

You'll be glad to know that I've now finished my second reading of Iain McGilchrist's monumental work *The Master and his Emissary* exploring the relationship between the right and left hemispheres of the brain and he does indeed make some monumental claims, including this, in the conclusion:

*In the opening pages of this book, I wrote that I believed it to be profoundly true that the inner structure of our intellect reflects the structure of the universe, (indeed)...I believe our brains not only dictate the experience we have of the world but are likely themselves to reflect, in their structure and functioning, the nature of the universe in which they have come about, (p.460)*

which seems to fit rather well with the monumental claim in today's scripture readings that the word of God has reached *to the utmost bounds of the world*. That the whole universe, indeed, is made to receive the Word because it is *of the Word*, created by and for the reception of God. This Word incarnated in Christ already calling each part of that world into the unity it already has. This may then make sense of the immediacy with which Peter, James and John respond to the Word calling them on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. We are made for God and, in this sense, God is our default position. The surprise should not be of the immediacy of the response but of our general unwillingness to respond. Why on earth is it that we do not hear and respond to this universal impulse? Yes, of course, because of sin and the need, then, for the Word to be made explicit – to be preached. Language is a strength of the left hemisphere and, in this need to be explicit about its own nature (the nature of love, one might say) the right hemisphere needs disciples to preach this word of love to others but the priority of the right hemisphere, of the Master representing the God of love, has to be respected if the emissary is to succeed in its task of interpreting God's love in the language of metaphor which all language necessarily is. So the disciples have to hew closely to the will of the Master if they are to represent God's love to us, the love Christ himself embodies; that is, subservient to the final say of the right hemisphere which is God's Word made explicit, not only in language, but in the practice of love. As the saying goes: we must preach, indeed, but use words (use metaphor) only when necessary – which of course includes the metaphor of right and left hemispheres.

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