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Dear Friends,

The Heart of God!

*Welcome to our shared conversation for the month of April. I don't know about you but I am having a difficult time putting together the Easter Story and the month of March, so I am very grateful the celebratory days sneaked over into the start of April. Hence, I did not make mention of Easter in the March letter, but I would like for us to spend a few moments thinking about that occasion, and in particular, contemplating my title for this month – **The Heart of God!***

*Just this week I read the scripture in **Matthew 5:8** that says: - **"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God"** (KJV). Our Bible study group are about to embark on a study of - **The Heart of God**; and with this in mind and contemplating Easter, it got me thinking about the real workings of - **The Heart of God**.*

*He (God) is the author and finisher of our faith; our life, our future, our daily existence. In fact, there isn't anything I can think of, that He is not the beginning and end of – except for the sin and shame of society. And that brings us to the reason for the season of Easter – **Jesus, God's son, and the sacrifice He made on our behalf**. There have been numerous books written, and movies made, trying to impress upon our psyche, the real horror of the journey to the cross, that Jesus made for you and me. Besides all of the physical brutality and cruelty associated with that moment of time, there was the very personal, emotional, breaking of **His Heart**, which I want for us to focus on.*

He was betrayed by one of His closest friends (Judas). His arrest and crucifixion was organised and paid for by the religious leaders of the day. He was disowned by His closest friends (Peter). Yet, He steadfastly and silently, carried His own cross to that lonely hill, and prayed; “not My will but Thine be done”. Now when I think of the life we live in the flesh, here in the real, but fallen world; I don’t think there is anyone I could call upon, to go to the cross and die for me. Not one friend comes to mind. **But Jesus did!!!** Why? **Because... “God loves me so much that He gave...”!** (See John 3:16). Now if you know Jesus as your own personal Saviour and Lord, that should set your heart to singing; and if you don’t know Him personally, it should still set your heart to singing; the fact that you are reading this letter, and should now know, that **HE - was the reason for this season – the Jesus of our Easter story! The Saviour of our world! Our friend and our Redeemer! Amen!**

I believe the **Heart of God** was so focused and intent on buying back what Adam and Satan had given away back in that garden, that Jesus complied with His Father’s wishes (heart), even though He had prayed three times, in **Matthew 26:36-46**, “**if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not my will but thine be done**”. God the Father and God the Son (Jesus), were so intertwined, that Jesus never did or said anything that God had not ordained Him to do and say. He simply mimicked His Father, just as He has asked us to imitate Him. **He was the perfect example of obedience. The Heart of God**, had looked ahead to see how He could redeem us back to Himself, and it took a man, His son, to stand in our stead. Now that is some **BIG heart!**

God’s Heart was so full of compassion, desire, longing, and above all, LOVE, that He was prepared to look away from His one and only Son for just a moment, while He bled and died for you and me. **Our sin** - nailed Him to that cross, and it took **His blood** - (Jesus), to redeem us back to His, and our Father – God! Amen and Amen! Now that is **GRACE**. The LOVE of God, put into action; **The purity, of the true Heart of God!**

Matthew 5:8 : - “**Blessed are the PURE in Heart, for they shall see God;**”...tells us that the pure in heart are (both) - **holy and happy**. These two things seem to be both fully described, and cemented together, here in this verse. And, I believe we find - the most **comprehensive character of the blessed - they are Pure in Heart;** and the most **comprehensive comfort of the blessed - they shall see God;** all here in this verse.

What more do we as fellow believers, want? Nothing!!! If we are serious with ourselves, and God, **we must lift up to Him, not only clean hands, but a pure heart.** The very sincerity of our faith, at its core, is found in the **purity of our heart**. The conscious effort made daily to meet together with our Lord, to

pray as Jesus did, **“thy will be done in my life today, Lord,”** is paramount to our successfully imitating Him. To consciously make that daily commitment to imitate Christ, and by so doing, walk in blessed holiness and happiness, regardless of the storms of daily life; **that should be our hearts desire.** That should **reflect the purity of our heart,** and it **should reflect,** as in a mirror, **the Heart of God.**

God seems to have covered not only our present, but also our future in this verse. We are pure in heart – **NOW!** We shall see God – **FUTURE!** Wow! That is a very comforting promise. The happiness of seeing God is promised to those, **and those only, who are Pure in Heart** – just like God. **As He is, so shall we be!!!** Amen!

The very fact that the **Heart of God** is so generous toward us His children - is evidenced in the Easter story... **“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son”...** for you and for me. Now isn't that the greatest story ever told! **The heart of God was then, and is now, so pure,** that He didn't even hesitate to do what was in yours, and my, best interest. Our eternity is hinged upon that ultimate sacrifice. The gift of the Father; the death of the son; the heartbreak experienced for what seemed, an agonising period of time, for both of them; that we might be redeemed back to the Father. That is why I cannot emphasize enough, that our salvation might be **FREE**, but it did not come cheap. It cost Jesus His life; and God the Father, His Son. **Oh, what a Heart, the Heart of God must be!!!** Thank you Jesus, for your obedience; Thank you God the Father, for your gift toward us; We remain eternally grateful.

Till next month

From my house to yours

Blessings of the abundant kind!

Leila Nord.

