

1 Thessalonians: The Ties that Bind

Ecclesiastes 3:11 ❖ 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20

“Christianity is not a religion or a philosophy, but a relationship and a lifestyle. The core of that lifestyle is thinking of others, as Jesus did, instead of ourselves.”

(Rick Warren)

Created for Relationships

A good friend of mine told me recently about how her _____ with the Lord and the Church have _____ over the years. She was raised in a Christian _____. Like her family, she loved _____ and loved going to _____. But when she moved away from home and began working, she got out of the _____ of going to church. She was living in a beautiful, tropical paradise, and she told herself that it was good _____ to see God in _____. Years later, while she was taking care of her _____, who was terminally ill, the Lord drew her _____ to Himself. Her mother’s _____ visited them regularly. His _____ rekindled within her a desire to go _____ to church and to study the _____ again. She tells people that she never again wants to do life _____.

As human beings, we have been created by a _____ God. On the sixth day of creation, God said, “Let us make man in _____ image, in _____ likeness” (Genesis 1:26). Mysteriously within God Himself, three Persons _____ to each other.

Not only were we created to be in relationship with _____; we were also created to be in relationship with _____ human beings. “The LORD God said, ‘It is not _____ for the man to be _____. I will make a _____ suitable for him. Then the LORD God made a _____ from the rib He had taken out of the man’ (Genesis 2:18, 22).

The first _____ of the Ten Commandments deal with our relationship with _____, and the last _____ deal with our relationships with _____ people.

Relationship with God

“God has set _____ in the _____ of men” (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

Only _____ can fill the spiritual _____ in our hearts. Temporal things can never _____ and permanently satisfy us.

There is a world of difference between _____ there is a God and having a personal _____ with Him.

The Lord draws us to Himself through:

G _____
G _____
G _____

Relationships with Other Christians

Though Paul was in Thessalonica for only _____ weeks, God used him to bring together a group of people who professed _____ in Jesus and started a _____. After Paul and his fellow missionaries were _____ to leave, he _____ to see them again, writing: “Brothers, when we were _____ away from you (in person, not in _____), out of our intense longing we made every effort to _____ you, but Satan _____ us. Indeed, you are our glory and _____” (1 Thessalonians 2:17-18).

Several years ago, I was tapped to fill a gap in _____ support on a Destroyer while the crew was at sea doing _____ trials. Though I was onboard the USS Mobile Bay for only _____ weeks, God brought together a _____ group of Sailors who met with me every day and often twice a day for _____ study and prayer. When the ship came back to port, it was _____ for us to go our separate ways. We stayed in _____ for a while, and every now and then, I still _____ from some of those Sailors.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ has a way of forging _____ ties between people who may have only known each other for a _____ time. As the years go by, as we worship and serve together, the ties grow ever _____.

Takeaway

How is your relationship with God? Is the Lord filling that _____-shaped hole in your _____?

How are your relationships with your fellow believers? Are they, as Paul described the people he worshiped with in Thessalonica, “your glory and _____” (v. 18)?

