



"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 1, 2011

Heart to Heart...

God is trying to grow our character. Character is tried integrity. It is being sound and upright in our behavior with honesty and sincerity. It is doing what is right, with the right attitude in all situations. Character is what produces a true and lasting hope in an individual (Romans 5:3-4).

Sometimes people are harsh and rude. When one acts like that it reveals their character. Sometimes people have 'smart mouths' and that is a revealing of their true character. People are put in situations and they will cheat when no one is looking. That's their character. In the church where unloving and harsh men are placed in leadership roles (such as an eldership) it will destroy the spiritual nature of the whole because of their character. Servants of the Lord are to be gentle and respectful in their behavior (I Timothy 3). Being tied to Jesus will make no one mean, nasty or 'smart mouthed.'

There is a danger lurking for each member of Christ's body. Many cannot discern a person of godly and holy character from a person of charm! Dale Carnegie made loads of money with his charm courses. Absalom stole the hearts of Israel over his father David because of his charm and smooth speech (II Samuel 16). People follow someone who is full of 'niceness' with their kind talk and are easily blinded to an honest evaluation of their true character. There is a great difference between godly character, tried integrity and a person with an outgoing personality!

God warns us to watch out for those who can slide in teachings that are contrary to truth of the Lord. They are in the church! ***"For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting."*** (Romans 16:18) We aren't trying to create a congregation of suspicion. That too is wrong. When people try to change teachings or try to get us to go another direction by embracing things because someone uses a Scripture, we need to be careful and make absolutely certain it lines up with the truth of the word. There are those who are simply 'unsuspecting' and will follow anyone that seems to be sincere and nice. Paul made certain that he was ***"not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God."*** (II Corinthians 4:2) How does one 'adulterate' God's word? You mix it with other ideas or teachings of the world.

Many can have charm about them but no godly character. Salesmen, conmen have to be charming and lovable! They are trying to take people. Godly character is discipline. Character has a purpose. Character is what makes one do right in the difficult situations. Character makes one follow through by keeping their word. Character will not compromise God and His truth. Character is not rude, hateful or mean. Character can be 'tough' when it needs to be and can make godly decisions that may not be popular. It takes godly character to preach the truth, to stand for right and to train your children. True Christianity is about godly character. Character is gained by persevering in difficult situations and God uses those difficulties to build His character in each one of us. Think about it!!!

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