



"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 – July 6, 2008

Heart to Heart...

The Lord has a great concern and love for the church. He cares for each member of His body and desires each member to grow. We cannot grow ourselves. The Lord is the only one who can cause growth. We just need to heed and follow with a whole heart.

I stay concerned for our parents in raising their children. It is an awesome responsibility. Jesus was questioned about taxes, to pay or not to pay (Luke 20:19-26). Jesus called for a coin and asked, "*Whose likeness and inscription does it have?*" They responded, "*Caesar's.*" Then Jesus said to them, "*Then render to Caesar's the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.*"

Take a few moments and look at you children. Whose image do they bear? They may have your features and your mate's features, but look a little more closely. Look beyond they physical features and see the real image they bear. It's the image of God! The image of God is engraved on their heart and soul and they have been placed into your guidance and care. "*Render to God the things that are God's!*" As they grow up, school will demand their energy and time and we want them to learn, ***but they belong to God!*** Friends will want their attention and affection, ***but they belong to God!*** Activities will want to fill their schedules and hearts, ***but they belong to God!*** Work will ask them to be diligent and want their time, ***but they belong to God!***

If only parents would exert more energy and their personal time, whatever it takes, to make absolutely certain the souls of their children are cared for properly. Parents too often are caught up in and offer too much world to their children! It is heartbreaking to watch mothers and fathers take the gift God has given them with children (Psalms 127:3) and abuse that gift by offering them to the world, completely unaware of what they are doing. Children, whom Jesus claims as the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:1-3), are turned against their Maker, their Father because they were trained to love the world, sacrifice for the world and take the world's attitude toward worship or Bible study by staying home. The world lies in the power of the evil one (I John 5:19). I have heard children tell their parents, "I don't like being around these church people!" Another young child said, "I don't like this God stuff!" At the assembly one day a child plainly spoke, "I hate church! Can we go home?" Can you imagine how God must feel, the very One who made this child in His image, giving this gift of life to each of us, only to find a young child turned against Him? When a child has no desire, little yearning for God, it tells you what is emphasized in the home. Children learn these attitudes and desires from mom and dad. I know many may not like to hear that but a child cannot turn against its Maker unless someone has directed their life somewhere else! The world hates God and when a child dislikes being around God, worshipping God, and being with the church, parent's better take heed!!! The result is an everlasting consequence and parents will be held accountable.

Prepare the hearts of your children. Teach them; show them what a godly husband and wife are. Train them in the ways and heart of God. Your example speaks volumes! Show them the body of Christ, the church, is most important to God and Jesus by making it most important to you. Teach them the sanctity of marriage and walking with God in that marriage. All of this prepares their souls to meet the One to whom they belong! Thank God for parents who show God to their children! "*Render to God the things that are God's!* Think about it!!!

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