



Fairgrounds Road
C H U R C H O F C H R I S T

MESSENGER

“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 – April 9, 2017

Heart to Heart...

“Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.” (II Timothy 1:13) Paul calls the preacher to “*retain the standard of sound words.*” What does Scripture mean by “*sound words?*” The word “*sound*” means “to be healthy, in sound health.” There is a pattern that one must hold to especially in their preaching/teaching and that standard is what gives people spiritual health. When “*sound words*” are ignored or other things are substituted in their place, the spiritual health of the brethren will deteriorate and the longer “*sound words*” are ignored it will lead to the spiritual ruin of many. As a result, the meaning of Scripture will get watered-down and the words used to convey God’s guidance lose their impact upon us.

Look at the word “*grace.*” It is such a rich word from the Lord yet it has become nothing more than an average and common word today. We hear children named Grace (nothing wrong with that). When we sit down to a meal we refer to the prayer as “*offering grace.*” We watch an athletic event and speak of “*gracious*” movements. One trips over something and we call them “*grace.*” We teach about the grace of God and people do not want to hear about the realities of sin and our sinfulness, so grace is smeared and we can no longer discern God’s grace. Don’t speak about sin and the realities associated with sin. We want “*grace*” and nothing else so “*the standard of sound words*” get diminished.

What about the word “*church?*” We speak: “*We are going to church!*” “*We are putting a new roof on the church.*” “*They sleep in church.*” “*We will meet at the church.*” “*Don’t run in the church.*” The word “*church*” literally means “the called out.” The “*church*” are the people who have been called out of sin and darkness to the Lord and into His light. It is “*the called out*” from among those lost. The “*church*” are the saved ones of the Lord. It has nothing to do with location, building or where we go. The result of all this is the term “*church*” has been watered-down so much that many have no idea of the spiritual concept, especially our children. The “*church*” is no longer seen as Christ’s body, as God’s household. They grow up with the thinking we can choose whatever “*church*” we want. There is little sense that the “*church*” are those who are saved by the gospel of Jesus Christ and so the teachings that come from all the different “*churches*” is never investigated to see if these are really the called out according to Scripture. “*The standard of sound words*” is lost.

If we are the people of God we are called to learn from Him and not what everyone says about Him. The preacher is called to “*retain the standard of sound words*” which is the only thing that can give you good spiritual health. Entertainment and the frivolous things people speak of God are not the standard. The standard has always and will always be what Jesus taught and His apostles whom He sent. Timothy was the next generation of preachers to follow and it was going to be vital to hold to the standard that Paul taught as that would be the only way to guarantee spiritual health. We are over two thousand years removed and we need to be more keen on listening today as religion is flying around us to draw our attention to things that aren’t sound. Be prayerful. Have a sincere faith and always check things out according to the standard that was up-held by those sent out from Jesus. May God help us and keep us fixed on “*sound words!*” Think about it!!!

Brent