



"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 4, 2022

Heart to Heart...

Sometimes we hear words, and an image comes into mind from it. For instance, we hear the word "*worship*" and many think of a building or location. How many thinks in terms of honoring God? We hear the word "*justice*", what would you associate with that? Maybe a court hearing or trial? How many thinks in terms of God? When you hear the word "*righteousness*", what comes into your mind? That becomes a little more difficult to connect because it's not a word we use often in our language. Many connect "*righteousness*" with perfection. Because of our lack of perfection, we simply shrugged such a word off because it seems unattainable in our mind.

When looking at God and hearing these words, we find that in His "*righteousness*" we see God's holiness. The holy God is seen in being righteous. In other words, you can count on God doing and acting in ways that are right in every situation. We don't always do that. We see this thought conveyed in Isaiah 5:16, "***But the Lord of hosts will be exalted in judgment, and the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness.***" Many times love, and righteousness are used together in speaking of God. They seem to be companion words that express the qualities of God and His actions. One example is found in Psalm 36:10, "***O continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You and Your righteousness to the upright of heart.***" Other words that seem to speak of the character of God and are linked together many times are "*truth*" and "*faithfulness*". They stress stability and trustworthiness.

When one looks closely at Romans 3:3-7, Paul is laying out the failure of the Jew and we find the words of "*faithfulness*", "*truth*", "*righteousness*" and "*justice*" all revealing the character of God in one section.

In all these words, we see the character of God and they were revealed openly to man in Christ Jesus! In relationship to Christ, we find God's faithfulness and His being just. Christ is the height of truth and righteous. In all these, our union with Christ has brought these elements of God to us and we need to learn to trust Him and His character no matter what we face in life. We have a running history that God has never been anything less than who He is. Who is He? A God of faithfulness and truth. A God of love and righteousness. A God that of justice in dealing with us. And if we belong to Him, what should characterize our lives? "***And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.***" (Rom. 12:2) Transforming into the character of God, that's what a true child of God strives for, and you can't become any of these characters of God if you are conforming to the world around us! This is serious. Think about it!!!

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