



"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 12, 2009

Heart to Heart...

We all face difficulties in our lives. Some are major, others are not. Some can cause us distress while other things are easy to deal with. Difficulties are needful as they remind us of our need for God and His life. Many times we drift along, without much thought to our relationship to God and when a difficulty strikes, we are left clueless and shocked. It reveals our laziness in our relationship and sometimes can send people over the edge spiritually.

Do we see our lives as Christ? Are we consumed with Jesus and Him crucified? We are in Christ Jesus and He is in us. That means when the difficulties arise, it does not alter God's will. We are to be working out our salvation, each and every day, with each breath we take, because ***"it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."*** (Philippians 2:12-13) God is trying to work in us if we would take the right attitudes. We are reminded that God is ***"able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us."*** (Ephesians 3:20) God goes beyond anything we can think or ask! But it is conditional: ***"according to the power that works within us."*** What is that power? Our faith in God! (Ephesians 3:17) If we exercise little to no faith, how much more abundantly beyond can God work? It is our faith in God that limits God. It is not because God cannot help or go greatly beyond; it's because of our lack of trust in Him.

Think about your prayers. We ask God ***"hoping"*** He can do something. What kind of faith is that? He is at work in us for His will and His good pleasure. He is working on our behalf and we act as if just maybe, through some sort of dart thrown at a board, He can possibly do something. Suddenly, something works out and we say, ***"God answered my prayers!"*** like we are in shock. Do we really see our lives in relationship to His life?

Paul endured much hardship in his life. He was treated as a common criminal, even though he had violated no laws. He found himself chained in the innermost prison with no help from man. He writes to Timothy the preacher telling him, ***"The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen."*** (II Timothy 4:18) While in prison, he encouraged the Philippians: ***"For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death."*** (Philippians 1:19-20) He was in a living and loving relationship with God and trusted in Him no matter what. In the face of difficulties, he prayed and sang because he knew his Father.

We need to be growing in this life of Christ. We need to see God at work and His ability to work in us. We need to grow in our faith and trust. It's easy to say Jesus is Lord but it's another thing to be convicted and trust. Think about it!!!

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