

## The Heart of Jesus...In My Hand

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Eternally Speaking Now

Our family recently visited my parents in Michigan. As we concluded our final evening there, the five of us sat to take communion together. My mom **tore** bits of bread from a loaf, and my dad **poured** the juice.

We gathered around the table as my husband led us in a time of silence and personal reflection.

When Jesus died on the cross for us,  
His body was **torn**.  
His blood was **poured** out.  
His heart of LOVE was revealed to all mankind.

In the quiet moments that followed, I was reminded of a sin that had crept in that morning: moved to tears, I confessed to Jesus that I'd been **doubting** His goodness. Not only that, but I'd been **questioning** the truth of His word towards me. Quite frankly, in a moment of emotional desperation that morning, I'd been **tempted to wonder** if He was even real.

*My head knew the truth, but my heart doubted.*

As I prayed about this in my mind, the word '**betray**' pierced my heart.

*Yes, to a degree, I'd indeed betrayed my Lord.*

I knew better than to entertain such thoughts of **doubt** towards Jesus, but I also knew, if left unconfessed, they'd keep me in some way separated from Him. (Psalms 32, 51) ***That's a dangerous, unhappy, crippling place to be.***

Robin's voice interrupted my thoughts as he encouraged us to take a piece of bread and consider the body of Christ. After doing so, I shut my eyes and listened to my husband's prayer. 'Take and eat, the body of Christ, broken for the remission of our sins,' he concluded.

I opened my eyes and looked down at the bread in my hand.

**I was in awe of the Lord as I saw the gift He'd given me,**  
after I'd confessed my sins with a broken and contrite spirit.

There in front of me was a piece of bread...*in the shape of a heart.*

*The truth about the Bread of Life-- Jesus Christ my Savior-- overtook me:*



**God is a good Father. He cares and provides for me.**

(Matthew 6, 7:11)

**His lovingkindness toward us never ends. (Psalm 100:5)**

**He forgives us even though we do not deserve it, and He loves us even when we are or behave like His enemies.**

(Ephesians 2:4-6, Romans 5:8)

**He never leaves us.**

(Deut. 31:6, Matt. 28:20)

**He remains faithful to us even when we are unfaithful.**

(2 Timothy 2:15)

***"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"***

(Romans 8:30-32)

**If I doubt one percent of these truths or any of God's Word, there's a grain (or more) of betrayal in me towards Him.**

*"Oh no!" my heart cried, looking upon the bread in my hand. "Am I Judas?"*

*God's Spirit spoke to mine: "No, my dear-- you're Peter."*

Suddenly I was filled with some of the most 'love' I've ever had for this great God and Savior who first loved me. *What kindness! What goodness!*

When Judas denied Christ, he was remorseful and hung himself.  
When Peter denied the Lord, he wept bitterly and was restored.

Both men betrayed or denied Christ,  
but there was a world of difference in their hearts and their reactions.

Peter was sorry, and his sorrow led to repentance, which led to salvation.  
Judas was sorry, but it was a worldly sorrow, and it concluded in his death.  
(2 Corinthians 7:9-10)

**Peter knew the love of Jesus. Judas did not.**

The kindness, the goodness, and the love of God is what led Peter  
out of lies and into Truth. (Romans 2:4)

God's love melted Peter's heart, and he returned to Him.

**Challenge:** Because we are human, it seems inevitable that, to some degree, we will experience **betrayal in our hearts**. I don't speak here of a 'falling away from the faith,' but instead to that inkling of **doubt** or even **mockery** towards what God says in His Word-- the little thoughts that will sneak up and into us. *What makes the difference isn't whether this happens or not, but how we react to it when it does.*

**Will you respond like Judas or like Peter?**

**He's given you His heart of love-- will your hand reach out and receive Him?**

The Lord knew Peter would deny Him. Before it happened, He said,  
**"Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."** Luke 22:31-32

*He has prayed for you. Your faith shall not fail.*

*You will return to Him.*

*Then go-- strengthen your sisters and brothers in Christ!*

Regardless of how long we've walked with the Lord, whether we know Him intimately yet or not, areas of our heart can fall **blind** to God's love for us.

**God is love, and His love never fails.**

May that drive us to receive Him with **open hands and hearts**. Amen.