

October 13, 2019
Heart Transplants

More and more we are hearing of people receiving a heart transplant, which is defined as “an operation in which a failing, diseased heart is replaced with a healthier, donor heart.” Reportedly, the first heart transplant (HTx) was performed in South America in 1967, and in the intervening years it has become more and more common. This is truly a medical feat, and it reflects the great progress evident in the medical world.

But we ask, does this not pose some theological questions to some? For example, haven't we all seen people beat on their chest and point to the blood pump within (called a “heart”), and say “I know I'm saved because I feel it right here?” Some have even gone so far as to say that “I wouldn't trade what I feel right here (pointing to their physical heart) for a stack of Bible this high?”

Well, this becomes interesting! For example if a person is saved at the time of his death, will the transplanting of his heart into another person's body make that person saved also? On the other hand if the donor person was lost at the time of his death, will the transplanting of his heart cause the person receiving the heart to be lost also? Furthermore, if the person who received a heart transplant suddenly “got religion and got saved” (as such people express it), would it result in the salvation of the heart donor or the salvation of the heart receiver?

Oh, the folly of it all! Perhaps reflecting upon this issue can help us realize that the Bible heart is not simply an organ that pumps blood. Perhaps we can begin to realize that a special feeling “in the heart” (pointing to the left chest) may be more a sign of indigestion than salvation! The fact is this: the **Bible** “*heart*” can purpose, think, believe, and intend (2 Cor. 9:7; Prov. 23:7; Acts 8:37; Heb. 4:12). In Hebrews 10:16 the “*heart*” and “*mind*” are used interchangeably to show that they are one and the same. This is why proper teaching precedes obedience, and why obedience is “*from the heart*” (Rom. 10:17).

-B. Witherington

“The road to heaven is never overcrowded.”