

**(PP1) Becoming human- giving glory x 27 Sunday 08 July\_2018.**

Background text READ 1 Samuel 16: 1 - 13. **God looks on the heart – humanity**

**This year we are exploring what it means to be truly, fully human. Also, I believe that as we seek individually and together in community to be more human we will bring greater glory to God by the way we live our lives in relationship to others and with God. Transformation through relating in Community as well as relating to God.**

**(PP2) Last week we began considering the HUMAN HEART....GTH looked at Ezekiel and described the way that the term human *HEART* is used in the Bible. Geoff spoke about stony hearts and open hearts. He spoke about not just the hearts of individuals but a whole nation – the Hebrews. Hardness of heart meant that they became arrogant and unable to hear God and so their practices became unjust and lacking in compassion.**



**The heart is not just the beating organ but the seat of our emotions, understanding, ethics, where we hope, plan and dream. *HEART – the fulcrum of faith and feeling as well as the mainspring of words and actions. The heart is the seat of our desires.***

**Jesus in describing the heart & mind of a people quotes Isaiah 6 in Matthew 13: 14, 15.**

*“This people will listen and listen but not understand. They will look and look but not see, because their minds are dull, they have stopped up their ears and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise their eyes would see, their ears would hear, their minds would understand, and they would turn to me, says God, and I would heal them.”* That’s the Good News version but v15 in the Greek reads their “*hearts that have become grossly waxed.*” (hardened)- so that they can’t see with their eyes or hear with their ears and thus understand with their hearts.

**We have already been considering - The image of God in humans – is NOT seen in a physical form likeness (as God is spirit) but in terms of knowledge and moral awareness and the possibility of relating in friendship to God.**

**Only Humans Have Morality, Not Animals. Only humans make moral judgements and moral choices.**

*Human beings, unlike other animals, are able to reflect on and make judgements about our own and others' actions, and as a result we are able to make considered moral choices.*

*Human beings have something that no other animal has: an ability to participate in a collective cognition. Because we, as individuals, are able to draw on the collective knowledge of humanity, in a way no animal can, our individual abilities go way beyond what evolution has endowed us with. Our species is no longer constrained by our biology. **Helene Guldberg Ph.D. Reclaiming Childhood***

**Human's have hearts which can be open or closed to hear God or be deaf to God.**  
They can be stony or responsive.

**The account we look at today** from *1 Samuel* involves the choice of a leader/ a King – a national ruler chosen by God. Samuel is sent in search of a new King after God rejects Saul because of his disobedient (*15:10*) behaviour and leadership. God tells Samuel his prophet that he has chosen one of Jesse's sons who is located in Bethlehem. Jesse is the grandson of Ruth and Boaz. The Messiah would later be born into this line – also a Shepherd king from Bethlehem.

Samuel in fear and reluctance takes his horn of oil (same as for Saul's anointing?) and goes under God's orders from Ramah to Bethlehem. He is obviously afraid that King Saul will get to hear of this – so goes under cover of making a sacrifice in Bethlehem. The city leaders are also nervous of his arrival – but he invites them and the family of Jesse to purify themselves and join him at the place of animal sacrifice.

Jesse's sons beginning with Eliab – no doubt the oldest are paraded before him. When Samuel sees the impressive Eliab he says, "Surely this is the one the LORD has chosen?" BUT the LORD says to him:

**(PP3) *V7 Pay no attention to how tall and handsome he is. I have rejected him, because I do not judge as people judge. They look at the outward appearance, but I look at the heart.***

In all 7 sons were brought before Samuel – but he knew God had not chosen any of these. "Have you any more sons?" Jesse said, "There is still the youngest, but he is out tending the sheep. So, he was sent for.

He is described as *v12 handsome, healthy, young and with sparkling eyes*. (Later we find out that he is also a *good musician, brave, a good soldier and an able speaker v18*). But none of that was overtly apparent to Samuel. The youngest, in the shadows of his brothers – is the one. Samuel anoints him as King and does a quick exit. From that moment the Scripture says the Holy Spirit takes control of his life.

**So "appearances can be deceptive"!** We – you and I can be deceived. We can be impressed by outward appearances, BUT the reality of a person's inner morality and spiritual life can be very different. (King Saul was a case in point. Visually impressive he was not a good leader to his people). David was disregarded by his father and his brothers – but he was God's choice. (We too are God's choice although the world may disregard us).

**V7 God sees differently from human perceptions. Our judgements can be skin deep – God goes deeper – to the very heart of a person.** David himself learns this

lesson and it is one we need to learn and live by. David learns this about his own imperfect heart and he addresses his son Solomon who is going to be allowed to build God's Temple. *"My son, I charge you to acknowledge your Father's God and SERVE HIM WITH AN UNDIVIDED HEART AND A WILLING MIND. He knows all your thoughts and desires..."*

(Discernment needed: choice of politicians, church leaders, business partners, & even which friends we share most deeply with. Prayer for our children's' choice of life partners).

**God's Future Messiah – would not be outwardly impressive especially at the end.** Isaiah said that *"he would be rejected by humans" and disfigured in appearance* but declared supremely great. (*Isaiah 52: 14; 53: 3*).

- **1 Corinthians 1: 27. God's use of the "weakest" in human terms to show the fullness and extent of his power and glory. Gods ways are often contrary to the world's ways.** God's measures of success are not necessarily those of the world's.

**David in retrospect came to see that God had kept him safe from his birth onwards** (*Psalm 22: 9, 10*) and that God had a special purpose for him even though at times he veered from it. But as the anointing showed – he needed the Divine equipping of the Spirit of God. To fulfil our full human calling and purpose we too need the anointing of the Spirit.

**God alone can read and know each human heart.** We each need God's discernment to under the motives and motivations of others. If we trust our own understanding, we will make countless mistakes and wrong decisions.

We also need God's insights and discernment to know and understand our own motives and motivations. We easily deceive ourselves – we can lie to ourselves about why we do what we do and respond as we respond. We need God's help so that we recognize distorted motives and weaknesses in ourselves. In seeking God's help to become more truthful to ourselves our stony hearts become more truly human and we become stronger as people.

***"The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Who can know it? Who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17: 9)***

**ONLY GOD CAN and only God can cure the ailing human heart. V10 *"I, the LORD search human minds and test human hearts..."***

God promises to do this – if we cooperate with him. (Prayer for an undivided heart: *Psalm 86*)