



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 – September 24, 2017

Heart to Heart...

The world is influencing us more than we think many times. It doesn't take much to hear what God's people bring into their heart believing as facts from God. The devil is a schemer, a deceiver, crafty and has one goal: get your mind to be led astray from devotion to the truth of the Lord (II Corinthians 11:3). How does he do it? Through the world (people) around us that are separated from God! Religious statements that seem to be solid in content are used to distract people from the truth of God's word. The devil would love nothing more than getting you to believe in things that are in conflict with the teachings of the truth. It's called believing a lie!

One such teaching that seems to penetrate the mind of many is this simple statement: “You must love yourself before you can love others!” This is stated in various forms. It sounds reasonable. But is this really what the truth of God's word teaches? Another such statement is “You can't forgive others until you forgive yourself!” What do both of these statements have in common? SELF! Forgiveness isn't about 'self' but faith in the Lord Jesus!

Jesus explained to His apostles that He was to suffer and die, then be raised up on the third day. Peter takes Jesus aside and “*began to rebuke Him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.'*” (Matthew 16:21-22) Listen carefully how Jesus responds to Peter's stance: “***But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.'***” (Matthew 16:23) Satan was behind the whole thought process of Peter. Whenever we follow man's interest, God is not part of that. Then Jesus proceeds to His next teaching: “***Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.'***” (Matthew 16:24) To follow Jesus one must deny themselves, not love themselves or forgive themselves! The problem today is 'self'! Self must go! Do we not realize that when we were baptized into Christ? “***For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.***” (Colossians 3:3) Self must die!

All the difficulties that come in the church come from self-seeking brethren. Timothy was reminded that the difficult times that will come is because people will be lovers of self (II Timothy 3:2). It's these self-loving people that “*holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.*” (II Timothy 3:5) Timothy was told to avoid such brethren!! Self is the easiest road and the most natural road. Jesus said you can't be a

disciple of His if self isn't denied! ***“For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.”*** (Matthew 16:25) Self must go before life from God can come! ***“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.”*** (Philippians 2:3)

Be careful in what we believe and quote. The devil has no problem with people acting, claiming to be religious as long as truth is never sought or found. Let's be followers of God's truth and make certain before we state something that sounds really good to make sure it lines up with His truth or we could be responsible for leading others astray as well as ourselves. Think about it!!!

Brent