

The Longest Journey You Will Ever Make?

From your Head to your Heart!

“So...What Would You Really Like To Ask Jesus?”

Luke 20:27-40, Haggai 2:1-9

November 10, 2019

So, we've spent a lifetime being taught to and practicing living from our heads.

To problem-solve our way through life by better thinking.

We've been taught it's a “this or that” choice we have to make and we should be able to figure it out.

Thoughts spinning around in our heads, us spinning around in our lives. Often, lots of drama results...draining our energy!

Drama...thoughts wrapped in emotions. And, over-thinking exaggerates those very emotions and so more drama!

Our thoughts playing out in life's dramas,
not resolving the real issues in our lives.

So, here it is:

Living from our heads alone is a life journey that often takes us nowhere.

You can't problem-solve your life...not even by thinking harder or better or right thoughts, by knowing doctrine,

reading the next, better book, taking the next class, finding a better church or partner or job or family or...

Instead, we are invited to journey from our heads into our courageous compassionate hearts.

That's what helps us move from where we are to where we most deeply desire to be in our lives.

BTW, Jesus did not come to help us problem-solve; did not come to help us problem-solve ourselves from our sin. That's a western church stance from long ago that misses the point.

This is not why Jesus was born into this world...to die to save us from our sins. His dying is about bringing all people

into a right alignment with justice and compassion that is self-reflective and aware and sets up a new dynamic of possibility for our individual and mutual lives. It's an integrity thing.

Most millennials know, it can't be true (that Jesus death somehow saves me from my sin...or the usual take on Adam and Eve or the Virgin Birth). They know it cannot be true in the way we say it and teach it.

The new scholarship of Crosson and Rohr says Jesus comes to show us in the flesh how to be in relationship with God and each other. Be in “right” relationship...a heart thing!

Not by problem-solving but through compassion put into action. God's promise is to be with us always as life giving energy that opens us to compassion for self and others... from which an action plan of integrity emerges... no matter what the situation.

To access your compassion, your courageous heart... especially in the midst of drama or problems: PAUSE!

A patient pause, a holy hush, a moment to remember the subject is not the issue.

To look with your heart at what is going on here.

To have a chance to ask yourself:

What is the compassion most needed now?

How do I find a way to respond courageously with compassion? Instead of react, give advice, create more drama?

How do I stay true to my heart?

In that pause, we set our intention: to be one with God and God's intention for us and for the other...in the same moment.

A second of solitude and silence will speak to you...about how "to be" next...maybe not what to say first but how "to be"...first!

{Nick story.}

Don't do what Jesus did, or even think like Jesus thought.

Live like Jesus lived.

Slow down enough to access His compassionate heart which is the rose within your own heart...

blooming there since before you were born.

So you are able to respond courageously in the moment.

It will come to you if you give it a chance...it's God's work to do in you...bringing forth the compassion that lets you see things differently...if you'll give God a chance!

Your worshipful work: the patient pause, the holy hush. Trusting God will spill

into the moment as you do.

Get out of your head! Journey to your heart.

This is the Christian way of Christ.

The Universal Christ energy where everything and everyone belongs and all are respected in the same moment...

and all is held in wisdom and grace...

YOU are the agent, Christ is the Way!

Be still. Sssh...

Every moment and situation redeemable.

The journey from head to heart is a path of becoming One with the Eternal Now and all the “ways of being” *that* brings to life!

“Put your head in your heart and stand before God for all time without ceasing.”
(Brother Lawrence)

Sshhh....

(Above reflection Paul Bane, July 2019 and Pastor Karen October 2019)

So...do you remember that old song from the 70's “Hooked on a Feeling”? The Sadducees are hooked...but not on a feeling.

They are hooked on details, on asking the wrong question of Jesus...the wrong question of life...the wrong question about heaven. They're overthinking it (trying to trick him).

They expect Jesus to answer their “wrong” question.
But Jesus doesn't take the bait.

He doesn't get hooked by the subject of marriage.

Instead, he goes to the underlying issue. Heaven!
Goes from head to heart...ssshhh!

Thing is...for Jesus heaven is not some far off place where human rules and regs and expectations are lived out
in some new way.

For Jesus, heaven is in the here and now as well as in the beyond, and this life's

questions and paradigms don't apply.

Those who see heaven in our midst, don't get hooked by life's tough subjects...trying to think their way through.

They don't get caught up in or divert their energy to contrived problems or the endless details of problem solving.

You know that expression....the devil is in the details?

No, those who believe, who see, who live from the heart of things...neither marry nor are given in marriage. It's not the primary paradigm of meaning making or joy.

Their focus is on their relationship with God,
their faith...integrity, justice, and accountability

...and how that affects all of life...including marriage of course!

...and eliminates a lot of subjects that hook most other people.

Most people get hooked by the notion that the good old days were really good. That it will never be as good again.

Most people get hooked by their fear of the future. Trying to figure it out.

Most people get hooked by the notion life is "supposed to be fair" and I deserve to cut myself a break

even at the expense of someone else if that's the only way

I can make it fair...

get my fair share of the good old days today!

Most people get hooked deluded by the notion that
being smarter, knowing more, thinking better
will bring them the life they want.

Most people get hooked thinking it's beyond them. Someone else will have to do it...they're better than me anyways! Or, I couldn't possibly be able to...

These are the issues Haggai is addressing to those exiles who had returned from Babylon to rebuild their lives and the temple in Jerusalem.

The temple was devastated and so were they when they saw it...thinking:

"Whose work is this?" "I didn't do it!"

"It will never be as good as the old temple, anyways!"

Haggai tells it to them straight.

Rebuilding the temple take energy and requires leadership.

He charges the leaders...the political leader and the religious leader...to see their common cause and work in tandem rather than in opposition.

Still separation of church and state...but not making a false dichotomy between religion and politics...the issues needing our mutual attention...

for at their true core both endeavors want what is best for the people, albeit they have very different ways of deciphering this and going for it!

Haggai is saying: Life calls out for leadership.

Your life calls out for your leadership!

Get over it! Get out of your head!

Haggai goes on to say it take leaders calling people to courage...to let go of fear.

(I think together you have often lived this kind of leadership!)

Sshhh...

It takes letting go of the notion that you can recapture past glory...gee, to re-evaluate whether or not it was so glorious to begin with!

The good old days are right now!

Haggai says have courage and *work!*

Your choices and actions determine what comes next!

Have courage, begin to begin to do the work at hand in your life. Not from your head, from you heart.

Sshhh...

You will find yourself held in the spirit as you do...and yes, things will get shaken up, changed up, and a new temple will begin to form before your very eyes.

...one that far supersedes your former memory or current expectations.

**Shake it up. Make a change. Do the work.
Find your courage. Live from your heart.**

Don't let the facts/challenge overwhelm you!

How do you get to your heart from your head?

Pause to ask the better questions of yourself and life ...and this will take you pretty far!

Stop over-thinking it! Don't get hooked on the details and so avoid the real issues underlying the choices you are making.

On a diet? The subject is food...not eating so much.

But what is the issue underlying your eating?

Got a problem in your house with homework? Homework is the subject of your angst...

But what is the issue underlying the avoidance of doing it?

Arguing with a friend?

What is the issue underlying what you are arguing about?

Ignoring a friend?

What underlies your actions?

Complaining about money...not having enough?

What is the issue you are hoping money is the answer to?

What questions are you asking that deflect you from discovering what it is you really want to know?

Well...what are the issues that underlie your questions?

What is the compassion needed in the moment?

What's hooking you instead of helping you?

Ssshhh.

If you could ask Jesus a question...about one of your issues...what would it be?

Try it: Jesus here's my issue. What I would really like to know is.....? Well, what I really want to know is.....?

Jesus, what I want to know is.....?

Jesus gives us the right answer even when we ask the wrong question. Are you willing to hear it?

Or, like the Sadducees,
will you keep on nagging or diverting attention...
turning away afraid to hear the right answers Jesus offers?

Jesus' answer:

Our God is the God of the living.
God is with you...just as God promised.

God's deepest desires for you align very closely with your deepest core desires for yourself.

And how Jesus lives points to how to live our lives.

Have courage. Do your worshipful life's work.
Be in the spirit in the moment.

Sssh...then, Shake it up!

Oh Sadduces! We can't change death.
What we can change is our attitude about life.

And changing your attitude and expectations
changes everything!

Each of us...we can change our lives!

Our God is the God with attitude!
Your God is the God of right attitude!

Where ever you are on your faith journey.

Live from your heart...pause long enough to get there before you ask the unhelpful questions or fall for easy answers.

Carl McColman — “Elizabeth Barrett Browning reminded us: “Earth's crammed with heaven, / And every common bush afire with God, / But only he who sees takes off his shoes; The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.”

It's a mystery to me why some people “see” and take off their shoes, while others just keep on plucking their berries.

But that's how things roll. I imagine it has something to do with grace — the person who “sees” has been given a special gift —

but it also has to do with the disposition of the person:

the one who sees is disposed to seeing. Just as the one who recognizes the presence of God in their hearts very often is the one who is open to such a knowing.

SSHHHH...