



"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 – July 3, 2011

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

A real sincere child of God has a motivating force within them that others do not have. Paul expressed it to the Thessalonian brethren: ***"Constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father."*** (I Thessalonians 1:3) A sincere child of God builds their life around the death of Jesus. They have a ***"work of faith"*** which is the spring board for all their actions. ***"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."*** (Hebrews 11:1) ***"Faith is the assurance"*** (some versions say ***"substance"***) of what one hopes for. Assurance/substance is a firm trust. Faith is a firm trust in the Lord that ALL the promises He makes He will fulfill. That's why it is an assurance! That assurance, that trusts is the foundation of our hope! Hope is a sincere desire that is coupled with expectation. You desire God looking to His promises and expect Him to do exactly what He says He will do. You are convinced, persuaded that it will happen exactly like He said, even though you can't see how.

Faith in a sincere child of God motivates. You don't need a 'rah-rah' atmosphere to fire you up. A saving faith motivates one to do the will of God no matter what. ***"By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and become an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith."*** (Hebrews 11:7) Too many see Noah as a nice bible story! A sincere child of God sees the salvation from God. Noah revered God! Noah had a firm trust in the promises of God and expected God to do as He said. In his reverence for the Lord, he prepared the ark for his salvation with no water around. The choice was plain: just be like everyone else around and be swept to your eternal doom or have some reverence in God's voice, trust in His promise and follow what He wants, even when you can't see it. Faith motivates those saved!! Those who claim faith (what they really mean is they believe God exists) but it doesn't motivate them is not a faith that will save them in the end. It sure wouldn't have saved Noah and his family!

Faith ***always*** leads to obedience. A ***"labor of love"*** is what enables us to work for the Lord tirelessly. A self-sacrificing love is a love that will help the Lord's cause, building up the church and reaching out to the lost. Without love, we become like those around, self-centered, self-seeking and self-consumed. How interested are the lost in helping the Lord's cause or His body, the church?

A ***"steadfastness of hope"*** is what inspires us to endure difficulties. Hope tells us better things are headed our way. No matter what, hope, which is held up by faith, encourages us to be steadfast, not wavering or doubting God. As Paul labored through difficulties, his hope in the Lord Jesus motivated him to press forward.

What about you? What is moving you forward in your life? Are you working to help the Lord's cause or just not too concerned or interested? For the saved, faith, love and hope are real in their lives and it moves them forward. Think about it!!!

Brent