

Making Change: Change of Heart

Jesus' words to the Pharisees give us pause: "You honor me with your lips, but your hearts are far from me." How has God been changing our hearts in the midst of the ongoing pandemic? Today, Jesus invites us to experience a change of heart that will change every part of our lives.

OPENING

Beloved, set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm.
For love is strong as death;
passion fierce as the grave.

**O God, search me and know my heart;
test me and know my thoughts.
See if there is any wicked way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.**

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of our longing,
**strengthen us and dwell in our hearts, that we be rooted and grounded in your love.
Help us to comprehend the breadth and length and height and depth of your mercy
shown to us on the cross. Fill our hearts with your grace, that we lead lives that radiate
your love to all. In Jesus' name we pray.**

READING: Ezekiel 36:22-28

Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. I will sanctify my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD, says the Lord GOD, when through you I display my holiness before their eyes. I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land.

I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

GOSPEL: Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

‘This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.’

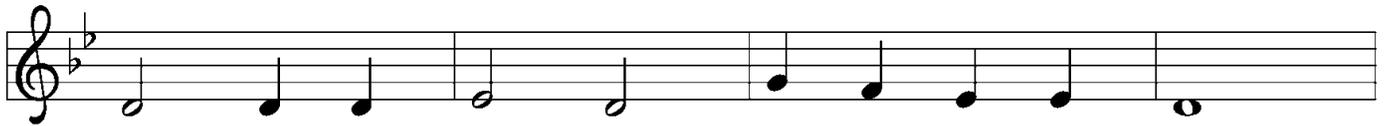
You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.” For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

Silence for reflection

HYMN OF THE DAY

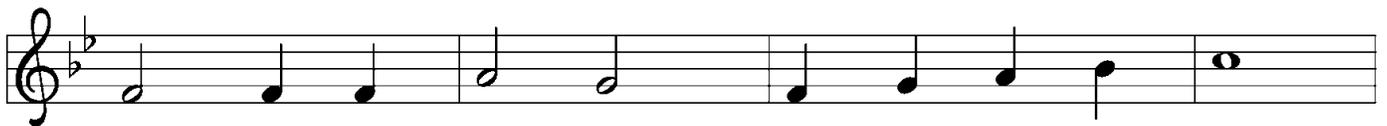
Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart



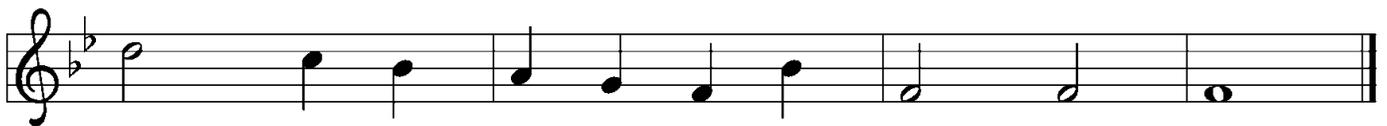
1 Spir - it of God, de - scend up - on my heart;
2 I ask no dream, no proph - et ec - sta - sies,
3 Have you not bid me love you, God and King;
4 Teach me to love you as your an - gels love,



wean it from earth, through all its puls - es move;
no sud - den rend - ing of the veil of clay,
all, all your own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind?
one ho - ly pas - sion fill - ing all my frame:



stoop to my weak - ness, strength to me im - part,
no an - gel vis - i - tant, no op - 'ning skies;
I see your cross; there teach my heart to cling.
the bap - tism of the heav'n - de - scend - ed dove,



and make me love you as I ought to love.
but take the dim - ness of my soul a - way.
Oh, let me seek you and, oh, let me find!
my heart an al - tar, and your love the flame.

Text: George Croly, 1780–1860

Music: MORECAMBE, Frederick C. Atkinson, 1841–189

PRAYERS

O God our help,
you walk with us through all of life's changes.
Grant us strength, patience, wisdom, and understanding.

O God our hope,
you come to us in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.
Show us your salvation, and lead us in the way of the cross.

O God our shelter,
you enfold us like a mother hen gathering her chicks.
Watch over all who are sick, grieving, lonely, and in need this day.

O God our home, you claim us as your beloved children.
Lord, remember us when you come into your kingdom.

Prayers from the community

All this we ask through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

BENEDICTION

DISMISSAL

Go now in peace, for nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus.
Thanks be to God.