

**“My Heart Is An Open Book”**  
Rev. Robert H. Wade  
February 17, 2010 – Ash Wednesday  
Psalm 139 (selected verses)

*Do you remember that old Dean Martin song, “My Heart is an Open Book?”* The words were written by Hal David and they go like this.....I won't sing them....

Don't believe all those lies  
Darlin', just believe your eyes and

Look, look, my heart is an open book  
I love nobody but you (ah, ah, ah, ah)  
Look, look, my heart is an open book  
My love is honest and true  
(doodidit, doodidit, doodidit, doot)

Some jealous so-and-so (doodidit, doot) wants us to part  
(doodidit, doodidit, doodidit, doot)  
That's why he's tellin' you (doodidit, doot)  
That I've got a cheatin' heart

Don't believe all those lies  
Darlin', just believe your eyes and

Look, look, my heart is an open book  
I love nobody but you  
(doodidit, doodidit, doodidit, doot)

Some jealous so-and-so (doodidit, doot) wants us to part  
(doodidit, doodidit, doodidit, doot)  
That's why he's tellin' you (doodidit, doot)  
That I've got a cheatin' heart

Don't believe all those lies  
Darlin', just believe your eyes and

Look, look, my heart is an open book  
I love nobody but you  
Nobody but you  
No body but you

Obviously this fellow is trying to convince the love of his life that his heart is “***honest and true***” and that he doesn't have a “***cheatin' heart.***” And to convince his love that his heart is only loving toward her he, over and over again, invites her to “***look, look, my heart is an open book.***” I'm not hiding a thing from you...just look and see that my heart is an open book! But you and I know that's not going to happen because no human can look inside another's mind, heart, and will. We can't see what makes another tick!

Only God can look deep within us and see everything all about us. To most of us that's probably a bit scary, especially as we might be concerned that God will not be pleased with what God sees. But what would it be if we trusted God to know and see everything about us....the good and the bad and we were blessed with the assurance that nothing about us will ever keep God from loving us?

I am glad you are here at this Ash Wednesday worship service because it shows that you have a desire to open yourself to God. Ash Wednesday, itself, signals the beginning of a season in which we can *take a deep breath....pause from our hectic schedules and take inventory of who we really are and where we are going.* Of all of the seasons of the year, Lent is that season when we go forth with courage and open our heart to God like an open book. Oh, we know that God already knows and sees us as we truly are but there is something about choosing to open our heart and life to God like an open book.....it completes the loop of relationship with God.

Psalm 139 is a beautiful Psalm that makes it very clear that God knows us intimately. But, as we read this Psalm, we will notice how God tenderly holds us with respect and even awe. As I read this Psalm, may you receive it as God's good news for you and may you hear the invitation to present your heart to God as an open book.

### Psalm 139

**1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me. 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. 3 You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. 4 Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. 5 You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. 7 Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? 8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, 10 even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night," 12 even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you. 13 For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. 15 My frame was not**

**hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. 16 Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed. 17 How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! 18 I try to count them—they are more than the sand; I come to the end —I am still with you......**

Ash Wednesday....a new beginning marking a journey toward our heart's true home. Lent is the perfect time to open our heart to God in an "open book" kind of way. Richard Foster gives us an interesting way to think of opening our heart to God in his book Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home....

***"For too long we have been in a far country: a country of noise and hurry and crowds, a country of climb and push and shove, a country of frustration and fear and intimidation. And God welcomes us home...."***

***We do not need to be shy. God invites us into the living room of his heart, where we can put on old slippers and share freely. God invites us into the kitchen of his friendship, where chatter and batter mix in good fun. God invites us into the dining room of his strength where we can feast to our heart's delight. God invites us into the study of his wisdom, where we can learn and grow and stretch.....and ask all the questions we want. God invites us into the workshop of his creativity where we can be co-laborers with him, working together to determine the outcome of events. God invites us into the bedroom of his rest, where new peace is found and where we can be naked and vulnerable and free. It is also the place of deepest intimacy where we know and are known to the fullest."** P. 1*

Lent is that season when we are invited to fall back into the everlasting arms, trusting that God is not only with us but for us. And because of God's delight in us we can join the Psalmist in saying, 23 **"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts.** 24 **See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."**

We open ourselves to God who is for us and we say, *"Look, look, my heart is an open book. Let me know exactly what you see and help me to align my heart with the heart of God!"*

As you leave our worship this evening you will be given a card. On one side there are simply two questions:

***For what moment today am I most grateful?***

***For what moment today am I least grateful?***

Use these questions to reflect on that particular day and give thanks for that which was good and offer that was not so good to God's redeeming work.

On the other side of the card you will find one of Paul's great prayers of invitation. Allow this prayer to become your prayer....a prayer that will make your heart and life an open book to God. It already is, you know, and the joy of intimate fellowship is acknowledging that reality every day.

Ephesians 3:16-17

**"I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love."**

Amen