

Theme for 2021

WE ARE ONE IN THE SPIRIT; WE ARE ONE IN THE LORD!

‘They Will Know We Are Christians By Our Love.’

“I have commissioned them to represent me just as you commissioned me to represent you. And now I dedicate myself to them as a holy sacrifice so that they will live as fully dedicated to God and be made holy by your truth.” “And I ask not only for these disciples, but also for all those who will one day believe in me through their message. I pray for them all to be joined together as one even as you and I, Father, are joined together as one. I pray for them to become one with us so that the world will recognize that you sent me. For the very glory you have given to me I have given them so that they will be joined together as one and experience the same unity that we enjoy. You live fully in me and now I live fully in them so that they will experience perfect unity, and the world will be convinced that you have sent me, for they will see that you love each one of them with the same passionate love that you have for me.”

John 17:18-23 The Passion Translation (TPT)



This Week’s Thought – March 21, 2021

“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2 (NKJV)

“We’re ALL in this TOGETHER.” Have you ever thought or considered the idea that *solitude*, can actually teach us how to truly **socialize**? Well, the words *social* and *society* come from the Latin word for friend or companion, and so to **socialize** is to be a companion and friend to someone around you. And if you and I want to truly **socialize** with our friends, family, loved ones, neighbors, etc., we must find a consistent and regular habit of getting away in prayer and reflection.

Before diving into the heart of His ministry with others, showing the world the most perfect form of socialization, Jesus entered into a time of *solitude* in the wilderness. However, Jesus’ *solitude* was not born out of escapism, but was a way for Him to re-engage the world with a heart of love and compassion for others. We must learn to do the same!

Remember this however: isolation is not the same thing as solitude. We get away from others, yet we do so with people on our hearts. If you’ve ever taken a retreat, likely your goal was to get as far away from others as you possibly could, both mentally and physically.

So often, to “get away with God” means we do all we can to forget and leave behind our responsibilities, relationships, and concerns of daily life in order to discover “what really matters.” Increasingly, I’m less and less convinced that this is the form of retreat our Lord desires for us to take.

Yes, we must find ways to re-center, reorient and recalibrate our lives around the Will of the Father and His purpose for our lives, yet we do so *with His people on our hearts*. Love for others must remain at the heart of any time of retreat or *solitude*. I like the way one writer/commentator Michael Ramsey put it when he said,

“Jesus is ever with the Father with the world upon His Heart. If we think of prayer this way, we may find that the many aspects of prayer are embraced within the act of being in God’s Presence...To be with God with others on the heart, that is intercession. The key is the quest of God’s presence: ‘Thy face Lord will I seek.’ ”

Who is the Lord asking you to keep on your heart? Whose burdens can you carry/bear as your own, even in times of *solitude* and prayer? Let us seek the Lord in moments of quiet reflection and retreat, inviting Him as we do to teach us to care, to have concern for and love others as we have been loved.

Application: How can you engage a meaningful time or period of *solitude* for the sake of others?

Prayer of reflection and response you might pray this week: “Heavenly Father, in places and times of silence and stillness, would You renew within us a love for others and a desire for You to use our lives for their good and Your Glory. I await Your Voice. This is my prayer in the matchless, wonderful and compassionate Name of Jesus, Amen!”

Yours in Christ, Pastor King