" (*Beyond Ourselves*, p. 188)

But it is only in going through this process—empowered totally by the Holy Spirit—that we can truly give Christ our whole heart—our "all." As Luther said, "The recognition of sin is the beginning of salvation." Charlie Brown would say, "The theological implications of this are staggering." We are "saved by grace through faith alone." And this is not an act we perform to be justified before God, but it is "God at work" in us. (See Ephesians 2:8-9).

Our Lord gave us His all. He suffered and died on the cross for our sins.

And now we are called to follow Him. But He is no "model to emulate." That is the evil of moralism. Moralism holds up certain values as ideals to follow rather than seeing them as consequences of the Gospel. We don't "work on" traits of Christian character. For Christ is not just "our example." He is rather prototype. He is the first fruits of those who believe in Him. Therefore, we do not focus on his humility, as a precept to follow, but on his humiliation—his sacrifice—for us. Also, we do not "work on" giving our whole heart to Christ, but see His giving of Himself for us. For we fail totally. But through His death and resurrection we are forgiven and then called to the fruits of faith, empowered totally by the Holy Spirit. It is "Christ in me" (Colossians 1:27).

That is the Gospel: what Christ has done for us. Not an act that I perform: giving my whole heart to God. That is the result of the Gospel.

So "Look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). I gave Myself for thee: Give thou thyself to Me.

Donald Deffner

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Carl Toelke

Nurturing Hearts for Service: Implications for Ministry

WHY DO YOU DO what you do?" In my work with Lutheran social ministry organizations, I often have the opportunity to ask people that question. Sometimes I am referred to a *mission statement* or an organization's *statement of purpose*. Most often, however, I find that people just seem to be spontaneous in their human care and not at all that conscious of their motivations. If pressed, they may reply, "I just like what I am doing," or "This is the way I was brought up," or "It's just part of who I am," or "Caring is something I just do from the heart."

My guess is that most of us can respond either way. If we perceive "Why do you do what you do?" as a *reason* question, we might try to give a theological answer. If we sense a *feeling* question, we will probably respond in a feeling way. How many of us can answer the "Why do you love me?" question? We "just do," and trying to intellectualize why we love or care or "have a heart" seems to diminish the integrity of the very feeling we are trying to explain.

Obviously, we know that motivating and nurturing the heart for service means more than merely jump-starting and maintaining a muscle to pump blood. More exercise and less cholesterol do not guarantee hearts for service. What, then, does or does not motivate and nurture the heart—in all its Hebrew and Greek metaphorical connotations—for ministry?

Physically, the heart pumps because that is the nature of the muscle. Metaphorically, too, the heart just does what the heart does. The heart gets strength from bread,¹ is gladdened by wine² and wise children,³ becomes sad⁴ or lion-hearted⁵ or discouraged⁶ or fearful⁷ or willing⁸ and trusting⁹ and loving.¹⁰

No matter how hard we try, we cannot explain precisely how the Spirit of God or the Christian heart works. Of course, we still try. Sometimes rather than appreciate the Gospel as a power¹¹ that works in its own way through the

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Spirit, we tend to use the Gospel as a reason for why we *should* do things. By nature, spontaneity of the Christian heart is as windy as the Spirit of God.¹²

What Motivates Hearts of Compassion?

IN GIVING THE NAME Yahweh to Moses,¹³ God says that the nature of God is who God is and what God does, that God's action cannot be separated from God's character. John's statement in his first epistle that "God is *agape*"¹⁴ is neither a definition of God nor merely a description of God. It is a statement about the nature of God. Never is there a question of whether or not God loves. God does not not love. If it is the nature of God to not not love, is not the question of what motivates God to love irrelevant?

Jesus' love and compassion for others is a natural, spontaneous expression of who he is as the Son of God. He has "heart" instead of reasons for caring for others. In baptism our whole relationship with God undergoes a transplant. We are God's sons and daughters, joined together with Christ in his death and resurrection. Living in forgiveness rather than fear or guilt that would motivate us to want to do good and look forward only *to* the resurrection, we are so much a part of Jesus' resurrection that we live our lives looking forward *from* the resurrection.¹⁵ As those with new life whom not even death¹⁶ or an original sinful heart¹⁷ can separate from the love of God, our loving and caring for others is a spontaneous expression of who we are as sons and daughters of God.

Children of God do not really need to be motivated to be who they are, but they can be nurtured or nourished for service.¹⁸ Amazingly, God does that, too. Unfortunately, though, God's nurture is often perceived as negative motivation. Biblical words like *command*, *obey*, and *authority* have been given the coloring of contemporary English usage. Hardly ever are they connected with God's nurture for spontaneously living out the Gospel.

How Do Hearts Express Compassion?

AS GOD'S SONS and daughters we have been given commands or commandments to carry out God's will. Just as in Judaism, where to be a *Bar Mitzvah* or *Bat Mitzvah* (Son or Daughter of the Commandment) is an honor or privilege, God's commandments to Christians are a charge that constitutes an honor or privilege. The Hebrew word *mitzvah* and the Greek *entole* both come from root words that have the basic meaning of commissioning for a specific task. In the Bible it is only God's people who are given God's commands.¹⁹ A command is a responsibility given to a person by an authority who has already established a relationship with that person. For example, a king or queen will give a command to a general because the sovereign

trusts the general to carry out the command. Commandments are not prescriptions for a relationship with God but descriptions of how we live out the relationship God has established with us. Commands express God's will for those with whom a saving relationship has already been established. "And God spoke these words, saying, 'I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.'"²⁰

Fine, but what about obeying those commands? In both Hebrew (*shema*) and Greek (*akouo*), the word "obey" comes from the root "to hear." If there were comparative and superlative degrees for verbs as there are for adjectives in the English language, "obey" would be the superlative of "hear." Obedience means that our wills, enlightened by the Spirit of God and the Word of God, are in tune with God's will. From being in touch with the Word of God, we appreciate God's will for us. We have heard and seen God's will in Jesus Christ. Having a command and being obedient are certainly not negatives but an affirmation of God's trusting and nurturing us. Jesus was under his Father's commandments, and Jesus was obedient.²¹ Rather than something motivated by fear, our obeying is a confirmation of our relationship with God in Jesus Christ.

Another assurance that we have God's love and trust is that we have been given God's authority or power.²² We are integral and essential components of the ministry²³ of the One who has been given "All authority. . . in heaven and on earth."²⁴ The authority or power God gives us conveys much more than merely representing God or exercising something like the "power of attorney." Luther's expression "Little Christs" captures the meaning. In Jewish legal tradition, a person who is given authority acts not in the place of the one who confers authority but *as* the one who confers authority. When the conferee acts, it is considered the same as the conferrer acting. There is no difference. When we reach out with care to others, God is reaching out to others with care. God's love is in our hearts.²⁵ Christ dwells in our hearts.²⁶ With the peace of Christ ruling in our hearts,²⁷ we obey God's commands and act with God's authority in our ministry with others.

What Nurtures Hearts of Compassion?

BECAUSE OUR CARING comes spontaneously from the heart, it does not follow that our nurturing hearts for ministry is unconscious or unwitting. In Lutheran social ministry organizations we even budget our spontaneity. Conceding to our backgrounds that often prescribe the lens through which we see religious things, I apologize in advance to Moses and Martin Luther for what follows. The "Commandments" have implications for both families and congregations as they nurture hearts for service.

1 You will have no ministry agendas that do not include nurturing hearts for service.

What does this mean?

It means that in our families and congregations ministry is not a concept separate from loving actions any more than God's love for the world can be separated from God's loving action in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ;²⁸ that just as healing and salvation are part of the same action for the whole person,²⁹ we minister so that every person may have "life to the full";³⁰ that nurturing hearts for service is as much a family and congregation goal as serving people; that ministry plans are specific about the needs that are to be met so that hearts experience "success" rather than disappointment about doing ministry; that individuals' strengths and age-appropriate abilities are used for service so that people can have a heart for what they do in service rather than feel guilt for what they cannot do; that nurturing hearts for service is enabling people to do what they can do and not holding them responsible for what only the Spirit of God can do.

2 You will not take your nurturing responsibility in vain.

What does this mean?

It means that in our families and congregations we will model the honesty and integrity and enthusiasm we expect from others; that we will model responsibility and competence and compassion by listening to the thoughts and feelings of those we nurture for service; that we create a safe atmosphere and environment for people to be creative and different; that we insure that all are part of the planning and have "ownership" in the ministry; that we will lead and not preside over ministry; that "doing it ourselves" without also nurturing others discounts others' potential and ultimately diminishes ongoing effective service; that, above all, we model to those we nurture the unconditional love and forgiveness that comes from the heart of God.

3 Remember to nurture your church relationship and keep it holy.

What does this mean?

It means that in our families and congregations each person's relationship as a son or daughter of God is the primary element in a heart for service; that individuals in families and congregations nourish each other through participation in worship and prayer and study of the Word and sharing in reception of the Lord's Supper; that regular prayer for those in need alerts persons to appropriate opportunities for service and support to human care organizations; that in families and congregations God's children are witnesses to each other as well as to society; that families and congregations develop a sense of commu-

nity and rituals and shared experiences in which hearts are nurtured for service.

4 Honor those whom you nurture for service that it may be well with you and you may live long to do the ministry the Lord your God gives you.

What does this mean?

It means that in our families and congregations we will affirm others as capable and caring; that we will enable people to experience satisfaction from what they do so that their hearts leap with joy about their parts in Christ's ministry; that we will challenge persons to become "perfect"³¹ in their service to others; that we let children and adults know that what to them may be seemingly insignificant acts of service are appreciated by us.³²

5 You will not kill the spirit of those whose hearts you nurture for ministry.

What does this mean?

It means that in our families and congregations we will nurture people fairly and be sensitive to personal differences and needs; that those with whom we serve are accorded the same care and concern as those for whom we provide service; that there are no surprises or changes in expectations that are not discussed with those whose hearts we are nurturing; that we acknowledge that ministry with others is interdependent.

6 You will not commit adulterous magnification of your nurturing expectations.

What does this mean?

It means that in our families and congregations hearts are nurtured little by little by persistence and patience; that hearts for service cannot be force fed or precisely programmed; that just as gardeners remove dead as well as living parts to improve production and form, pruning is sometimes necessary—no matter how much it hurts us to do so; that, as much as we may hate to admit it, we cannot control peoples' hearts but can control only our responsibility for nurturing hearts for service; that we realize we are also wrapped in the arms of God's forgiveness and often need to forgive ourselves.

7 You will not steal from your effectiveness in nurturing hearts for service.

What does this mean?

It means that in our families and congregations there will be constant evaluation of our nurturing; that, just as there are detours and delays in any planned trip, nurturing has snags and needs regular evaluation; that just as a child's physical nurturing plan can be diverted by food allergies, heart nurturing may call for a revised menu; that constant

evaluation ups the chances of nurturing hearts for service by diminishing the possibility of sidetracking; that stealing time or attention or love from our own families actually lessens our ability to nurture others.

8 You will not bear false witness against others who nurture hearts for service.

What does this mean?

It means that our families and congregations are not islands—although it may sometimes seem that we have lost each other's coordinates; that families and congregations need to build up and work in conjunction with others who nurture hearts and provide opportunities for service; that serving with others who share the same goals in ministry is itself an affirming and nurturing experience.

9 You will not covet your neighbor's turf.

What does this mean?

It means that our families and congregations are not in competition with others who nurture and provide similar service; that our ministry is to nurture those hearts for which we are responsible and serve those who can use the help we provide; that we need to keep our eyes focused upon those whom we can nurture.

10 You will not covet your neighbor's resources.

What does this mean?

It means that in our families and congregations our ability to nurture hearts for service is not dependent on budget or buildings or buses; that while the type of service opportunities we provide may be limited by lack of resources, nurturing hearts for service comes from something we have— hearts for nurturing.

For each of us, the primary preparation for nurturing hearts for service is our own relationship with God. That's what keeps our hearts in tune with God's will for bringing life in its fullness to others. As we reach out with God's command and authority, we can be creative in nurturing and serving others.

End Notes

¹See Judges 19:5.

²See Psalm 104:15.

³See Proverbs 27:11.

⁴See Nehemiah 2:2.

⁵See 2 Samuel 17:10.

⁶See Numbers 32:7.

⁷See Isaiah 35:4.

⁸See 2 Chronicles 29:31.

⁹See Proverbs 31:11.

¹⁰See Deuteronomy 13:13. For a complete overview of *leb*, see Fabry, "leb," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. by G. Johannes Botterweck, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., VII, 1995, p. 399 ff. For a complete overview of *kardia*, see Baumgartel and Behm, "kardia," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. by Gerhard Kittel, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., III, 1965, p. 605 ff. For a compact overview, see R. C. Dentan, "Heart," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. by George A. Buttrick, Nashville, Abingdon Press, II, 1962, p. 549 f.

¹¹*dunamis*. See Romans 1:16.

¹²See John 3:9.

¹³See Exodus 3:14.

¹⁴1 John 4:8.

¹⁵See Romans 6:4.

¹⁶See Romans 8:38-39.

¹⁷See Matthew 15:19; Mark 7:21.

¹⁸See 1 Timothy 4:6.

¹⁹See Exodus 20:1-2; Deuteronomy 6:25; Matthew 28:20; John 13:34.

²⁰Exodus 20:2.

²¹See John 14:31; 15:10; Romans 5:19.

²²See Matthew 10:1. The words "power" and "authority" are different translations of *exousia* [See Matthew 7:29; 28:18]. When *exousia* is translated as "power," the "power" is to be distinguished from when *dunamis* is translated as "power." *Exousia* has the connotation of authority; *dunamis* has the connotation of energy or force [Romans 1:16].

²³See Matthew 9:35-38.

²⁴See Matthew 28:18.

²⁵See Romans 5:5.

²⁶See Ephesians 3:17.

²⁷See Colossians 3:15.

²⁸See John 3:16.

²⁹*sozo*. See Acts 14:9; Romans 8:24.

³⁰See John 10:10.

³¹The Hebrew (*tamim*) and Greek (*teleios*) have the connotation of wholeness and maturity. Perfection does not mean attaining 100 percent on some standard of measurement.

³²Just as it is important when assuring persons of God's forgiveness that we assure them also of our forgiveness, it is important to assure persons also of our affirmation and appreciation. With God's authority, we are "Little Christs" to them.



Paul J. Grime

Worship and the Heart

TODAY ONE HEARS considerable discussion about worship. More specifically, questions are raised concerning what is and is not appropriate for the worship of God's people. While there is little consensus regarding how the worship debate can or should be resolved, there is at least a common goal that is shared by all, namely, that God's people be edified as they are brought into His presence to receive the forgiveness and life won by Jesus Christ.

In order to take a fresh look at the worship issue, we will examine the relationship between worship and the heart. What role does the heart play in worship? In what way does worship proceed from the heart? In what way is it for the heart? What makes worship "heartfelt"? What prepares the heart for worship of the triune God?

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To accomplish this inquiry, we will first consider the use of the word heart in sacred Scripture. This will then lead us into a discussion of the place of the heart in worship. Finally, we will consider the place of human emotions in worship.

The Heart in Sacred Scripture

THE WORD HEART is used in the Bible over 1000 times. The vast majority of these occurrences are not in reference to the physical organ that pumps blood through the human body; rather, the word heart is used primarily in a metaphorical sense, referring to the inner person or, if you will, the conscience. Such usage really is not that foreign to us. In this modern age in which we regularly toss off terms like EKG or heart bypass surgery, we still find ample opportunity to use the word heart in the metaphorical sense. We speak to someone "from the heart." We learn a hymn "by heart." There are many ways in which our use of the word heart embraces the whole of our human existence.

This conceptual use of the word heart is clearly rooted in the Biblical language of both the Old and New Testaments. The heart comes to represent the very being of a person. One modern Old Testament scholar describes the word heart as "a comprehensive term for the personality as a whole, its inner life, its character."¹ For example, every spectrum of the emotions is associated with the heart, such as Hannah's joyful heart (1 Samuel 2:1) and Nehemiah's sad heart (Nehemiah 2:2). Likewise, a person's understanding and ability to think is related to the heart. When the apostle Paul writes to the Philippians that "the peace of God . . . will guard your hearts and your minds" (Philippians 4:7), his point is not to separate the heart from the mind but to hold them together as a way of speaking of the whole person.²

The Biblical view of the heart presents another reality as well, namely, that the heart has been corrupted by sin. The individual acts of murder, adultery, theft, or false witness are not isolated aberrations that can be remedied by self-mutilation (Matthew 5:29-30); rather, it is the sin-enslaved heart that has brought the whole person, body and soul, into bondage. Jesus clearly affirms the Biblical understanding of the heart when He says: "Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander" (Matthew 15:20).

Through both positive and negative examples, sacred Scripture presents a picture of the heart that combines every aspect of our human existence. As Theo Sorg summarizes: "It is the person, the thinking, feeling, willing ego of man, with particular regard to his responsibility to God, that the N[ew] T[estament] denotes by the use of *kardia* [heart]."³

The Heart and Worship

FROM THE FOREGOING DISCUSSION it is not difficult to see how the heart is significantly involved in worship. The faith that is seated in the heart is inextricably bound to the confession that is given by the mouth (Romans 10:9-10). A separation of the heart from a person's worship would, in fact, be the highest form of hypocrisy.

In order to understand precisely how the heart is involved in worship, it is necessary to return to our earlier discussion regarding the sinful heart. Just as sin does not stem from an isolated event or thought but originates in the heart, that is, the whole person, so does God deal with sin not in some piecemeal fashion, but holistically, beginning with the heart. When, for example, Peter finished his sermon on Pentecost with the stinging accusation that the people were responsible for the death of Jesus, their response was not one simply of intellect or emotion: "When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37). Because the heart is accurately described as unrepentant (Romans 2:5), it is precisely there that God must begin His work of killing and making alive.

Because the Word of God—both the Word of Law and of Gospel—permeates the worship of the Christian Church, it therefore goes without saying that the heart is inextricably bound up in worship. It is to the heart that the Law of God is addressed in all its fury. Indeed, the heart must be circumcised (Romans 2:29; Acts 7:51). But it is also to the heart that the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings the sweet comfort of sins forgiven: "For God, who said 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made His light shine in our hearts" (2 Corinthians 4:6a). God does not despise the broken and contrite heart; rather, He creates a pure heart (Psalm 51:17,10). Through the Holy Spirit "God has poured out His love into our hearts" (Romans 5:5). Furthermore, He has sent His Spirit into our hearts that we might no longer be slaves of sin but His very own (2 Corinthians 1:22; Galatians 4:6).

When Lutherans talk about worship, they customarily speak of both Word and Sacrament. There can be no doubt that the proclamation of God's Word is addressed to the human heart where God accomplishes His work of repentance and faith. Likewise, it is with the heart that God's children give Him thanks and praise for His undeserved gifts (e.g., Psalm 111, especially verse 1). Yet at first glance it would appear that there is no direct connection between the Sacraments and the heart. Is there a connection between the heart and the Sacraments of Baptism, Confession and Absolution (Apology of the Augsburg Confession), and the Lord's Supper? Or is there some validity to the claim that the Lutheran linkage of Word *and* Sacrament is neither an ideal nor a necessity?⁴

Though each of the Sacraments is unique and defies any generalization, there is one common thread that runs throughout, namely, that through the Sacraments God works forgiveness of sins. We have already seen how forgiveness must be received by the heart in faith. Thus, it is self-evident that the heart is bound up in a proper reception of the Sacraments. This line of reasoning, however, begs another question: If the Word of God both convicts the sinful heart and soothes that heart with the comforting message of forgiveness, what use is there for the Sacraments? They appear, in effect, to be redundant.

That is not how Lutherans view the Sacraments. In his *Smalcald Articles*, Martin Luther says that God "is surprisingly rich in His Grace."⁵ He then goes on to list how God distributes His grace not only through the Word of the Gospel but also through Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar. Far from being redundant, the Sacraments give testimony to the goodness of God, for He has chosen to distribute life to us not only through His Word of truth but also through the visible means of the Sacraments. It is, in fact, precisely here in our discussion of the Sacraments that we see a correlation with the Biblical view of the heart. Just as the heart is used in Sacred Scripture to represent the whole person, body and soul, will and intellect, so do we find the Sacraments as a means by which God distributes His forgiveness to the whole person, both body and soul.

The linkage of Word and Sacrament and the relationship of the heart to both of them is an important deterrent to the threat of intellectualism. If the Christian faith were limited only to words on a page, there would be the constant temptation to turn the faith into an intellectual endeavor. The fact is that God has never dealt with His people in this way. To ancient Israel He gave not only His Word but also an elaborate system of sacrifices and rituals by which the people were to approach their Maker and Redeemer. Of course, with Jesus' sacrificial death we no longer observe these ordinances of old. Yet, for His New Testament Church Jesus has instituted the Sacraments, that through these earthly, physical means He might deliver to us life and salvation. Because our body is a part of who we are, the Sacraments play a vital role in our worship of God, for they address us not merely as intellectual beings but as fleshly creatures made in the image of God. Ultimately the Sacraments, as well as the Word of God, are part and parcel of the Incarnation, for the God who came in the flesh to save the world now comes in wine and bread and water and Word to deliver life to us.

Worship and the Emotions

THE TOPIC OF THE HEART in worship inevitably leads to the matter of emotions. Is there a place for emotion in worship? And a related question is this: How do we endeavor to make worship genuine or heartfelt?

The first question regarding emotion in worship must be answered in the affirmative. Yes, there will be emotion in worship, because God has created us to be emotional creatures. Separating our emotions from our worship would be to approach God as less than He created us to be.

To acknowledge that there is emotion in worship, however, does not bring the discussion to a close. After all, our whole being—emotions included—has been corrupted by sin. Emotions cannot always be trusted. Indeed, there are times when our emotions can and will mislead or deceive us. So imagine the result if our worship were somehow judged on the basis of our emotions. Just think how dangerous it would be if it were our feelings that determined the effectiveness of our worship.

So what are we supposed to feel in worship? That really is the wrong question. In response to the conviction of God's Law and the comfort of the Gospel there will be emotional responses that range from terror to exuberance, from sober reflection to joyful contentment. There is, however, no way to predict or control the emotional response. And what of those times when there seems to be no response at all? Are we then to conclude that our worship is less than genuine?

When our emotions or feelings are used to determine how we view our worship, then we run the risk of displacing God as the Giver of His good gifts. Instead of resting securely on the solid rock of God's promises, we find ourselves wallowing in the uncertainty of our fickle feelings which change from one moment to the next. Faith, which by its very nature is a sure trust and confidence in the mercies of God, suddenly finds itself challenged by the doubts of the sinful heart.

In the quest for genuine worship, the question to ask is not, "How do I feel?" but "What is God saying to me through His Word?" Do I hear the conviction of His Law? Do I grasp the sweet comfort of His promises in Christ? There can be no more genuine worship than to recognize the truth that God speaks about us. That includes the assurance of knowing that through Holy Baptism we have been joined to the triune God and have the blessings of life and salvation. It is genuine worship when we celebrate faithfully our Lord's Supper, believing that Jesus' words are true when He says that it is His body and blood that are given for our forgiveness.

And what of the quest for worship that is heartfelt? What could be more heartfelt than to take God at His word? Faith is trust in the heart toward God. So every time we say "Amen!" to the words of Absolution at the beginning of the Divine Service, that is heartfelt worship, because we are taking God at His word in the sure confidence that our sins are forgiven. Likewise, the hymns we sing, the creeds we confess, the prayers we pray—all of these are examples of worship from the heart as they are done in faith.

Is there the danger of our worship degenerating into mere formalism or hypocrisy? As long as we are in this sinful flesh, the answer will be "yes." No one is immune. But the remedy to this danger is not the quick fix of changing the way in which we conduct our worship. We must go deeper than that, for the problem lies not in a particular form or style of worship, but in the human heart. It is there that the Law of God must go to work, cutting away every vain effort to set our own agenda over against God's. And it is there in the heart that the soothing balm of Jesus' forgiveness must do its work of healing and restoring so that we are able to receive all that God has to offer.

Genuine, heartfelt worship is worship that will always begin and end with God, confidently trusting that He knows what is best for our heart and our entire being.

We approach God's service, hearing His invitation and all His words, and receiving His gifts. The emotions and the intellect are involved, but in a way that we don't think about *them*; we come to the Divine Service confident and thankful that God is thinking about our feelings and about everything else pertaining to the well-being of our lives. Then, when we are thankful for God's gracious concern and promised gifts, the emotions are likely to be very much present in our worship, in our joyful response.⁶

When our focus is solely upon God, then we can be sure that our emotions will find their proper place, acknowledging our dire need for God's mercy and rejoicing in the victory that is ours in Jesus Christ.

Footnotes

¹Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, II, 1967, p. 143, quoted in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, edited by Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 2:181.

²Jesus' quotation of Deuteronomy 6:5 in identifying the great commandment is notable for the addition of the word "mind" (Mark 12:30; Matthew 22:37). This addition in no way indicates a change in meaning; rather, it reinforces the all-encompassing Old Testament view of the heart as the center of a person's being.

³Theo Sorg, "Heart," in *The New International Dictionary*, 2:182.

⁴See, for example, David Luecke, "From the Editor," *Worship Innovations* 1 (No. 2, Fall 1996):4.

⁵SA Part 3, Art. 4.

⁶Ronald Feuerhahn, "Lutheran Worship and Emotions," *Lutheran Worship Notes*, no. 30 (Fall 1994), 2.



Peter Prochnow

“Heartfelt” Worship Takes Courage

Making Worship Truthful to God



RE WE AS WORSHIP LEADERS and participants

exposing our hearts in worship? In many cases and places of worship I think we are not. Our hearts hold our true feelings, experience and faith. From my perspective, holding back, hiding or ignoring our hearts has resulted in routine, isolated and untruthful worship in many places.

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Worship becomes routine when the hearts in the community surrounding the church are ignored. Routine in worship suggests there is no other way to worship. There are many ways to worship God and retain the parts and order of the service we strongly believe in as Lutherans. Supporting the idea that “page five” of *The Lutheran Hymnal* is the only truthful and effective way to worship God would make sense only if we were part of a church in a town with people who spoke in the language style of “page five” and listened to only four-part chorale music. I have yet to visit or hear of such a town. My intentions are not to take away anything from our written liturgies in any of the Lutheran hymnals. Most are actually written quite well, but they generally do not work truthfully and effectively in our “melting pot” society.

It appears to me that some leaders insist on this untruthfulness and ineffectiveness in worshipping God in today’s society. This insistence isolates others who wish to worship God in the most truthful and effective way they can offer. Not to recognize and acknowledge these differences is to deny God’s ability to treat each of us as special individuals. God has made each of us individuals with different tastes, styles, and backgrounds. No one individual is better than another, nor is one’s unique relationship with Christ more important than another’s. I think everyone knows this at heart, especially our leaders and pastors, but we appear not always to reflect this in leading worship.

At church potlucks we dive into all sorts of interesting foods: some German, some Spanish, and casseroles which are reflective of the individual cook’s truthfulness to good food. We choose what we want to eat, thank God for supplying nutrition, and eat. I have never seen a potluck where there are only one or two food choices, but we generally offer only one or two worship formats as if everyone worships God in a similar manner. I strongly doubt that a potluck with one or two food choices would be well attended. Perhaps a lack of diversity in worship services explains such low attendance among various cultures in our communities. We must worship in truth and expose our hearts, making worship truthful to God (John 4:24).

Worship That Reflects the Church and Unchurched Within Community Cultures

THERE ARE VERY FEW people who are not aware of the many cultures that surround their community, but our worship services rarely reflect such diversity. This is an example of the lack of “heartfelt” worship in many of our churches. I am not talking only about the speaking of various languages, but rather about more universal aspects such as the arts. Reflect on all the amateur and professional visual artists in your church and the various age groups and

cultures they represent. Are they being used in the worship services, as in the design of bulletin covers and banners? When the theme of the worship service is chosen, are we purchasing pre-made bulletin covers? The "artist" who designs these covers lives far away from each individual church community. How could this "artist" be aware of your church's experiences, cultures, struggles and individual worship style? When leaders choose pre-made bulletin covers, are they engaging in "heartfelt" worship?

Go to a record store, look, and if you can, listen to the many musical styles around us today. Are you hearing these styles in church? There is mood music, country music, jazz music, rap music, reggae music, organ music, rock music, rhythm and blues music, Japanese music, salsa music, Chinese music, opera music, and much more. These styles are in the stores because people relate to them. How many styles are in your church? How many styles are in your community? The answer to the second question is found in your local record store and library. Business people do not sell what people do not listen to, or they go out of business. There have been some efforts to remedy the lack of musical diversity, but usually they are quick-fixes. These attempts are not very authentic in relation to the musical styles they attempt to emulate. However, these efforts *are* examples of attempts to engage in "heartfelt" worship, and leaders need to support such efforts.

Pretending that various backgrounds and cultures do not exist in each church community ignores the truth. To ignore is to continue with the same worship format of limited styles of worship. Paul reminds us to "Conduct yourself wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone" (Colossians 4:5-6).

I have read articles written by some pastors, leaders, and musicians who insist on keeping and maintaining tradition. Their speech seems to be seasoned with hot pepper. Pride, job security, and personal taste can mean more than the views of a person with a different background. It does not make sense when personal tastes and security come before the welfare of the unchurched, with control of the usual format of worship keeping hearts from surfacing and being exposed.

Ignoring Real Life Struggles

IN THE BOOK *Sexual Abuse*, Adele Mayer states that one in every four girls will be sexually abused before reaching 18 years, and that one in every eight boys will be sexually assaulted before becoming 18 years old. I am 30 years old and have been in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod all my life and have yet to hear sexual, physical, or other types of abuse discussed in sermons, prayers, or song. It is as if the church has ignored and abandoned anyone who

experiences such damaging trauma. It is not that I think the worship service is a place for counseling, but it should be reflective and truthful of the community in which a church is located. Christians and non-Christians who attend the worship service should feel sin is sin and there are no taboo topics. Even though certain sins are labeled taboo in society, the church needs to break through that barrier. I have seen and heard great things being done by "Lutheran Counseling" in Florida, but I wonder why some of the struggles of people are not discussed in the worship service. This silence takes away from many worshippers a feeling of "heartfelt" worship. The world is not all joy, especially with the Devil constantly trying to destroy everything that is good. A heartfelt worship service will reflect this and acknowledge the Devil's efforts but deny him success.

I believe many of the problems we hear about in the media, such as alcoholism, drug use, anorexia, gangs, robberies, child murderers, sexual deviance, and overeating, are actually *symptoms*. In my opinion these are symptoms of problems of abuse and inability to resolve the problem. Many explain these symptoms away as people who are disturbed. Perhaps "disturbed" is an accurate word, but I think "shamed" is more accurate. Once again, I have never heard worship leaders acknowledge any of these symptoms in prayer, song, or sermon. I heard one group called "Lost and Found" sing a touching song about anorexia. While I do not really enjoy the style of music in which the song was written, one can recognize its effectiveness for other people, both church and unchurched. As Paul writes, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; never be conceited" (Romans 12:15-16). The worship service must reflect life in the community around the church, whether good or bad. The shame of some real life struggles fades away when church members live through these struggles with each other and God. Pretending that these problems and symptoms do not exist does not fool God, but I believe it saddens Him. Truthfulness to God in worship takes courage. Truthfulness is "heartfelt" worship.

Personal Music Taste Shadows Lack of Heart in Worship

MUSIC IS ONE of the most expressive aspects of the worship service. Each of us expresses our self differently to God. We have various preferences in music styles, individual hymns, and other favorite tunes. No musical style is better than another. No musical style is more praising to God.

In the music world of the church we cannot seem to get away from one or two basic styles of music. The reason for this is that we are not training our music people in other musical styles and theories. Some professors acknowledge

that these styles exist but let their personal preference for a certain type of music block them from exploring and learning other styles, resulting in not teaching them authentically.

We need to eliminate the attitude that God is more pleased or feels more worshipped with one style of music. One is called to minister music to all people in the church. One of the first things a church music leader should do upon arriving at a church is to discover what the music community around the church prefers and how people are expressing themselves. Unfortunately, we spend most of our time training future church leaders to use the red, green, and blue hymnals. These hymnals can be examples of "heartfelt" worship, but only when they are used in the proper context of a community. The red hymnal is like cornflakes. It serves its purpose for those who like cornflakes. We tried to do something new with the green and blue hymnals, but they turned out to be frosted flakes. When will we recognize the need for many types of hymnals (foods), because we want everyone to have a "heartfelt" worship experience? Using foods analogous to musical styles makes us aware of the need to create more hymnals with different foods (styles). Even more important, let us train our musicians to use these new hymnals and arrangements of tunes authentically.

I have seen and heard of efforts to produce a Spanish hymnal and various other hymnals, but they seem to be little different from our older hymnals. The effort is great and "heartfelt" and will lead us into the future, but only if we remain authentic to the styles that exist and train our musicians to compose and play in these styles.

Examples of "Heartfelt" Worship

"HEARTFELT" WORSHIP, which does take courage, is taking place in some churches. At Trinity Lutheran Church in Orlando, Florida, worship services are offered in many styles and formats. Folk, jazz, rhythm and blues, classical, reggae, handbells, country, swing, blues and many other forms of music are offered. They are offered because the leaders and members realize that such styles exist in the community, and they act upon that awareness. The Word of God is taught in various ways, such as experiential sermons and lessons, which relate biblical events to community experiences today.

These services are an extension of the evangelism program, as all worship services should be. First we go and tell all people; then we demonstrate how we worship God with each other in the community. The last thing we should do is try to separate ourselves from the community. Not everything attempted at Trinity Lutheran Church in Orlando has been successfully reflective of the community, but it is the respect for various perspectives which has made Trinity more effective and truthful.

There is much talent among members of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod that has not been recognized until recently. Many new publishing companies engaged in recording messages and spreading the Gospel to the unchurched are experiencing enormous success in both the secular and nonsecular industries. Someday "heartfelt" worship will not take as much courage as it does today because of these pioneering organizations working in unison with organizations that have been around for some time.

Self-Reflections: Why Do We Have our Individual Perspectives?

THIS ARTICLE REFLECTS my perspective on "heartfelt" worship. Everyone has a perspective. They are all correct. The concept of a wrong perspective does not exist when listening to individual perspectives. Perspectives are wrong only when leaders try to pound into communities their individual perspective and make it routine. This isolates anyone who does not fit that leader's perspective. Leaders must take an honest look at our communities and adjust toward a community-oriented worship service. This may not be their personal taste or perspective, but it would be the truthful and loving thing to do. Christ loves us unconditionally, not because of individual tastes and points of view. We must do the same to each other. Love will create heartfelt and truthful worship of God.

We have individual perspectives gained from our experiences—some bad, some good. If we did not have support when we grew up, our self-esteem may not be at a high level. Experiences of broken trust can lead us to be overcautious. Some of us have been disrespected by persons who happen to be of a particular race, size, or gender. This leads some of us to assume that people of a particular race, size, or gender are disrespectful. Unfortunately, when our experiences are unresolved, we are more easily controlled. It takes real courage to resolve "differences," "experienced trauma," and "abuse." This lack of resolve among some members and leaders in churches creates an environment where true feelings are held back and ignored, resulting in routine, isolated and untruthful worship.

I hope my perspective of "heartfelt" worship and the courage it takes to engage in "heartfelt" worship is understood and respected. I apologize if I have offended anyone; that was not my intention. We need to be reminded that each voice that proclaims God's love is a voice of beauty. Not one individual voice or perspective can say everything. One voice does not make a choir. No individual voice can mirror the omnipotence and love of God!



Marvin Bergman

Teach to the Heart!

TEACH TO THE HEART" is a plea of some educators. A church educator in a conversation with a mother heard her story about a teenage son who announced one Sunday morning, "No more church for me!" The mother asked for an explanation, and the son responded, "I've been confirmed." When the mother asked, "What did confirmation do to my son?" the church educator spoke of the need to teach to the heart.

A university educator, in observing students who reflect a consuming interest in exploiting careers for personal ends rather than service, attributed this development to a failure to educate the heart. He added that without educating the heart, expertise and ambition can become demonic.¹

A teacher of Christian ethics in a study of the role of the family suggested that families need to reclaim their responsibility for the moral formation of the minds, wills, and hearts of their children.²

A theological educator observed that just as the heart pumps blood to keep the brain alive and the brain sends signals to regulate the heart, teaching that is alive involves an integration of the heart and the mind.³

Researchers who conducted a national study of the faith maturity of 3,270 adult and 1,511 youth members of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod emphasized the importance of focusing on the heart after identifying a number of gaps between understanding and action.

While ninety-eight percent of adults believe that the Bible is the Word of God, thirty-one percent read the Bible several times a week.

While ninety-seven percent of adults believe that Jesus was buried and was resurrected from the dead, twenty-four percent encouraged someone to confess faith in Christ six or more times during the past year.

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While nearly all parents of children between ages three and eighteen agree with statements of orthodox beliefs, two-thirds report having family devotions "never, or once a month or less."⁴

The study concluded that while congregations are effective in developing head knowledge, too often such knowledge does not reach the heart, hands, or feet to stimulate action.⁵

In this discussion, attention will be given to: 1) factors related to the omission of the heart in education; 2) a rationale for church educators to focus on the heart; 3) emphases in teaching to the heart. The goal is to consider the "Why" and the "What" of teaching to the heart.

What Happened to the Heart?

ONE CAN IDENTIFY several factors relating to an absence of the heart in education. One observer noted that religious communities traditionally have lifted up the heart as the center of one's estrangement from God and have seen that the only solution lies in hearts that find their rest in God. Art and literature have paid significant attention to the central role of the heart. In fact, religion, theology, and philosophy for centuries addressed the chief problems of the people through the model and language of the heart.⁶

However, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries a significant shift occurred when spin-offs of the Enlightenment and the social science displaced the heart with another focus. The self became the center of the mapping of one's inner world and outer behaviors, with such concepts as ego, superego, and self-actualization displacing the heart.⁷ Another astonishing development is the ability and power of modern psychology to penetrate the language of a society and shape the self-understanding of so many.⁸

When self is encapsulated without any referent beyond the individual, such a model deepens a turning in upon self. Now, self creates its own norms, establishes its own canons of authority, and manufactures its own gods. It is not surprising that this understanding of the self in contemporary society can lead many to view the Bible as ancient history, theology as irrelevant, Biblical morality as out-moded, involvement in the Christian community as optional, and liturgy as passé. What counts, instead, is the level of satisfaction of "my needs," "my self-enhancement," and "my self-actualization" which solidifies hearts that curve in upon themselves.⁹ This concept of the self may be a key factor in a researcher's assertion that the Christian faith in the United States is losing its grip on the public.¹⁰

Another factor in the loss of the heart is that the language of the heart is suspect. The heart suggests emotion, which at times is associated with instability or lack of substance. Emotion is at times seen as clouding, disturbing, or even

warping one's perceptions and judgments.¹¹ One who is not in control of the emotions can be viewed as dysfunctional. Or, when one is gripped by a strong emotion, then one may be seen as being controlled by that emotion. In addition, how does one sustain an emotional "high"? Instead of coping with the up-and-down emotions of the heart, an easier response is to suppress the emotions and ignore the heart.

A third factor related to the ignoring of the heart is the specter of Pietism which looms over our shoulders. When Philip Spener became disturbed by an intellectualism and apathy in the Lutheran Church during the seventeenth century, he designed strategies that would bring the head into the heart. During this era, confirmation, for example, became a time to ratify one's baptismal covenant and provide a testimony to one's personal faith or "conversion."¹² When disciples of Spener accentuated an even greater degree of subjectivity by urging catechists to work to bring children to "holy tears" and to lead catechumens through several stages on the way of salvation, the role of the heart in education became more suspect.¹³

Educators have contributed to the demise of the heart by creating an artificial separation of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of learning. A model that has had this effect and which has had considerable influence in our own circles is the Herbartian Model.¹⁴ The five steps of the model, Preparation, Presentation, Assimilation, Generalization, and Application clearly focus on the cognitive and leave little room for the heart. The faulty assumption of the model, that correct knowledge will lead to proper attitudes, and that attitudes and knowledge will lead directly to action, can be seen through reflection on one's own experiences. If a teaching model focuses on only one domain of learning, whether cognitive, affective, or behavioral, and fails to provide linkage with other aspects of learning, one result can be an ignoring of the heart which can lead to gaps, such as between knowledge and action.

Reluctance to address the heart also may be tied to an awareness of the mysteries of the human heart which transcend comprehension and control. As Luther noted, the thoughts of the heart are not accessible even to the senses.¹⁵

Why Focus on the Heart?

A CORRECTIVE TO the traps of ignoring or minimizing the heart is provided by Biblical/theological perspectives on the role of the heart in teaching and learning.

Prophets, apostles, teachers and other authors of the Scriptures recognize that the major predicaments of human beings center in the heart. Unrepentant and stubborn hearts are linked to an ignoring of God's patience and

kindness (Romans 2:4-5). Resistance that insists on being separated from God is seen to be the result of a hardening of the heart (Ephesians 4:18). Anxiety that weighs one down centers in the heart (Proverbs 12:25). When considering the most critical issues in life, the fool says in one's heart, "There is no God" (Proverbs 14:1). In Jesus' analysis (Matthew 15:19), a 560 percent increase in violent crime, a 400 percent increase in illegitimate births, a quadrupling in divorce rates, and a 200 percent increase in the teen suicide rate in the United States within the last thirty years have their origins in the heart.¹⁶ The Biblical perspective is clear: if significant change is to occur, such change needs to happen in the heart.

In the Scriptures, the renewal of an individual centers in the heart. When Paul proclaimed the Gospel at Philippi, the Lord opened the heart of Lydia to believe (Acts 16:14). It is with the heart that one believes and is justified (Romans 10:10). Through the Holy Spirit, God poured out his love into our hearts (Romans 5:5). One who believes has this testimony in the heart (1 John 5:10). The call of the Psalmist to create a pure heart (Psalm 51:10) is answered in the Gospel which restores and revitalizes the heart.

With a new, God-created heart, an individual sees with new eyes that have been opened to the hope to which one is called (Ephesians 1:18). One seeks to do the will of God from the heart (6:6). One is motivated to work with all one's heart as working for the Lord, not for people (Colossians 3:23). Love comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith (1 Timothy 1:5). A heart at peace gives life to the whole body (Proverbs 14:30) and guides the words of one's mouth (16:23). With rejuvenated hearts, we make music to the Lord (Ephesians 5:19). Joyful giving flows from the heart (2 Corinthians 9:7).

That the heart as the center of the person which impacts all facets of one's person and relationships is a focus of teaching in the Bible is not surprising. John in writing to the seven churches urged his hearers and readers to take to heart what is written in the words of prophecy (Revelation 1:3). The writer of the Proverbs called on his students to write his instructions on the tablets of their hearts (7:3). The prophet Jeremiah announced to the people of his day that the living God will make a new covenant to be written on their hearts (Jeremiah 31:33). Jesus in his conversation with the disciples on the road to Emmaus chided both for being slow of heart to believe what the prophets had spoken (Luke 24:25). When their eyes were opened, they remembered how their hearts were burning as they walked while being taught the Scriptures (24:32). Paul in writing to Christians in Rome taught for the purpose of strengthening the hearts of believers.

Investigations by Biblical students portray the central role of the heart. In the Old Testament, the heart is seen as the

core of one's identity which impacts all aspects of one's person, including physical vitality and spirituality as well as the cognitive, affective, and volitional activities. The heart as the center is evidenced by emotions such as love, hate, and gratitude; intellectual functions such as perception and memory; volitional factors that lead to action, such as planning and courage; and the locus of God's activity in the life of an individual.¹⁷ Reinvigorated hearts reflect the compassion and energy of the heart of the living God.

Though Biblical perspectives focus more on the person-to-God relationship rather than on an analysis of the parts of the person, New Testament views parallel those of the Old Testament. The heart is seen as the center of one's spiritual life in which God bears witness to Himself through His Word. In the heart dwell feelings and emotions. The heart is the seat of understanding and the center of the will. The heart is the locus of faith, with conversion occurring in the heart and transforming one's person. It is in the heart that Christ lives by faith.¹⁸

In the Bible, the heart is much more than the emotions. Biblical perspectives deny contemporary views that intellectual or emotional intelligence are the chief controlling centers of our persons. Instead, what we set our hearts upon is the key dynamic in life, whether the center of our being is a faith response to a gracious God or the worship of an idol.

A Biblical perspective of the heart also sees constituent parts of our persons, such as beliefs, values, understandings, images, attitudes, habits, relationships, and action patterns to be interrelated. Attitudes impact beliefs and actions, just as beliefs and actions impact attitudes. These components of our persons which interact with each other are controlled by the answer to the number one question, "Who is your God?"

Biblical perspectives on the heart also reject the notion that the intellect alone deserves most of the energies invested in teaching and learning. Instead, attention which focuses on the heart will attend to connecting, for example, understanding to faith and the heart. Or, a focus on values will explore the link between what is prized and the center of all values, a heart commitment to the living Lord.

Teaching to the Heart

IN EXPLORING APPROACHES to teaching to the heart, five emphases can be identified. First, we need to continue to focus on the one dynamic that changes the heart. The focus of our teaching has to be the proclamation of the Good News which addresses a plethora of bad news situations in the lives of children, youth, and adults and which leads to new ways of living. A society that is wrestling with a host of

crises, issues, and problems provides Christian teachers with countless opportunities to proclaim, teach, and relate the Good News to the hurts of individuals and society.

Such teaching requires an in-depth grasp of the Gospel in the heart of the teacher as well as an informed, intuitive knowing of the persons of the learners that results in "heart-to-heart" communing rather than processing information. Bits of information and sound bytes can be transmitted via technology to the minds of individuals; teaching to the heart requires teaching and learning that is personalized in the context of quality relationships.¹⁹

Indicators of the need to focus on Law-Gospel as the center of our teaching is seen in the *Congregations at Crossroads* study of youth and adults of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. In responding to ten basic statements related to Law-Gospel, only 53 percent of the youth and 63 percent of the adults responded correctly to seven or more of ten basic statements. Only 48 percent of the youth and 62 percent of the adults agreed with the statement, "Salvation is a gift which no one deserves."²⁰ The only power that will "pump more blood" to the body is the power of the Gospel that lives in the heart.

A second focus of our teaching to the heart is to relate the Law and the Gospel to various facets of the self, such as emotions, beliefs, values, images, and actions. That the heart impacts all parts of the body and that the parts of the body impact the heart suggest that the heart can be reached by relating any of the parts of one's person to their center. The emotions can be a gate to the mind and heart, for example, just as a heart grasped by the Gospel will shape emotions. When focusing on any component of one's person, the key in reaching the heart is to relate the understanding, image, belief, value, emotion, or action to a Law-Gospel perspective. It is this perspective that speaks to the heart question, "Who is your God?"

More of the heart can be addressed in our teaching when the various components of the self are related to one another. When learning activities involve images, the mind, and the emotions, for example, learning will be assimilated at a far deeper level than activities that involve only talk or the intellect. Confirmants who spend one hour in helping older persons can develop the concept of "service" in a much more "heart-felt" way than by listening to examples of service described on a marker-board. With the emotions of younger learners being "massaged" by years of media experiences, teaching that involves a plurality of learning channels in communicating Law-Gospel will be more effective in reaching the heart.

A third focus of teaching to the heart is seen by borrowing a page from the early church which developed a curriculum with six components: the gospel narratives and the Old

Testament; doctrine and creeds; ethics and lifestyle; worship and the sacraments; one's role in family and the Christian community; service and witness. All dimensions of this curriculum reflected an outward "missions" thrust. Such a curriculum speaks to the important dimensions of the self: one's story and identity, beliefs, ethics, worship, connections with family and community, and role in the larger society. Teachers of the early church, recognizing that a heart grasped by the Gospel transforms all facets of one's person, structured a curriculum that was holistic.

Such a focus suggests an expansion of the curriculum that goes beyond teaching chiefly through words printed with black ink on white paper. Instead, the curriculum which really teaches is life experiences in the family, congregation, school, peer groups, media, and larger community. Living voices that articulate the Good News and express the Gospel in actions are the key shapers of hearts. Of course, printed resources can serve as valuable tools in teaching toward the heart. However, the clarity and passion of the teaching and preaching of the Word of God, the quality of relationships in a family or school, the level of engagement in heartfelt worship in family and congregation, the depth of one's grasp of the Scriptures and theology, and the level of one's involvement in ministry in church and society, are far more powerful in the shaping of the heart.

Teaching to the heart can be enhanced through a fourth emphasis, that of a focus on faith. In the Scriptures and *The Book of Concord*, faith lives in the heart, not the intellect. Faith nurtured by the faithfulness of God to his promises deepens commitment. Faith inspired by the Gospel impacts one's emotions, images, understandings, values, and actions. Faith that lives in the heart can be nurtured through a variety of "gates," such as images, understandings, values, and emotions, which are linked to their object, the Gospel.

Teaching that seeks to nurture faith that lives in the heart provides a model which features a Gospel center, builds on a Biblical base, addresses the core of the person, offers a holistic view of the individual, provides a lifespan perspective, serves as a corrective for inadequate models, focuses on the basics, and identifies key agents in the formation of faith.

The fifth emphasis of teaching to the heart is a generational focus. In the Scriptures, a strategy is to hand down the faith from generation to generation. With each generation being affected by unique events and experiences, the Word of God can be addressed in more personal ways by teaching to the hearts of a generation.

One generation that deserves special attention by the church today is the "Thirteenth Generation," also known as "Generation X" (born between 1961-1981). With large

numbers of this generation disengaged from the church while engaged in a search for spirituality, this generation at this time is making up its mind about the church and her message. Perhaps there is a "window" of about ten years in which connections between this generation and the church can best be made.

In order for the church to reach young adults, it is critical to speak to their hearts. This can be done by moving away from business-oriented, church growth models to more holistic models of ministry which can give particular attention to:

- demonstrating a compassion that addresses the vulnerabilities and hurts of the generation;
- relating the Gospel to the whole person and all of life;
- engaging congregations in liturgies which speak to the heart and are sensitive to the musical styles of worshipers;
- providing solid Biblical and theological foundations for everyday living;
- equipping for ministry in church and society;
- seeing work as a ministry rather than as a "pain in the neck";
- responding to the deep-seated desire of young adults to be part of a healthy family;
- being a community of quality relationships;
- engaging the generation in the mission and decision-making of the church at various levels of the church's structures.

These emphases can lead to a sharper focus on teaching to the heart. As Luther pointed out, the Christian faith looks chiefly at the condition of the individual's heart.²¹ When the heart is justified through faith in the Name of Christ, God pours His Holy Spirit into the heart and fills it with love, peace, and good works.²² God requires nothing except a heart moved by God's heart of compassion that responds in faith.²³ The great gifts of God are grasped solely with the heart. When light enters the heart through faith, one is a new person.²⁴ Then, as the heart behaves, other members of one's person behave.²⁵ Here, we see a rationale for teaching to the heart.²⁶

End Notes

- 1 James Laney, "Education of the Heart," *Christianity Today*, 31, No. 2 (February 6, 1987), p. 21.
- 2 Lois Gehr Livezey, "Family as Moral Teacher," *Church and Society*, 84 (November-December, 1993), p. 69.
- 3 Mary Elizabeth Moore, *Teaching From the Heart* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), pp. 206-207.
- 4 Peter Benson, *Congregations at Crossroads: A National Study of Adults and Youth in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod* (Minneapolis: Search Institute, 1995), p. 32.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Troels Norager, "The Eclipse of the Heart: The Shift from Pre-Scientific Metapsychology, and Its Implications for the Theme of the Endangered Self," *The Endangered Self*, ed. by Richard Fenn and Donald Capps (Princeton: Princeton Theological Seminary, 1992), p. 49.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁹ For further discussion of this perspective, see *The Endangered Self*.

¹⁰ See George Barna, *The Index of Leading Spiritual Indicators* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1996).

¹¹ Don Saliers, "Distinctiveness of Christian Emotions," *Weavings*, 6 (May/June, 1991), p. 11.

¹² Arthur Repp, *Confirmation in the Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), p. 69.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 72 & 76.

¹⁴ Stephen Schmidt, "Theology and Pedagogy in the Thought of Paul Edward Kretzmann" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1969), p. 206.

¹⁵ Martin Luther, "Sermons on the Gospel of St. John, Chapters 1-4," *Luther's Works*, 22 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1957), p. 12.

¹⁶ William Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1993), p. i.

¹⁷ G. Johannes Botterweck, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 7 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), p. 412.

¹⁸ Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 3 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1965), pp. 611-613.

¹⁹ For further discussion of the role of technology in society and education, see Neil Postman, *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992).

²⁰ Benson, *Congregations at Crossroads*, p. 53.

²¹ Luther, "The Sermon on the Mount," *Luther's Works*, 21 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), p. 14.

²² Luther, "Lectures on Galatians 1535," *Luther's Works*, 27, p. 221.

²³ Luther, "Lectures on Hebrews," *Luther's Works*, 29, p. 232.

²⁴ Luther, "Sermons on the Gospel of St. John, Chapters 1-4," *Luther's Works*, 22, p. 374.

²⁵ Luther, "Word and Sacraments IV," *Luther's Works*, 38 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), p. 107.

²⁶ For a discussion of Luther's perspectives on the heart, see Jared Wicks, "Martin Luther: The Heart Clinging to the Word," *Spiritualities of the Heart*, edited by Annice Callahan (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1990).



URGINGS OF THE HEART by Wilkie Au and Noreen Cannon. New York: Paulist Press, 1995.

Urgings of the Heart throbs with sensitivity toward the human condition and an abiding trust in an incredibly loving God. The 170 page book also teems with engaging tales, rich imagery, and creative insights into a number of familiar scripture stories.

The initial question the authors raise sets the stage for what follows: "Is there a connection between psychological health and spiritual development, between wholeness and holiness?" The answer, although easily misread, lies in humankind's inner struggle to deal with warring forces (Romans 7) and the soul's intense longing to be united with God. The connection between holiness and wholeness is found in Jesus' grasp of God's all-embracing love and His expression of that love in His life, death, and resurrection. The call to holiness and wholeness then is one of loving in an all-embracing way. This inclusive love challenges one to love not only others but to "make friends with those hidden parts of ourselves that we have come to consider as enemies." Thus, the call to holiness is also a call to wholeness, which is experienced as a deep sense of being worthy, accepted, and loved.

The authors—Cannon, a Jungian analyst, and Au, a spiritual director/adjunct professor of theology—team up to mine the vast contributions that their respective disciplines bring to wholeness and holiness. Their goal is to describe how each Christian is on a daily path of Christian transformation that requires both self-appropriation (a disciplined self-knowledge) and self-transcendence ("the giving over of oneself to God and others in love").

There are four aspects of the book that I find particularly useful. The first is the book's relentlessly robust presentation of God as an unconditional lover of humankind who "bathes our existence with abundant grace and acceptance." Second is the recurring emphasis on *God's action* in the psychological and spiritual realm so that the quest for holiness and wholeness is not of our making but of God's. A third aspect is the explanation and application of the Jungian concept of the shadow—a subpersonality with its own goals and values that each of us represses because it conflicts with the way we see ourselves—as a "hidden treasure" that is not to be feared or ignored but to be mined as a means of helping us become more whole. The fourth is that the book brings God's all-encompassing love to bear on

four present day "demons"—codependency, perfectionism, envy, and overwork—that haunt those needing to compensate for feelings of inadequacy and self-rejection.

I would be remiss if I did not warn the potential reader to beware. *Urgings* can take you to a depth that is discomforting, particularly when examining the four modern day demons. Yet *Urgings* also can bless the reader with insight that calms, reconnects, and provides one with specific helps on how to overcome that which diverts one from holiness and wholeness.

Several other comments bear mentioning. Occasionally the authors slip into hyperbole such as "grace abounds everywhere," and "only a contemplative attitude can enable us . . ." to engage in a biblical pattern of ministry. Although the authors took pains to differentiate the shadow from human sin by asserting that "sin reflects a rejection of God," and the "shadow reflects a rejection of self," various illustrations of behavior erupting from one's shadow-side certainly reflected sinful behavior. Also, the chapter on perfectionism could have been enlightened by including a balanced discussion of how the feeling of "it's not enough" reflects the impact of God's Law at work.

Urgings is not a book to be read quickly. Rather, *Urgings* could provide great stimulation for a sharing group, couples who wish to deepen their relationship, or a person on a spiritual quest. Just as the ancient theological axiom suggests that "God is always more" than our human images convey, be mindful that this modest review does not capture the vast riches of the authors' thoughts and experiences. Said another way, *Urgings* is one of those "three-peat" books. Having read it once, it deserves to be read again for clarification and then another time for its ability to stimulate and bless.

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EDUCATING CONGREGATIONS by Charles Foster. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Charles Foster is a man who looks at Christian education programs within congregations and is concerned. His concern is not as a practitioner observing a flawed methodology, but rather as a systems analyst concerned over a breakdown in the operational understanding of the central organizing principle, the heart of Christian education. He feels that current congregational education is too concerned with programs, individual needs, and a "popular understanding" of psychology, therapy and marketing.

For Foster, the central forming and transforming device within the church is anchored in the perspective of the "event." He decries the detrimental effects of operating within a narrowed perspective based upon one's experience and com-

fort zone (yet his fundamentalist perspective of the sacraments leads him to refer to the concept of the real presence as "inadequate" for the integration of young believers into the sacrament of the Lord's Supper). Still, Foster's emphasis on providing a learning environment, or community, where people are free to do what they will naturally do anyway—question teachings and develop their own meaning for concepts and terms—is a valid one which all too often is threatening to the local congregation.

Educating Congregations redirects some present-day paradigms (his "Exercises in Congregational Analysis" every few pages help with that process). However, for a systems analysis to become a resource which drives a redistribution of resources in congregational education, it must be more than that. The new (Foster would call it "old") paradigm is sold too much on the basis of Foster's interpretations of events and conditions and too little on the basis of standardized or verifiable criteria and research. He cites data including selected portions of the 1990 Search Institute research, *Effective Christian Education*, to make a point for the need to focus on events within the church. His interpretation of that data (he interprets the data as longitudinal when it is in fact a cross-sectional research piece) is narrow, and demonstrates that his perspective may have skewed his interpretation.

While his excitement for and heart towards an "event-full" and individual-centered educational plan is convincing, Foster simply reworks familiar themes—build community, allow the individual to "own" his/her faith, and emphasize the story. These are all valid directives which speak to the issue of congregational education, but it has been said and supported before (e.g., Fowler, Westerhoff, Lee). Aiming at the heart in congregational education does not have to come only through an impassioned plea, but also from a logical analysis of what we know about religious "maturation" and educational methodology.

Finally, Foster's central flaw is a lack of focus on the saving and transforming power present within the Gospel. To have a chapter on the concept of nurturing hope within our increasingly despairing world, and to not mention the hope that comes from the unchangeable nature of Christ's redeeming work, is to miss the heart of all Christian education. That, combined with the faith knowledge of the promise of the Holy Spirit's direction in our Christ-centered educational ministries, a theme which is also almost totally absent in Foster's work, will build a solid and alive Christian educational experience.

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continued on page 24

THE ASTONISHED HEART by Robert Farrar Capon. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996.

Robert Farrar Capon in this engaging little volume writes, "I have been 'let go' (that's the polite word; 'fired' is more like it) from every position I ever held in the church." Though his wry humor causes one to view that assertion with some skepticism, one can imagine that in 46 years in the Episcopal priesthood, more than a few would like to have sent him into exile, for he slaughters virtually every sacred cow in the ecclesiastical feeding lot as he searches for a return to the astonished heart that is captivated by the Gospel of forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

At times sounding conservative and at other times liberal, at times evangelical and at other times almost universalistic, Capon takes the reader on a somewhat playful excursus through church history, attempting to show that as Christianity became more and more of a religion (which he defines as a human activity dedicated to the job of reconciling God to humanity and humanity to itself—hence "Christian religion" is an oxymoron) and an institution, it lost its grip on catholicity and moved into the realm of spiritual poverty with an almost total loss of astonishment at the Gospel.

Capon traces this theme through history, in the Old Testament through the time of the Exodus, the monarchy and post-exilic Judaism. In the New Testament he looks at the church of Peter and Paul, in the Greco-Roman world before

Constantine, and then the rise of Christendom from Constantine until the 19th century. Then comes the corporate model of the church which he says is now crashing down all around us. Capon further examines new models that the church is testing today, e.g., Mega-Church, Professionalism-of-the-Clergy, Renewal Models (Church Growth), etc., and examines some models that we have yet to consider, such as the Alcoholics Anonymous Model. Capon thoroughly excoriates all contemporary models, claiming they have sold the soul of the church and in its place substituted platitudes about life enhancement and moral uplift while leaving it bereft of the astonishment of the Gospel's proclamation of life out of death.

While much of his book is a look backwards, its purpose is to look to the future and admonish the reader that in looking for new models of the church it is important to recognize what was good and what wasn't in the past while seeking to recapture the hearts of sinners for whom Christ died. While he consistently takes aim at the institution of the church, at the end he does concede that there is a necessity of some type of institution, but it needs to be modest. His ideal hearkens back to the church of the New Testament where the people reveled in being a people, a community which met in homes, prayed together and celebrated the Eucharist as the community of the faithful.

Capon writes with a refreshing candor when he, for example, describes the New Corporate Model: "Shared decision-making is all well and good. But when the sharers decided, for example, that grace

is for the birds, or that sinners can't be kept in the fold. . . some apostolic voice is supposed to speak up and tell them all to get lost. The ordained ministry. . . have a duty and a right to say what is and isn't Gospel—and they have a solemn obligation to tell the church it will have to drop dead to all such anti-Gospel nonsense if it really wants to live."

While at times Capon sounds antinomian, his emphasis on proclamation of the Gospel is one that clearly is needed in the Church at the end of the millennium. Many of the theological points he makes would be refuted readily by Lutherans. However, the book is thought-provoking and cannot but help stir the reader to a renewed commitment to Jesus, the incarnate Savior, who comes to offer forgiveness, salvation and life to the dead.

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