



"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 – February 28, 2010

Heart to Heart...

People associate the character of a person with their name. Whenever you hear someone's name, you automatically draw a conclusion about them because of your experience with them or knowledge of them. When you hear the name Adolf Hitler, what do you associate with his name? What about Michael Jordan?

A name reveals the character, authority, rank, majesty, power and excellence of everything that name covers. ***"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."*** (Isaiah 9:6) Isaiah is speaking of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. These names, recorded 700 years before His birth, reveal who He is and His complete character. It covers every detail about Him and was displayed in His life. Jesus revealed the character and attributes of God when He was teaching His disciples to pray. ***"Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.'"*** (Matthew 6:9) The name of our heavenly Father is holy! When Jesus was ascending back to the Father after His resurrection, He sent His apostles out with these words: ***"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."*** (Matthew 28:19) People were baptized in the recognition of the authority combined with the thought of relying on that name. Paul made it clear in these words to the Corinthians: ***"Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul? I thank God I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, that no man should say you were baptized in my name."*** (I Corinthians 1:13-15) To be baptized into another name would mean you were leaning on the power and authority of that individual!

When you hear the name Paul, what do you associate with his name? What about the name Judas? Barabbas? Names speak volumes about a person. When someone hears your name, what do they associate with it? How does your name characterize you? A godly, sincere follower of Christ? A trouble maker? Someone untrustworthy? A lover of God and His word? Trustworthy? An endless talker? A hot head? ***"A good name is to be more desired than great riches, favor is better than silver and gold."*** (Proverbs 22:1) ***"A good name is better than a good ointment."*** (Ecclesiastes 7:1)

The standard you live by and the way you act is always associated with your name. We need to be a people with a good name and reputation. Your name can do a lot of teaching for the good or cause someone to reject the Lord because of your example. Paul was not ashamed of his name being associated with following Christ (I Corinthians 11:1). Phoebe had a reputation of being a helper and servant of Christ (Romans 16:1-2). Epaphras' name was associated with Jesus Christ (Colossians 4:12). Silvanus was regarded as a faithful child of Jesus (I Peter 5:12). Gaius was known as a faithful servant of Jesus Christ and a lover of the brethren (III John 5-8). Lydia's name was associated with being faithful to the Lord (Acts 16:14-15).

When your name is spoken, what do people associate with it? This should make each of us pause and think about the examples we set for our loved ones and co-workers. We never want to be known for keeping others from God on account of our actions and attitudes. Think about it!!!

Brent