

The Headless Boy

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There once was a young man who had no head. He was not keenly aware of this fact because he simply followed what his heart had to say and that seemed to be sufficient. Every unfiltered inclination that proceeded from his heart went straight into his life without much hesitation. It was a rather simple life plan and he liked it though he never really thought about it since, as I have said, he had no head.

Upon occasion, his heart would direct him to be quite generous and kind, even to total strangers. He was often treated by his heart to the warmest of feelings when he followed these urges. But as often as not it would suggest he do something that could be considered... selfish. He was not usually conscious of this however, since of course he had no head. His heart did not generally give him much indication of this either although it had been known to change its opinion so quickly that it seemed to contradict itself. He felt this, having a heart, but could not explain it since he was without a head.

Now it came about that in time this young man became a true follower of Jesus Christ. Indeed his heart itself was changed by God and felt the sincerest desire it had ever known. It felt new power and energy that it had never before experienced and could not find from any source within itself. But being a young man of heart and not head, he just enjoyed this new and truly wonderful sensation and followed it as much as he could.

After some time however, the young man felt his heart, the same one that had been changed, giving him an old command that he had not had for a long time. Then almost as quickly, he felt a fresh impulse that seemed more like his new heart. But then came the old urge again! This went on so long the young man felt torn apart. And for the first time he wished he had something other than his heart to listen to. As much as he was glad to have the heart he had, he felt like he needed another guide.

Then one day early in the morning, the young man's friend, who incidentally had a very fine head, gave him a present. It was a box that looked like a large book. He quickly opened it and indeed the box contained a book but it also had something else – a beautiful new head! The young man was exceedingly happy. The head had brown eyes – to serve as a lamp to the body, the book said. They needed to be kept good so that the whole body would be full of light. The head also had two ears. The book said that whoever has them is to hear, and the young man knew that they, like the eyes, gave him direction but also responsibility. In addition to the eyes and ears, the head had a tongue. The book gave a great deal of information about this part of the equipment, mostly warnings. The tongue, for example, could be left running when it appeared to be off. Usually if that happened, the heart would use it without much discretion. It could be very dangerous, the book said, but it could bring great healing also if used correctly. It needed careful supervision. Finally the head had a mind. Not the top of the line, but a very good one. It was to be involved in everything the young man did. If he prayed, he was to use it; if he sang; he was to use it; if he undertook a project, he was to use it. Everything he did from now on was to include it. The book made it very clear however that the mind was limited. It could be fooled or could misread information, or just plain get stuck. At first this disappointed the young man. But the book suggested that the mind be used alongside the heart instead of being its replacement. The mind was to make the decisions even if that decision was that the heart was right. The heart was to inspire the mind and keep it from functioning without feelings and joy. Each had its job and if balanced properly, the book said, they would give not only direction to the young man but also fulfillment.

The young man wore his new (but not top of the line) head enthusiastically and was overjoyed at the progress he made. He kept the book always with him and studied it daily. Which, by the way, was a decision his mind made and his heart agreed on... most of the time.