



"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 – December 26, 2010

## ***Heart to Heart...***

I could only encourage that all parents read this, especially those who have little ones! God speaks that we (specifically fathers) are to bring our children up in the instruction and discipline of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). The majority would agree with this but what does it really mean? How do you do it?

First, it means as parents you have to know something about the Lord and serving Him. It means you have to understand how the Lord operates in dealing with you. Parents who are indifferent toward the Lord have no understanding of His instructions or expectations! Parents think because they bring their children to services (or make sure their wife does) is what the Lord wants. (It is only a small portion of their instruction and discipline.) Sometimes our homes are being run like a military boot camp and other homes are so loose and free that they allow the children to dictate how the home is run while catering to their children. Both ways are destructive. I have witnessed over the years that a 'boot-camp' atmosphere drives children far away from the Lord when they become of age because of the demanding attitudes from fathers. There is little mercy and grace offered. It's what God means when He speaks, "***Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.***" (Colossians 3:21) I have also witnessed that a 'loosy-goosy' atmosphere opens the door for many a child to wander into situations that destroy the soul and blindly follows the fads and delights of the world. As the child ages the Lord means little because sin is more enticing. It is the result of the parent's loose values.

Secondly, as parents we need to realize the importance of teaching and instructing. Our lives teach! Your decisions are instructing your children how the Lord lives and how much He really means to you. In Deuteronomy 6 Moses speaks of the sons "*asking*" what certain things of the Lord means. In order for children to ask parents about their lives it shows the parents are living different than the world around them in sincerity of heart! Living lives in fear of the Lord, respect and love for Him is for our survival (Deuteronomy 6:24). A parent makes a decision to choose something they want to do over the Lord's instruction; that is sending a message, a teaching to their children. The children may be young, but they are being sent a message. Too many parents choose the things of the world over the Lord (and His assemblies) and think the children don't notice. Instructing our children is more than just reading them a Bible story! They must be taught the ways of the Lord by parents walking in those ways.

Teaching and instructing our children in the ways of the Lord is more important today than ever. With all the wrongs in life, the religious confusion speaking, the need to be teaching our children in the truth and living that truth is utmost important. Parents need to know how to stand so our children will know how to stand. Parents need to be serious and sincere in faith so our children will see the importance of eternity. It is amazing the sincere faith of a mother and grandmother that had an effect on Timothy and the Lord thought it so important that it was written for that ages to come (II Timothy 1:5). If your parents instructed you and taught you the discipline of the Lord, thank God for them. Be sincere as a mother and father realizing you speak without ever saying a word. Children observe and they catch your every move. To speak about God but live in a way that contradicts, you are directing your children toward an unbelieving heart because your life is not lining up with the Lord and it makes a mockery in

their mind as they become older. Parents, you get ONE shot and there are no do-overs. We need the Lord's wisdom and teaching to help us lead in ways of righteousness and wisdom. You are dealing with the eternal destiny of your children and yourself! ETERNITY! That should really get our attention. Think about it!!!

Brent