



"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 – March 6, 2011

Heart to Heart...

"For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death." (II Corinthians 7:10)

There are two types of sorrow over the sins one commits. One is worldly sorrow and the other is godly sorrow. There are great differences between the two and Paul contrasts them in the above verse. Godly sorrow is more than just saying, "I'm sorry!"

Godly sorrow is the grief and remorse that grows out of a realization that one has offended God. Worldly sorrow is the pain and regret over what has been afflicted on oneself. People feel sorrow and grieve over their past conduct. Some are very ashamed and in their sorrow, their shame and pain arise out of their sinful offense is against God so they go to God seeking pardon and finding His peace. *That's the sorrow that leads one to salvation!* They have a sincere desire to be right with God and needing release from guilt.

Unfortunately many do not take this road. They don't sincerely seek God for release and peace. In reality, they actually turn away from God and continue in their sins. When people fail by doing something that is displeasing to God, in their sorrows they turn to other means to clear their conscience because of the wrongs they know they have committed. They seek to rid their sorrows by surrounding themselves with people who have practiced the same in their lives because they will be accepting. They will use work, pleasures even drugs or alcohol in their escape. Worldly sorrow produces spiritual death!

Godly sorrow is not a mere regret that soon passes away in its effects but it produces permanent and abiding changes in one's life. It leads to repentance that is not regretted and results in salvation. Godly sorrow puts one on the road to improving without any props! (Read Psalm 32)

Grief, regret and remorse that does not lead one to God will ultimately lead one away from God. It will be a matter of time. Relief from the pains of guilt comes only from God. The human spirit cannot abide continuously in guilt and shame. One will seek refuge either in God or by: (1) seeking the approval of others, wanting them to know what is taking place in their lives, (2) hardening their heart toward what needs to be done, (3) becoming critical of the church and attempting to discredit those who walk according to the truth, (4) attempting to transfer the blame to others, or (5) showing contempt and resentment toward the one whom they hurt.

Rebuking and admonishing one another should always be done with the goal of producing godly sorrow, not making it personal. It should never be dealt with an attitude of revengeful feelings. The one that has sinned needs to realize they are out of line with God and need to turn to God to solve their problem. It's not personal but eternal. Think about it!!!

Brent