

## TIES THAT BIND

### REMINSCENCE OF THE PAST & LOOK TO THE FUTURE

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One of my cousins and I decided to contact our family members and relatives from my mother's side together for the Chinese New Year. It has been years since we have met with our uncles, aunties and cousins due to our busy schedules and the humdrum of coping with our lives and families.

Calls were made. My heart sank when my auntie shared that my 4<sup>th</sup> uncle has not been able to get out of the house for the last few years due to diabetes. He is wheel-chair bound and has to be cared for. They had to decline our invitation for a family get-together on one of the 15 days of the Chinese New Year. ☹️

A cold chill ran down my spine and I went silent with a heavy heart when she asked me how I was. The warmth of her tone recovered my composure with a thanksgiving to God that there are family members who still remember and care for each other. There are so many experiences and events that have happened over the last few years where I had missed them all because we have not been keeping in touch with our relatives and their family members.

It was then my mother added that this auntie has always enquired about me and how I was since my maternal grandmother passed on several years ago. My late grandmother took care of me in my early years and this thought opened a flood-gate of emotions drilling into memories then when I had more interactions with them as we gathered at our maternal grand-parents' home yearly during the Chinese New Year.

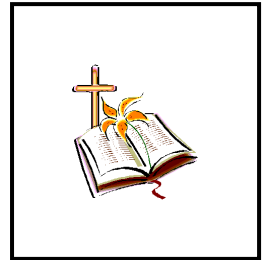
The sentiments grew stronger as more calls were made. It was when we heard from another uncle that he cannot make it due to family issues and medical conditions. It dawned on me that things have changed over time. I will be praying for them.

I am thankful to have a family in Christ too. God as our Father in Heaven taught us that the ties that bind starts with Him.

In the New Testament, the four gospels narrated the life and death of Jesus Christ. It formed the back-drop of how Jesus came to us and the importance of His role from birth, life and death in God's plan to save us from sin; provide us an avenue with the opportunity for eternal life and salvation through Jesus Christ.

I read that the word "Gospel" is derived from the Anglo-Saxon term of God-spell, i.e. "Good Story. It was in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the first three gospels are known as Synoptic Gospels because the texts are written in such a way that flowed with the life and death of Jesus Christ. It was His Promise to us that He will never leave us and will always be with us when we believe and have faith in Him.

*<sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20*



### Jesus Prays to Be Glorified

1After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

"Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.2For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.3Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.4I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.5And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

### Jesus Prays for His Disciples

6 "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.7Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.8For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.9I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.10All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.11I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.12While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

13 "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.14I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.15My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.16They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.17Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.18As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.19For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

### Jesus Prays for All Believers

20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,21that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.22I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—23I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

24 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

25 "Righteous Fath 25 "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me.26I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them." er, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me.26I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

John 17: 1 - 25

In the book of John 17, there is a significant emphasis of how the relationships worked between the ties with God, Jesus, disciples and His expectations and love for us. It depicts how we can serve Him like what the disciples did to glorify His Name.

He continued by assuring us that He is always with us through His Word and the Holy Spirit as He had protected His disciples with prayers, truth and love.

In this time of the Chinese New Year, it can be a time of love as we reminisce on our past, savour our current blessings and treasure the ties we have on earth. Let us remember this Love from our Lord Jesus Christ and continue to pray for those around us; knowing that those whom we are praying for will come to know Christ and believe in Him! Impact 5! 😊

We are not alone and should look towards the future as we build ties that bind with Christ in our lives and walk with him.

Have a blessed New Year! May you prosper in our Lord Jesus Christ with doing good works, have a good understanding of God's Word sustain with prayers and serve others through His Love!

Joyce Tan