



Sunday – January 20, 2013

Heart to Heart...

Recently I had a phone call from a dear brother in Christ living in another state. He was hurting. For several years the congregation where he lives has struggled. As he has worked diligently to find out why, it finally surfaced. In due time the Lord reveals where things really stand with Him. There has been a growing number of members with unforgiving attitudes that has been held to for years! Finally, a dear sister in Christ revealed how much she detested another member there. She was asked if she had gone to that member of Christ's body to work it out and forgive one another. She stated she simply could not do that. That's rebellion! What came next was another sister in Christ opened up how much she had been hurt by someone there and she refused to forgive and work it out. Once again, rebellion! Suddenly, other things started revealing themselves and now we have the reason why they are not growing. The camp of the Lord is filled with sin! How can the Lord bless such?

Paul wrote the congregations in the Galatia region showing them that unforgiving attitudes and bickering are signs of fleshliness and will cost your soul. ***“But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.”*** (Galatians 5:15) ***“...and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*** (Galatians 5:21) The Lord does not bless His people when these things are present! They are not part of Him. When God's people stand with these things harbored in their heart, they are not standing faithfully with the Lord. God rejected His people in the Old Testament because of sin in the camp.

That leads us to asking if we are really true believers. Does God's voice reach our heart when He speaks: ***“So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.”*** (Colossians 3:12-13) Do these words penetrate our hearts or do they just fall on lifeless ears, never entering our hearts? A claim doesn't make something true. Stating you love the Lord and not heeding His words is living a lie. A heart that receives the word of the Lord with humility brings the power and life of God within.

How can the Lord bless His people in any congregation when things that oppose His very nature are going on within? It reminds us that the Corinthian brethren were abusing one another and partaking in the Lord's Supper, claiming to fellowship Jesus while they hurt one another. Paul states what was really happening to them: ***“For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.”*** (I Corinthians 11:29-30) It's a matter of life and death that we take on the nature and life of our Lord and Savior. Each time we take of His Supper, judgment is being pronounced against those unforgiving, ugly hearts until eventually spiritual death occurs. What's worse, those spiritually dead are not even aware they are dead. They have completely deceived themselves by living in the state of death so long; they

cannot discern what has happened to them. And people wonder why they aren't making much progress spiritually? Think about it!!!

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