



"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 20, 2008

## Heart to Heart...

I sat in a court room listening to a couple during their divorce hearing. They were both in Christ and both had asked me to be present. I could not believe what I heard and witnessed. First, why are two people in Christ divorcing unless one or both are involved deeply in sin? That was my thought. Secondly, why can't they reconcile and be loving and tender hearted toward one another as the Lord asks? Why do people in Christ completely reject the direction and will of God? Have they become unbelievers?

The judge entered and the proceedings started. It was a nightmare. Hate and hateful words came from both of their mouths. Past offenses, deep hurts were hurled at one another like someone throwing spit wads against a chalk board, hoping one would stick. They had both reached a point that neither was willing to forgive and both wanted out of the marriage. There was no love; no desire to love and their attitudes demonstrated that. I sat in disgust and sadness. Two people who claimed Christ as their Lord are making a complete mockery of His life in their lives. What was worse is two "so-called" believers were displaying the world of Satan before the eyes of the lost and it was a shame! Christ made no more difference in their lives than the lives of those lost in their sins. Those witnessing all this thought nothing of it because this is their normal sin filled world. It is not the world of God and Christ!

Because someone claims Christ as their Lord and Savior does not make it a reality. The reality is the fruit that is produced in ones life. Hateful, bitter and unforgiving hearts have no place in Christ or with God. Ungodly actions, not practicing the righteousness of God are the devil's world. Jesus said a good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. (Matthew 7:18) The presence of God is shown by the fruit of the Spirit that is produced in our lives. Love, joy, peace and kindness are just some of the fruit produced. To claim fellowship with Christ and our love for Him, the evidence is seen in our lives. When hate and bitterness grow to such a degree between two people, where is Christ? Did Jesus lead them into this end product? Is this where God has taken their lives? Does a Christian arrive at ungodly behavior because they have been walking with the Lord? Paul warned about difficult days because brethren would be "*unloving, irreconcilable, brutal and unholy.*" (II Timothy 3:1-5)

One thing I have learned from all these years: When sin is present in the lives of God's people, love will always be absent! When people are in sin, love is the last thing they think about. No longer is one concerned about encouraging another, helping another or doing the best for another to make for peace. Sin takes one away from love and away from Christ! Sin takes people to the depth of the impossibility to be reconciled!! For love to enter the heart, our sin must be dealt with. When love is absent, sin grows stronger and deceives us. When love is absent, people become self consumed while justifying each step they take. Jesus came to deal with our sin and forgive. Until we come to Jesus with all our heart, sin will be present and the fruit we produce in our lives will grow and expose us. The worst part is one cannot fake it and can easily deceive themselves into thinking they are right with the Lord while sin has them in its cords. Jesus always has and will provide a fruit in us that we can rejoice in. Think about it!!!

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