Anatomy of the Soul

Anatomy of the Soul is based upon two basic observations:

- First, at our core, we all are desperate for joy, courage, kindness, and security. We long for these qualities to be displayed in our children, our families, our communities, and ourselves.
- Second, new discoveries in neuroscience – the study of how our brains function – reveal that our interactions with each other help shape our brains and relationships in ways that either point to the qualities above, or point to negative, harmful qualities.

Anatomy of the Soul examines the process of paying close attention to our brains and our relationships—a process that not only strengthens our awareness of their existence, but enhances our ability to become more joyful, courageous, kind and secure as we interact with those around us.

Furthermore, the observations and suggestions made in Anatomy of the Soul point to something deeper, more mysterious, and more exciting. For those who desire to follow Jesus, these findings in neuroscience reflect what we already know from Scripture – that God desires for our lives to be changed in concrete ways for the good of ourselves, our communities, and for humanity as a whole. He desires for us to tell a better life story than what we ever could plan for ourselves. By paying attention to how our brains and relationships shape each other, we create space for God to work. We create space to “be transformed by the renewing of [our minds],” so that [we] may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2, NASB)

Comprehending all of this begins and ends with understanding the difference between knowing and being known. Knowing is an activity of the mind that keeps the “knower” separated from the fact, idea, object or person s/he knows. Such separation is not so bad for facts, ideas or objects, but it is bad for people, who are meant to be known at a deeper level. Being known requires an availability, vulnerability, and trust of the person knowing you. It requires an understanding that there is no such thing as an isolated mind, and that life will only be full of joy, courage, kindness and security to the extent that one is engaged, known, and understood by another, especially by God.

So you see, everything is connected—the question is whether or not we will pay attention to it. As such, we cannot separate what we do with our brains and our relationships from what we do with God. Likewise, as we pay close attention to what stories in Scripture tell us about the people of God—about their experiences with Him and with each other—our very neural networks (and mind) are renewed. In essence, God is inviting us into a deeper, more joyful, more secure and courageous relationship with him and each other.

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