



"And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." 1 John 4: 21

Sunday – June 15, 2008

Heart to Heart...

He stood up during the assembly. He was an older gentleman, quiet spoken. The words came out of his mouth, "I want to thank you for your many prayers offered on behalf of my son. He is 21 years young and he died yesterday of the hepatitis in Abuja. God answered our prayers and He said, 'no'!" With tears falling slowly down his cheeks but with a confidence I had never seen, he continued, "Our God is a wonderful God. In my son's death, may God be forever glorified. To God be the glory in his death and our lives!" As he sat down, the congregation in one accord said, "Amen!"

This happened at one of the assemblies where I preached one Sunday while in Nigeria. I sat there listening, with tears in my heart thinking to myself, "How many of my brothers and sisters in the states could see things the way he saw them and do what he did? How many would give God the glory and thank Him for saying 'no' in the death of their own child? Could I do that?" As my mind reflected while I listened, I thought, "How many of my own brethren would even show up for the assembly to worship when their son had died the day before?"

We have great difficulty in God telling us 'no'! We see our prayers are answered or not answered. Our Father says 'no' and we say He did not answer our prayers. That reveals our selfishness. When our requests are granted the way we ask, we rejoice and thank Him for answering our prayers. It reveals how little we accept, trust and understand our Lord. Everything God does is holy and righteous! Take a few minutes and reflect at the end of the life of Jesus on earth. He asked God 3 times to remove the suffering He was facing. God said 'no' three times! Paul asked God to remove the thorn in his flesh. Three times God said 'no'! David prayed fervently that his new born child would not die and God said 'no'! In each and every case, God was glorified in the lives of the individuals. There was no moping about. No depression. No staying home unable to function. They all gave thanks, rejoicing because they knew their heavenly Father worked all according to His will for righteousness sake. The response and attitude of each one found strength beyond themselves to move forward with a deeper commitment and faith.

This Nigerian man attended each and every lecture I gave that next week. He rejoiced in His Savior and made me reflect in my own heart. I thank God for giving us such men to teach us and show us what it really means to be in Christ Jesus, trusting in Him. How about you? Think about it!!!

Brent