

Preparation for G117 -Learning By Heart

Definition: Learn by Heart (To).

The heart is the seat of understanding; thus the Scripture speaks of men “wise in heart;” and “slow of heart” means dull of understanding. To learn by heart is to learn and understand; to learn by rote is to learn so as to be able to repeat; to learn by memory is to commit to memory without reference to understanding what is so learnt. However, we employ the phrase commonly as a synonym for committing to memory.

-- *E. Cobham Brewer 1810–1897. Dictionary of Phrase and Fable. 1898.*

Questions:

- 1) Think about the phrases “learning by heart” “take to heart”. Think about it literally. Where do you think it comes from? What has been your attitude about learning by heart in the past?
- 2) Have you ever learned a poem by heart? Did it change your relationship to it?
- 3) Think of what it might mean to have one or several poems in your mental library. What might you do with them?
- 4) Learn a poem by heart and share it with your group. Why did you pick this particular poem?
- 5) Do you know the affirmation or the chalice lighting by heart? If you do know them have they ever come in handy? Why should or shouldn't we repeat the affirmation each Sunday?