



"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 – August 14, 2011

Heart to Heart...

We are saved by grace through faith. It's a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8). Grace is a hard concept for many to grasp. I'm still working on it! Grace is God giving us what we don't deserve. God's grace is what brought salvation to all men (Titus 2:11). We don't deserve Jesus as our substitute! Why did God send Jesus on our death mission? GRACE! If anyone is going to be saved, it will be completely by the grace of God because we have all sinned and defiled ourselves with sin. It wasn't God that went astray. It wasn't God that encouraged us to follow our lusts. Here we find ourselves sinful at best and here comes God through Jesus...GRACE. It is His gift to us. God wants a relationship with us, the sinful. It is by His grace we are saved!

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men..." (Titus 2:11) We responded to His grace by being baptized into Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins (Act 2/Romans 6). As we have benefitted from God's grace, it should mean so much that it takes us into the very heart of God.

"...instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age." (Titus 2:12) The grace of God *instructs* us to deny ungodly and worldly desires. Worldly desires will take one away from the Lord. We see it all the time. Worldly desires take away the desire to please the Lord and worship the Lord. It is ungodliness that takes us into the worldly desires.

Ungodliness is not just being evil according to our defining of evil. There are good, decent people according to man's standard that are ungodly. Think about the term "*ungodly*." It simply means a disregard for God! Should the grace of God lead us into worshipping His name? Why do many disregard worshipping with His body? Should the grace of God take us away from sinful places and actions? If we do not deny ungodliness, we will simply disregard God! Ungodliness is nothing more than people not wanting God to run their desires or thinking! They want to do as they please. Here's the deceptive part: If God can be incorporated into that life-style of doing as we please and not interfere in our desires, we feel we are in a right relationship with God because we believe in God and Jesus! That's why so many are self-deceived and lost! They think of themselves as good and decent people comparing themselves with the world. They aren't evil in their personal assessment of themselves! God wouldn't punish them! *We are saved by God's grace not by our works!* People can be morally upright but ungodly. Ungodly people are easily led into worldly desires because that's what they live for. The grace of God instructs us to deny ungodly and worldly desires.

The grace of God teaches us not only to deny ungodliness and worldly desires but to live sensibly, righteously and godly. Godly living is having a deep regard for God and allowing Him run our thinking and desires! Godly living is a life that is lived in reverence and worship to Him. It is an awareness of His presence and our standing before Him. It is where God is the motivating factor of our decisions and actions. That's where God's grace takes us.

To live sensibly is to live your life with sober thinking to have some restraints (self-control) and prudence. Too many just do things on a whim without any thought. They feel like doing something, buying something, saying something (just listen to the profanity at times) and off they go. There is little sensibility or self-control. The world around lives like that and it becomes normal for us. The grace of God instructs us to live sensibly.

Righteous living speaks to our redemption, our salvation. It is a life that is of right conduct lining up with God's character. It regards honesty and right conduct toward other people, especially in the church fellowship. (See I Peter 3:8-12) Righteousness is not just being nice people. It is being conformed to the image of Jesus in our conduct.

Are you allowing the grace of God to teach you? Is it instructing you? It does the saved. Think about it!!

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