

Church of Christ

...Heart to Heart ...

Are you growing spiritually? Are you really growing, getting stronger and stronger toward the Lord and His ways? The only way one can grow is through surrender and surrender to the Lord takes an honest, willing heart. Your heart submits to God, listens to Him, and you put your desires into His hands. What is troubling is to find some wanting a relationship with God without giving themselves completely over to Him. The only problem is God will not accept that from a person.

The Pharisees thrived on being religious, calling God their Father. They prayed and fasted often (Matt. 6). They gave their money to help the needy and paid tithes on their income (Matt. 23). They studied the word and claimed God's word as their source of information (John 5:39). They were regular '*church attendees*'. They were very God centered in the eyes of everyone around. They were religious in all aspects. Jesus said they were God rejected!! He called them empty and heartless toward God. They were just a bunch of whitewashed tombs! "Even though you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness." (Matt. 23:28) We can fool one another, but no one is fooling God! "You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you saying, 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.'" (Matt. 15:7-8)

Jesus wants the heart! God looks at the heart! The heart is the seat of our very being. It's the throne that determines our attitudes and actions. Unless the heart surrenders, you can never grow spiritually. Our heart is exposed through our language, our actions and wants. People speak evil of others behind their back. Where did such speech come from? People can't assemble because of health reasons but have no problem going to events that are entertaining. What does that reveal?

Paul knew the brethren at Rome had become '*obedient from the heart*' (Rom. 6:17). Peter's preaching of Jesus and His Lordship penetrated the heart of the hearers (Acts 2:37). The Hebrew writer warned brethren not to '*harden your heart*' when you hear God's word (Heb. 3:15).

You correct a person who has a surrendered heart toward the Lord and they will accept correction and love you. You correct one who looks the part, just conforming outwardly, and they will turn on you and despise you. Jesus is living proof of that happening. Paul and Peter are a living proof of hearts surrendered to God (Gal. 2:11-14).

Let me ask again, are you really growing spiritually? Are you each day becoming more Christ like, Christ centered, helping His cause? Have you surrendered 100%? How's your heart? Think about it!!!

Brent