

INTRODUCTION TO THE HEART OF CHRISTIANITY, BY MARCUS BORG

Next Wednesday, May 24, we begin our discussion based on the book: *The Heart of Christianity*, by Marcus Borg. Whether you have or will be reading the book or not, it may be of primary interest to you to be part of the discussion – to listen, to share, to think, and hopefully to feel stirrings in your heart.

Here are a couple of quotes from the opening chapter:

"Like all good metaphors, *heart* has more than one nuance of meaning. To begin with, it suggests what is most central. What is the core of Christianity, the "heart of the matter"? What is the essence of Christianity and the Christian life?... If "core" and "essence" suggest something too abstract, too lifeless, *heart* is also an organic metaphor, suggesting something alive, pulsating, the source of life. What is the heart, the animating source or driving force, of Christianity without which it would cease to live?"

"Furthermore, as in the phrase "head and heart," *heart* suggests something deeper than the intellect and the world of ideas. What is it about Christianity that is deeper than any set of Christian ideas and beliefs? And what is it about Christianity that reaches us at the "heart" level – a level of ourselves deeper than the intellect? The heart, the deeper level of the self, is the "place" of transformation. What is it about Christianity that gives it power to transform people at the "heart" level?" (from Chapter 1)

Is faith a matter of believing or is it more primarily what Borg calls a matter of trust, of faithfulness, and a way of "seeing"? He also points to how before modern times, to believe in something or someone meant "giving one's heart". (Chapter 1)

Is the bible sacred scripture because of the information it provides, the stories it tells, the laws it teaches about God's will, or is it even more primarily about ways the Spirit of God awakens something in us as we immerse ourselves in scripture and wrestle with it too? How do we liberate ourselves from more literalist readings of scripture that have been dominant, to more metaphorical readings that reach deeper into our hearts? (Chapter 2)

If any of this interests, intrigues or fascinates you, if something in you stirs with such questioning, all this and so much more will be the focus of our discussion next Wednesday, May 24, 7:30pm. A zoom link will be sent out Wednesday morning. For any questions contact Dr. Harris.