



"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 – January 3, 2010

## ***Heart to Heart...***

It was time for the showdown. A mob carrying swords, clubs and torches approached. They had a Roman cohort with them (600 men). Judas knew exactly where Jesus was going to be as he had often been there with Jesus (John 18:1-3). Jesus asked whom they had come to seek to which they responded, "***Jesus the Nazarene.***" (John 18:5) Judas approached Jesus and kissed Him. The kiss of betrayal was what this mob was waiting for as that was the signal (Mark 14:44).

The disciples had two swords, one which was on Peter. Peter had already sworn his allegiance to Jesus telling him that he would fight to the finish. The mob arrived. They seized Jesus and suddenly, Peter pulls his sword and cuts off the right ear of Malchus, the slave of the high priest. Peter knew how to use a sword! But what happened next was most surprising. Peter demonstrated a willingness to stand and fight but then came the words of Jesus: "***Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword.***" (Matthew 26:52) The Lord Jesus heals the ear of Malchus and Peter puts his sword away.

In all this, what do we learn? Peter was willing to fight but was he willing to accept the will of God? Jesus had told them all along this would happen. Could Peter accept Jesus Christ's humiliation? Could Peter bear with the betrayal kiss and do nothing? Could Peter trust Jesus instead of trusting the power of the sword? In all this is the real test of a true faith.

What about us? Do we really trust Jesus or are we going to "*take up the sword?*" Sometimes people hurt our feelings and we can either "*live by the sword*" or forgive them (even without their asking). We want to fight back, to take a stand, to make sure we aren't hurt again. Jesus says, "*put up your sword!*" Pray for them, show them the love of sacrifice, go to the one whom you hold a grudge and forgive them, be reconciled to your brother, forgive and forget, put on a heart of compassion and be tender-hearted, forgiving. Sometimes people will disagree with us and what do we do? Trust Jesus or fight with them or take a bad attitude toward them? Sometimes we have helped someone over and over and they seem so unappreciative and we want to resort "*to the sword*" by not reaching out anymore. Can't we go the extra mile? Are we really willing to walk where Jesus wants us to walk? It takes a heart of faith!

Maybe we need to pay much closer attention to the words of Jesus: "***...for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword.***" And we wonder why our lives are such a mess sometimes. Think about it!!!

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