

Speaking to the soul



Christian fellowship

We always pray for you, and we give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all of God's people. Colossians 1:3 - 4

It is unlikely that Paul and Timothy had ever visited the church in Colossae, but Paul and Timothy had heard all about the Colossians and they were constantly in their prayers. They knew they had not only a strong faith in Jesus but also a love for other Christians. This is the calling of every follower of Christ because loving him immediately brings us into relationship with other Christians.

When we start following Christ, we are not cured of our natural selfishness, so it is sadly possible for Christians to be extremely self-centred in their discipleship. It is possible for us to focus on our own spiritual life and development and to neglect our responsibility to other Christians. This is deeply sad because we need the enrichment of spending time with our Christian brothers and sisters. We need to be challenged and strengthened by their very different experiences of God. This can be hard work at times, but we all need the stimulus of opening ourselves to Christian fellowship. It isn't an optional extra.

When Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus, he spoke of the infinite care with which God organised his Church. He wrote: "He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love." (Ephesians 4:16) If you have faith in Jesus, you belong to an amazing family, and it is only through your increasing love for that varied community that you will grow and become everything that God made you to be.

QUESTION

In what way is your relationship with your Christian brothers and sisters growing?

PRAYER

Loving Father, thank you for the gift of your Church. Help me to love and listen to my brothers and sisters. Amen

*Photograph - After Palm Sunday, The Royal Chapel,
Hampton Court Palace*

