

Ps: 3, 4, 5. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

I deem it a great privilege to be invited to participate in this ceremony which is in many ways a unique one because, as far as I know, to start the work of your acad. year with such a short relig. service, is a very rare occurrence in medical schools throughout the world.

What does this short ceremony portray? If I may be allowed to interpret it, I see it as an acknowledgement, a witness from those who are actively participating in this service, that we are not just working ~~in~~ on a purely human level in our med. school, but that at some point God enters the scene, takes over and gives direction and meaning to our study and ~~work~~ <sup>discovery</sup>. It is a clear indication that we believe that God has a specific message for us in our lecture rooms and our laboratories - a message ~~concerning~~ directly connected to human life (including the human body).

Perhaps some of you <sup>will</sup> disagree with this statement. Perhaps you ~~will~~ are saying:

"On the face of it no medical student need take notice of what the diff. religions of the world profess or believe about the human body because the man of medical science is only dealing with visible matter, with bones and muscles and ligaments. What lies outside this sphere is pure speculation and does not concern medical science which is at heart an exact science."

A little careful thought will, however, soon disclose the superficiality and the fallacy of such a viewpoint. Because whatever the difference in ~~our~~ <sup>our</sup> approach may be in ~~other matters~~, ~~and~~ they all accept that the human body is in fact much more than a dead mass, <sup>a cadaver!</sup> it is the visible reminder and token of human life in all its infinite variety, in its splendour as well as its frailty. It is in fact God speaking to us, making us conscious of his creation.

And this is where one's religious belief comes in. I cannot speak on behalf of other religions but this I know that although some religions ~~do not~~ ~~think~~ think less highly of the sacredness and worth of the human body they all acknowledge the wonder of God's creation as manifested there in. And in the Christ. religion which I profess, the Bible is very clear in stressing

the importance of the human body as harbouring the spirit of man. In the passage we have read, B. S., ~~the~~ this belief is reflected in the words of the poet:

- ① The overwhelming greatness and grandeur of creation as seen around, above and beneath us
- ② The total insignificance of man in comparison with this majesty of God: "What is man."
- ③ The incomprehensibility of the exalted and privileged position God has allotted to man: "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour"

And because God has created the human body to harbor man's spirit and soul on this earth, we honour his body, because it bears the trade mark of God. And it is just here <sup>where</sup> ~~that~~ medical science enters into human life: to make its invaluable contribution in restoring the human body, to alleviate human suffering, to grant new health and strength