



"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 – May 17, 2009

Heart to Heart...

Any sincere Christian wants their faith to grow. Some think that Bible knowledge is faith growing. That's not necessarily true. It is true we need knowledge but knowledge alone can make one arrogant which God opposes (I Corinthians 8:1). In order for faith to grow, you must do something with the knowledge you gain.

The apostles asked Jesus, "***Increase our faith!***" (Luke 17:5) Why would they make such a request from Jesus? Because Jesus had just taught them about forgiving one another "***...if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent.' Forgive him.***" (Luke 17:3-4) Too many put strings and attachments on forgiveness. You hear statements like, "*They weren't sincere.*" Did Jesus say anything about that? No, He said if they come seven times in one day saying they repent, forgive them!!! We put obstacles in front of what the Lord wants from each of us and the result, no increase in our faith.

Jesus goes on in the context speaking about faith using an illustration of a slave plowing or tending sheep. The slave comes into the house from his work and what does the master do? Does he tell his slave to sit and eat? No! The slave prepares a meal for the master and then afterwards, the slave can sit and eat (Luke 17:7-8). Listen carefully to Jesus' next words: "***He does not thank the slave because he did the thing which were commanded, does he?***" (Luke 17:9). The slave isn't praised or thanked for what is expected. He's the slave, not the master. He is the servant to the master. He is only doing what is expected. "***So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done.'***" (Luke 17:10) There will be no faith increased until one does what is expected! It's not a matter of understanding but responding to the words of Jesus. Are you really sincere about your faith growing? What's expected when a brother or sister hurts your feelings? If a brother or sister sins against you seven times in one day and repents seven times, what are you going to do? There has to be a willingness to follow the Lord with all our heart or there will never be any increase of faith. If our faith isn't increasing, what we have will be taken away! (Luke 19:26) Faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17). We cannot hear unless we respond to what is said. No response, no faith! The Lord considers our faith as more precious than anything on this earth (I Peter 1:7-9). This should give us all pause and take it to heart. Thank about it!!!

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