



"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 22, 2013

Heart to Heart...

Where is the church of the Lord headed? (I'm speaking in general & local.) It stays on my heart, and I wonder what my family will face in the up-coming years in this body of Christ called His church (Matthew 16:18). We hear often of things spoken like "different churches" as if Jesus built them all. Yet when you ask someone what they are religiously, they say, "I'm a" They claim their allegiance to some named group. It is getting more and more difficult to keep things pure and on track with all the talk and intermixing of religious things. Where are your children going to be in regard to the church that Christ built? Do they have any convictions there is but ONE body, the church? (Ephesians 4:4-6) Have you taught your family how to identify the true church?

The church the Lord built is not built on some man's ideas or creeds. It is built on His Lordship as the Anointed One of God and He instructed how entrance is gained and the structure of this spiritual house. It is built on His teachings under His direction. Today people are speaking of different churches as being part of the whole but that's simply not true according to God's word. Jesus gave His teachings to His apostles and those who heed His teachings from His apostles; the result is Christ's church and unity (John 17:20-21). They didn't go out into the world preaching different things like we see today (I Corinthians 4:17). Each denomination we see today is built on some unique thing or idea from man's perspective. Something added, something changed, something someone likes or someone leading people after themselves. Let's be honest in heart; Jesus didn't have His apostles teach 600 different things! They spoke one message, one teaching with one voice everywhere they went and unity resulted!

I was reading an article this week of a "new" church that has started in Fort Worth, Texas. A lady started it and she wanted to try to bring in people to a new, more modern approach to what people call church. She reads devotional thoughts and speaks often of not being judgmental. That's a buzz word today. It's to make certain no one puts down another for what they believe and that means truth is not absolute in their eyes even though it is in God's. What is unique about this "new" church? They serve beer! They meet at a brewpub each week and "*have their fellowship, their pizza and even serve communion.*" (This is their quote.) They call themselves the Church-in-a-Pub. It is a church they claim that has a significant relationship to Jesus "*and if it turns out to be craft beer, fine!*" The regional council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has named Church-in-a-pub a Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community! Next year they are expanding this to other taverns around the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Their sign reads: "*Beer & Hymns tonight at 6:00. Free food and beer.*" Their reasoning is claimed to be centered on John 2 where Jesus did His first miracle. And what was the first miracle Jesus ever performed? Turning water into wine! (Many believe this gives them credence for drinking! A complete misuse and manipulation of Scripture!)

I share this only to show us the direction of man's thinking. No convictions of the truth. No standard of teachings from God's word. No understanding of Scripture. Peter warned of such in speaking of Paul's writings: "*...which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.*" (II Peter 3:16) Paul reminded Timothy about the church Jesus built: "*But in*

case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.” (I Timothy 3:15)

What does all this mean? We need to seek the truth and uphold the truth. We need parents instilling within the hearts of their children, teaching about Jesus and His church. It's not about a denomination but the truth of Jesus and His word. The church of Jesus Christ supports and upholds the truth as the apostles taught. The true church belongs to Jesus, not man! The church isn't a place but a people that are centered on Jesus and His truth. What do you think the church is? Without realizing what the church is and what truth it stands on, you won't hold it precious and valuable as Jesus does. Your thinking will be one is as good as another. Think about it!!!

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