



"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 – August 31, 2008

## Heart to Heart...

Character is what God is trying to grow in us (Romans 5:3-4). The character of a person is what makes them sound and upright in their behavior. The character of a person is what makes them dependable and faithful to their words and the way they live. The character of a person is revealed when opportunities arise to do the right thing in trying situations. Men and women in Christ should have a godly and honest character. If a person is faithful in little things in their lives, they will be faithful in big things. If a person is unrighteous in little things, taking advantage of others/situations to gain an advantage, they will be unrighteous in the big things! Those are the words of Jesus (Luke 16:10). It all reveals one's character.

For some, they cannot distinguish the difference between godly character and a person's charm. Dale Carnegie made a load of money teaching charm and persuasive words. Absalom, David's son, stole the hearts of Israel over the king because of his charm (II Samuel 16) but was a man of little character. Brethren are taken in because of someone's smooth and charming ways. Sales personal and con-men have to be charming and loveable to make a sale. In all these situations, character is overlooked. What happens is we get blinded to an honest evaluation of character. We seem to have difficulty in certain situations distinguishing between true, godly character and a person who has an outgoing personality of charm!

Paul warned the brethren at the church in Rome to watch out for those with "...smooth and flattering speech" as they can deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting (Romans 16:18). Paul warned the church at Corinth that they (the apostles) were "not like many, peddling the word of God" like one peddles wares (II Corinthians 2:17). Paul instructed the Thessalonians that they did not use "flattering speech as you know, nor with a pretext for greed...nor did we seek the glory from men." (I Thessalonians 2:5-6) It was about being dependable and trustworthy, being an example to others. All of these things describe godly character.

Everyone in Christ should be people of godly character but that's not reality. To develop godly character takes a deep love for the Lord and discipline! Character has a purpose! Character makes one dependable! Character makes one follow through with commitments made! Character will not be rude or hateful when a situation gets stressful! Character will be tough and straight when tough and straight are needed but love will be the motive! It takes godly character to preach the word in purity and honesty, despite what others might think. A relationship with the Lord is about character and character is gained by doing right in difficult situations. Do you see yourself as a person of godly character? Can people, especially brethren, count on you as being dependable? Are you a person that will carry a task through even though it might cost you or do you look for the easy way out? It's all about character and character is tied to faithfulness and faithfulness is tied to God. Think about it!!!

Brent