



"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 1, 2009

## Heart to Heart...

Isaiah speaks of man's ignorance in his idolatry. Man takes a tree, cuts it down and shapes the wood. He works it, planes it and outlines it with a compass. In the end, he falls down and worships it! The rest of the remaining wood is burned in a fire to warm up. What silly thinking and actions man arrives at. Why do people do such ignorant things? ***"They do not know, nor do they understand, for He has smeared over their eyes so that they cannot see and their hearts so they cannot comprehend."*** (Isaiah 44:18) That should shock us! God can prevent people from understanding or allow them understanding which in turn leads people into doing things that are really foolish. God is powerful and in control!!!

As we read such back in the Old Testament, we see the ignorance and might chuckle. Yet today, idolatry is still alive and well. Many have the same blind hearts and eyes allowing things to come before God. It can be from a block of wood, to superstitions, lucky charms and clothes, possessions, entertainment, work and even family! When we allow anything to come before God and His will, it is idolatry! To place your trust in a lucky charm, number or clothing is to trust that to bring you to victory, which amounts to idolatry. Paul called a coveter an idolater and no idolater has an inheritance in the kingdom of God (Ephesians 5:5).

How many times do you hear people who stay home instead of assembling with the saints because 'family' has come in or they make other plans? Maybe you have done that? God is pushed in the background and family becomes our focus. Listen carefully to the words of Jesus: ***"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."*** (Matthew 10:37) To love family members and place them before God will cost one a relationship with the Lord. ***"Come, for everything is ready now. But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.' Another one said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.' Another one said, 'I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.'" (Luke 14:17b-20)*** Jesus was showing His disciples the commitment that must be between Him and His followers. When we place anyone or anything before God and His will, idolatry takes place. Listen to Jesus words about excuses: ***"For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner."*** (Luke 14:24) Jesus said these would NEVER eat His dinner. That's sobering!!!

Is there anything or anyone you place before God? It takes an open, honest heart but we need to ask ourselves that question. He is our Lord, our Savior and God has given us eternal life through Him. He should always, in every situation be foremost, ***"...so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything."*** (Colossians 1:18) Otherwise, the Lord might smear our eyes and heart to not comprehend the real issues or the words that we will never taste His dinner might be spoken. The Lord does have the final say about us. Think about it!!!

Brent