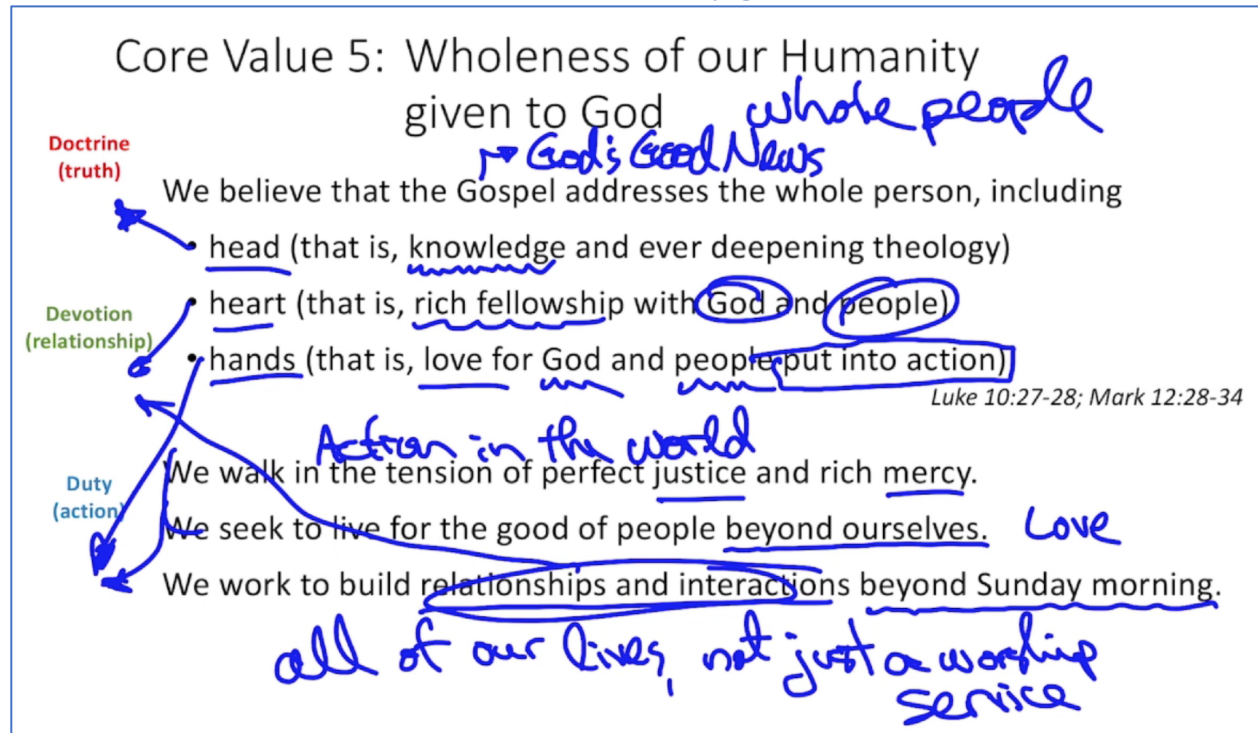


Core Value 5: Wholeness of our Humanity given to God



We look now at our fifth core value, focusing on the wholeness of our humanity being given to God. This is the idea of being whole people, and we want to love him with all we are. This core value expresses a bit of what that means. So we believe that the Gospel addresses the whole person.

What we mean by the Gospel is God's good news, the good news of his rescuing us and calling us to be with him as his children. This "whole person" can be expressed in a number of different ways. It has been helpful for us to talk about head, heart, and hands.

So by "head" I mean particularly thinking about knowledge, that we want in our thinking, our ever deepening theology, to give ourselves, and to pursue the good of people, in terms of their thinking.

"Heart" is focused largely on this idea of rich fellowship. This is with God and with people. We were called to live in relationship with God and with others. This is an important part of who we are as people, and how we want to love and live with God.

"Hands" is an expression of love for God, especially in this idea of being put into action. So "hands" says we will do things to take action on behalf of both God and people. We want to love God in all parts of who we are.

Some of the ways that this is expressed is that we take action in the world. This first idea, this

first application of this idea, is that we will pursue justice and mercy; so we'll walk in the tension of perfect justice and rich mercy. This is how we take action in the world, to care for those who are in need, those who are vulnerable who have been oppressed. We want to walk in action in the world pursuing justice and mercy.

We seek to live for the good of people beyond ourselves. Again, we want to take action to meet the physical, the real needs of people, the spiritual needs of people, and this is an expression of love for our neighbor.

We want to do the work to build relationships and interactions beyond Sunday morning. Because we want to value God in the whole of who we are, and this is not just what happens on a Sunday morning, but in the rest of our lives, the rest of the week. So we want to love God in all of our lives, not just a worship service. We do want to love God and worship Him in our worship service, but not just there. It's the whole of who we are.

So in some sense the loving God with our head is this truth, this doctrine orientation. Loving God with our heart is relational. And loving God with hands is action, its duty. We also see this commitment to relationships and interactions as being a part of our devotion, our relationship, and taking action in the world for justice and mercy, and the good of people beyond ourselves, is a part of the action to which we are called.

So we believe that we're to love God with a whole of who we are, and at least including this idea of head, heart, and hands, in how we take action in our world.

Reflection Questions

1. Which of the three areas (head, heart, hands) is most natural for you? Which is least natural?
2. Which of the three areas is most natural for our church? Which is least natural?
3. What is one step you could take to grow in each of these areas?