



"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 – October 19, 2014

Heart to Heart...

It's called "faith." It's not blind faith, an ignorant faith or a faith that just believes. Faith as spoken in God's word is a saving faith. It's a faith that has substance, assurance in God that God will do as He says He will do in everything He calls us to do. A saving faith is a faith that is convicted to stand and not retreat but moves forward carrying out God's will even when you can't see or understand how things are going to work out!

"What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him?" (James 2:14) I want you to look at what God speaks carefully. If one "says" they have faith. How many times I have heard from people who have walked away from what the Lord asks yet "says" they still have faith in God! Can that faith save them? NO! It's absurd to believe that people can walk contrary to God's will as revealed in His word and think they have faith in God much less be saved in the end!

What is meant by works? Too many get caught up on that word. The term "*works*" carries the idea of obedience to carrying out the will of God. If one doesn't carry out the will of God by responding to His word, they do not have a faith that will save them. How can anyone walk contrary to the will of God and believe they will be saved? That's a self-deceived person!

"You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe and shudder." (James 2:19) At the very heart of the Jewish belief from the Law was a declaration from Deuteronomy 6:4. ***"Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!"*** This Scripture was recited each morning and evening by the Jews. It is the opening line of the Shema (the central prayer in the Jewish prayer book). They spoke that there is only one true and living God. James writes to Jewish Christian's. They would be very familiar with such statements. It's also true in the faith of us who are under the new covenant which Jesus mediates for us that God is one. But James is quick to point out that believing in the one God is well but this verbalizing acknowledgement does not bring one to saving faith! In fact, James speaks that the ***"demons also believe and shudder."*** Demons do not obey the word of God. But there is one thing to carefully note. Even the belief of demons brings them to the action of shuddering!

For anyone to claim they "*believe in God*" and yet do not carry out the will of God by obedience, that is a faith that won't save them. Too many times people listen to God's word preached/taught and do nothing with it. Their idea of sitting at an assembly listening (and might even take notes) or reading from God's word at home means they believe it God. If faith doesn't lead to acting upon His word, it's not a saving faith. ***"For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they did also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard."*** (Hebrews 4:2) Israel ended up lost simply because there was no uniting of faith with the word IN THEM. If one does not respond to God's word that is a dead faith, no matter what one claims. If we have a saving faith, it will move us and motivate us to not only listen but to respond by obedience and that's a faith that will save. One must act or there is no saving faith! Think about it!!!

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