

A NEW HEART FOR A NEW YEAR

a series of conversations and study based on Celtic wisdom

LORD OF MY HEART

Lord of my heart, **give me vision** to inspire me,
that working or resting, I may always think of you.

Lord of my heart, **give me light** to guide me,
that at home or abroad I may always walk in your way.

Lord of my heart, **give me wisdom** to direct me,
that thinking or acting, I may always discern right from wrong.

Lord of my heart, **give me courage** to strengthen me,
that amongst friends or enemies, I may always proclaim your justice.

Lord of my heart, **give me trust** to console me,
that hungry or well-fed, I may always rely on your mercy.

Lord of my heart, save me from empty praise,
that I may always boast of you.

Lord of my heart, save me from worldly wealth,
that I may always look to the riches of heaven.

Lord of my heart, save me from military prowess,
that I may always seek your protection.

Lord of my heart, save me from vain knowledge,
that I may always study your word.

Lord of my heart, save me from unnatural pleasures,
that I may always find joy in your wonderful creation.

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall me,
rule over my thoughts and feelings, my words and actions."

Ray Simpson, in *Daily Light from the Celtic Saints: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Life*

3 : WISDOM

guest - Mary Berry



Mary Berry is the founder and Executive Director of The Berry Center, in New Castle, Kentucky. The Berry Center was founded in 2011 to advocate for sound agricultural principles, small farmers, small communities, and local economies, among other work. The Berry Center is, in essence, institutionalizing the work and philosophy of the Berry Family - Mary's grandfather John Berry, Sr., a lawyer and farmer; her uncle, John Berry, Jr., also a lawyer and state senator; and her father, Wendell, arguably the most important writer and voice in America on agriculture, local economies, ecology, and related issues.

Home also to The Agrarian Culture Center and Bookstore at The Berry Center, and other initiatives, there are numerous ways in which Mary's work with The Berry Center is transforming the landscape of agriculture, small communities, and local economies.

SESSION 3 : WISDOM

welcome : Ike Nicholson

session : Dave Charlton in conversation with **Mary Berry**

PRAYER FOCUS

*Lord of my heart, **give me wisdom** to direct me,
that thinking or acting, I may always discern right from wrong.*

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

1 Corinthians 1:18-21 (NRSV)

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written:

*"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;
the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate."*

Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

MAIN IDEA

Wisdom, in the scriptures, is often portrayed as being 'counter-cultural'. The Beatitudes, and indeed the entirety of the Sermon on the Mount, becomes an exposition of the counter-cultural wisdom of the Kingdom of God. How do we know, though, when we are adopting a spiritual wisdom born of God, or adopting a wisdom that is part of the culture in which we live and might be in opposition to the wisdom of God? How do we know the difference?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ⇒ How do you determine the basis for what you think is right? Are you sure you are not 'kicking against the goads'? (Acts 26:14)
- ⇒ In these days of unprecedented change, how do we know the difference between change that is moving us forward in a helpful, healthy manner and that which is not?
- ⇒ In what ways do you see the wisdom of Jesus and the kingdom of God as 'counter-cultural' today?
- ⇒ In one year, two years, five years, ten years, as we look back upon this time, what do you think we will be able to see, in retrospect, that we cannot see now? How much will our perception be shaped by the wisdom of a later time?