

A REUNION OF LOVE

“WE LOVE BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US”

1 John 4:19

The verse continues with *“Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.”* (1 John 4:20-21)

Chinese New Year (CNY) is a busy time for many families. We will take the time to clean, wash and buy stuff to celebrate this festive season; storing up the goodies, food, drinks for visiting guests and for ourselves during this period.

For those who are married, the “business” of packing “Ang Baos” is exciting even though it leaves a deep hole in the pockets. Yet, the ambience will not be the same without “Ang Baos” or “Bak Kua” (i.e. barbecue pork), which is a “must-have” for some of us during CNY.



Is CNY just about food, drinks, “Ang Baos” and a holiday without work for many of us? I began to realise that the meaning of CNY is lost as our society progresses over the years. It is a meaningless season without the love of family members, relatives, friends gathering and visiting one another. It is a time that people can bond and remember each other. The festive spirit starts from having the reunion dinner and there is also reunion lunch (nowadays) which is a tradition for families to gather and have food together over a meal. It is an important occasion before the New Year



starts!

It is also an opportunity for families and friends to put aside differences and take the step to reconcile for the New Year! So, CNY is more than having food and drinks. It is a festive season with a spirit of love and well-wishes for everyone.

Do you know that we can have reunions with God every day? As I looked back, I saw how time and circumstances changed families and people around us; influenced by societal values, personal hunger for success and incidences of anger, resulting in broken relationships among families, relatives and friends. Most importantly, time changes our views and understanding about God. It should be for the better, I pray.

For us, we do not need to wait for a CNY or any festive season to have a reunion with Jesus to pray and learn more about Him anytime. God's love is always there for us to embrace as we believe in Him. We have the opportunity to reunite with Jesus everyday!

God's love is reflected in his teaching clearly for us to love one another. This message is consistent throughout the Bible, expressed through the parables in the gospels of the Bible of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” John 13:34

In the epistles of many God fearing men in the Bible who evangelised and reached out to save the sick, the hungry and the lost; the wealthy and treacherous, even those who claimed to know God, the underlying message of love was evident.

“Be completely humble and gentle, be patient bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” Ephesians 4:2-3

It also advocates how we should reach out to forgive others because of the love of God. It is not easy to overcome the emotions to take the first

step to forgive because of the love we should have for one another through God. But remember, we love because He first loves us. Take the time and pray along the way.

“Let no debt remain outstanding except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.” Romans 13:8

There are specific examples listed for friends, husbands and wives on the love we can have for them. Amazing, isn't it?

“A friend loves at all times.” Proverbs 17:17

“Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.” Colossians 3:18-19

God's love is manifested through many ways in His teaching to us through His Word. The eras and dynasties rose and fell. Yes, times have changed. The seasons came and went. Yet, the teachings from the Bible are not obsolete. The love never changed. God's love is the same then, now and forever. Amen!

“Above all, love each other deeply because love covers over a multitude of sins.” 1 Peter 4:8

As we pray and stride along with Jesus in His Name daily, remember that He has given us the chance of being with Him anytime. Will you have that reunion “lunch” and “dinner” through prayers with Him?

Have a blessed New Year, everyone!



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