

December 31, 2014

This world's system is all about money, power, control and domination, but God's Kingdom is just the opposite. It is a clash of two kingdoms and as Christians we must work only out of God's Kingdom principles. When we choose the methods and motivations of this world's system we reproduce the fruit of that system, which is death.

Luke records an incident with the disciples in the ministry of Jesus: "They began to argue among themselves as to who would have the highest rank in the coming Kingdom." His response was to explain His attitude about leadership; "I am among you as one who serves." Jesus demonstrated this servant leadership when He humbly took the role of the lowest of slaves and servants by washing the disciples' feet. He tells them that "greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" and He proved His love by doing that for us all.

Love has to be the motive for a true heart to serve. If we serve for any other reason, then we pervert our heart and our actions. Our motives for serving can be good but as Paul tells us "The greatest of these is love." We may serve out of obedience but still not love the person we serve. We may serve out of duty, because that is our vocation but again, we can still do it without love. The worst case however is serving in order to control, manipulate, or dominate for our selfish benefit.

Because God has revealed Himself as love, all His actions are birthed out of it, even His judgements, discipline and anger. God becomes angry about man's behaviour towards each other as well as Himself because He cares and loves so much. God does not self-protect so our behaviour makes Him more vulnerable to suffering. The more you love the more you can be hurt by those you love. God is no exception and He feels the pain of it more than we do. If righteous anger rises in us over injustice and cruelty perpetrated by mankind then how much more in Him?

God is more caring than we are and therefore feels suffering more than we do. He tells us that "He is slow to anger and plenteous in mercy" and we're called to be the same; just as we can cause Him pain through bad behaviour we can also bring Him pleasure through our loving obedience. Our ability to love comes from Him; "...because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us." Our desire should be to do all we can to please Him and the expression of that love is serving both God and each other, just as Jesus did.

God wants us to SEE His heart so that we can KNOW His heart and BECOME His heart so that we become just like His Son. He wants to bring "many sons to glory." If we have eyes to see He will show us more intimate things of Himself. Then, just as the Scriptures describe, all His attributes become a living person in us, God Himself.

This is the path we are on and we will not settle for less. He has encouraged us with the vision of becoming "One with God" just as Jesus; "I in them and you in me all being perfected into one so that the world will know that you sent me and will understand that you love them as much as you love me."

Shalom.

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