



"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 – January 23, 2011

Heart to Heart...

We live in a world that is hungry for the spiritual. Not necessarily the true spiritual things of God but *spiritual happenings* that prove the work and existence of God. Look at the bookshelves loaded with books of *spiritual events* that are being connected with God. We hear stories that are called *spiritual* to stir people to crave to prove the reality and ability of God. We hear people speak of a denominational church (not the church of the living God of the Bible that supports the truth – I Timothy 3:15) has moving *spiritual assemblies* based on events that rock the emotions and stir the heart with emotional stories. These stirrings are tied to the Holy Spirit and how the Spirit moves them in their minds. To convince people that the truth of Scripture is not about all the above is very difficult, if not impossible because they base what they know on what they feel and not Scripture! The stirring of the emotions/feelings mean more to people today than the Holy Scriptures and truth about God!

Isn't it rather ironic that when Jesus used parables, they weren't emotional stories to move the heart? They were common events used to draw people to spiritual truths about God and His kingdom. In fact, Jesus said He spoke in parables because it wasn't granted to the people to understand the mysteries of the kingdom (Matthew 13:10-11). They had a spiritual hearing and seeing problem and truth wasn't being sought. The people were more interested in the wrong things rather than the truth revealed from God. It is all over the four gospel books. The truth offended many! The truth cost Jesus His life, the apostles their lives and many others who loved the truth. The truth caused a persecution of the church!!

Listen how easily people can be led into spiritually deceived thinking. This true story happened at the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship meeting. A denominational preacher of this group named Ken Cantrell gave a stirring account of what happened attributing it to the Lord. It was so moving that it was published in the Gadsden Times in Gadsden, Alabama. He claimed the event happened on August 7, 1953 aboard the aircraft carrier USS Lake Champlain. He was moved to tears at times and eloquent in his speaking. There was an explosion of fire which killed 15 men instantly while only Cantrell survived. In his story, he describes flames all around him while picking up his buddy who had died taking him to a door which was red hot. He said the Lord told him to open up the door with his bare hand and not be afraid as it would not burn him. Upon doctors examining him, they found no burns or even the smell of smoke. Sounds spectacular and a miracle from God, doesn't it? He said prior to this day he had been reading a book by Franklin Hall titled, "*Because Of Your Unbelief.*" He had studied the book so much he had almost memorized it and it led him to put his faith completely in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (Interesting THE BOOK didn't lead him but man's book did!) This book was with him while claiming all the other papers and books around him had been burned to ashes, but this book was not singed. How does one respond to this? It sounds convincing, doesn't it? Here is what happened. Mrs. S. R. Morrison, Head, Research and Public Inquiries Branch Office of Information, Department of the Navy searched out this story being told to thousands. She found that on the USS Lake Champlain, the ships log discloses no fires of any kind on August 7, 1953. There was one gasoline fire in July 1957. This occurred four years after what this so-called preacher claimed and had only three fatalities. But here's the clincher: the records of the Bureau of Naval Personal showed Mr. Cantrell was detached April

26, 1953 and transferred to the Naval Receiving Station in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. A liar and deceiver but how many thousands of people were taken in?

Deception is all around us! We have the Scriptures if we would just listen and heed to allow God to develop our faith. We don't need anyone's stories or testimony. We have all we need to find the truth of salvation. The real question is: Do we really seek out the truth or follow some feel good story? It might do us well to read I John 4:4-6 again. Think about it!!!

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