



"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 – January 8, 2023

Heart to Heart...

God's word gives us a running history of man and man's natural desires have never changed. Over and over God's prophets/teachers warned God's people that certain things would take place if the fear of the Lord is lost. Over and over God's prophets/teachers warned the consequences of listening and following the customs of the world around them. Israel easily at times just followed the nations/religions around them and suffered greatly because of it. As people didn't heed, thinking they knew better, their end results were tragic. Here's the word of the Lord from the prophets and the people just freely walked in their own thinking. Those who did heed found refuge and peace just as God said.

There is nothing new today. Those who live their lives under the Lordship of Jesus find real power and strength, especially in difficult circumstances. Those who "act" like they love the Lord, but their heart is not with Him, they eventually come to unfaithfulness in their lives. We have watched many beloved brothers or sister find their way back into the arena of sin and their sins overtake them.

Each one of us will make one of three choices: (1) To follow Jesus with all our heart, walking by faith. (2) Rejecting Jesus by following our own desires and thinking. (3) Corrupting Jesus by corrupting His teachings coming up with our own ideas of God. We fall under one of these three things. With today's social media and high-powered outreach systems, people are meeting up with opportunities to hear many things. Our present-day cultures, philosophies, psychology, religions and influences can create illusions that seem spiritual and godly but are just the opposite and take one into death. ***"In whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."*** (II Corinthians 4:4) How can we be sure? Jesus said to strive to enter by the narrow door (Luke 13:24). That means we must look one direction only and seek the words of

Jesus alone. Paul warned the Colossians that the philosophies, empty deceptions, traditions of men and the principles of the world can take us captive if we aren't careful (Col. 2:8). The answer: *make certain it is according to Jesus!* Jude warns us to make certain we as God's people are *contending earnestly for the faith*, holding to the teachings that were preached in the first century by the apostles because there will be those among us that want to turn God's grace into something else (Jude 3-4). Peter spoke of false brethren that would malign the way of the truth (II Peter 2:1-3). Paul warned Timothy there would be those in the church who would fall away by listening to "*deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.*" (I Timothy 4:1). Still others would hold to a form of godliness but deny the power because they love other things more than Jesus (II Timothy 3:1-5). How committed are you to Christ? Does your heart long for and stay with the word of truth? Corruption is all around and only with a 100% commitment to Jesus will we be protected. If we live for Him now, we will also live with Him forever. Think about it!!!

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