

Christian Family Matters

1 Thessalonians 5:11 – 14

I. Intro

- A. Memorial Day weekend; think about sacrifice many have made – not just served our country in armed forces, but sacrifice of many families
- B. Every person can say they have made sacrifices for their family – some more than others
- C. **Question:** Why do that? Because they're family, they're part of us, because the love we have for them – the innate desire to care, protect them; don't understand parents who neglect, even endanger their own children
- D. **Question:** What about friends? Would you prefer to have many friends at a more impersonal level, or just a smaller amount of friends at a deeper more personal level?
- E. **Question:** Would you say that you NEED other people, and how does that play out in your everyday life?
- F. **Question:** As someone who belongs to local church family, how does sacrifice, deep personal relationships, and NEEDING that interaction affect who you are and your life everyday?
- G. Realize and understand – WE ARE FAMILY, imperfect yes, but still family because of common relationship we have with Christ as Lord and Savior; just as for our natural families we would make any sacrifice necessary, just like we want to care, protect and love them because they are part of us, just like we NEED them – it should be no different when it comes to church family
- H. Discipleship is living, growing together in our relationship with Christ AND our relationship with one another – our brothers/sisters in Christ, our church family – Church Family Matters
- I. One of most dangerous positions any believer in Christ can take is one of isolation – yes, it's about getting involved in local church fellowship (spoke about this few weeks back), but it's more about community – it's becoming connected in a deeper relationship with one another as our relationship with our Lord is deepened
- J. **READ 1 Thessalonians 5:11 – 14**

II. Building Community

A. Luke 14:28-30 (ESV)

28 For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him,
30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'

- B. **Question:** Why wasn't the building able to be finished? Because there wasn't a true understanding of the costs
- C. **Question:** Why are there many uncommitted, back-slidden believers? Because there wasn't a true understanding of the costs of being a follower of Christ
- D. **Question:** Why are there many churches that are cold, impersonal meeting places? Because there wasn't a true understanding of the costs – the needed sacrifices of love, care, protection, service to that church family (no relational connection)
- E. In passage, told what it takes to build this type of spiritual family community
 - i. *encourage* (Gr. parakaleo) – to console, to call near, to invite to come close, be of good comfort, KJV translates to pray; all with intent of building a close relationship
 - ii. *build one another up* (Gr. oikodomeo) – literally, to be a house-builder; means literally building the house of God, (not a physical building) but house of God which is the body of Christ (true church)
 - iii. *respect* (Gr. eidenai) – to be aware, watch, know and understand, look or stare; seeing and appreciating all those who labor among us in this spiritual community, and those who have been placed by God in authority over this spiritual community – those who *admonish* (talk about that in a moment)
 - iv. *esteem highly in love* (Gr. Hegeomai) – to lead, by example
- F. All this done by being *at peace* with one another
- G. (v. 14) Gives specific categories of people within the family (*idle, fainthearted, weak*)
 - i. *admonish* (Gr. noutheteo) *the idle* (unruly, disorderly) – to caution or reprove (correct) gently
 - ii. *encourage the fainthearted* (discouraged, depressed) – same word used before
 - iii. *help the weak* (Gr. antechomai) – to literally hold up, give physical support
- H. That's our task/duty as Christian family; that's what establishes and cultivates that relational connection
- I. The Lord did not establish the church to be a bunch of individualistic, independent people – not an option; the church (family of believers) is to be interdependent people with close relational bond; within a family of believers is where the relational action is found

III. The “One Another” Relationship

A. Recurring phrase throughout NT – “one another”

B. 1) Galatians 5:13 (ESV)

13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love **serve one another**.

C. 2) Romans 15:7 (ESV)

7 Therefore **welcome [accept] one another** as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

D. 3) Romans 15:14 (ESV)

14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to **instruct one another**.

E. 4) Galatians 6:2 (ESV)

2 **Bear one another’s burdens**, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

F. 5) James 5:16 (ESV)

16 Therefore, **confess your sins to one another (accountability)** and **pray for one another**, ...

G. 6) Ephesians 4:32 (ESV)

32 Be **kind to one another**, tenderhearted, **forgiving one another**, as God in Christ forgave you.

H. 7) Ephesians 4:2 (ESV)

2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, **bearing with one another** in love,

I. 8) John 13:34 (ESV)

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you **love one another**: just as I have loved you, you also are to **love one another**.

IV. Close

A. **Question:** What kind of people are you most likely drawn to – people who encourage, build up, respect, esteem others – or people who discourage, judge, disrespect, condemn and disapprove?

B. **Question:** What kind of church family would you more likely be drawn to – church of people who are a close-knit, caring, loving, connected family – or one where people are independent, impersonal, basically strangers?

C. Answer to both questions obvious

D. A very important aspect of discipling: even with it’s imperfections, is connecting with family of believers that God has put together primarily so each one of us can grow and mature together to reach our greatest spiritual potential

E. Invite to become part of this Christian family – either through profession of faith in Christ and/or by officially placing your local church membership here with our church family – so we can connect with you and you with us; family willing to sacrifice, care, protect, and love