

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

All Because of Jesus, One Thing, In Christ Alone

WELCOME

Make a list of 5 persons you consider closest to you. Share the names in your list and explain briefly how you are related to each one.

WORD

1 CORINTHIANS 15:33

Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals."

MATTHEW 5:23-24

Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,²⁴ leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

We are on the 4th principle in our MOTIVATE Series. The three previous topics on modeling, open communication, and time all play a role in building INTIMACY with our loved ones. How do we define **INTIMACY**? It carries the idea of **closeness, close familiarity, deep friendship, mutual vulnerability**. When you are intimate with somebody, there is a sense of openness and a feeling of being loved. It is **BEING FULLY KNOWN** yet **BEING FULLY LOVED** despite our flaws. You are known and loved at the same time. The principle of Intimacy is this: **THE CLOSER THE RELATIONSHIP, THE GREATER THE INFLUENCE.**

1. GOD MADE US FOR RELATIONSHIPS

1 Corinthians 15:33 is a reminder and a warning. The people we spend time with and are intimate with will impact our lives. They either corrupt or build up good morals or behaviors. We all desire relationships--as somebody once said, to be loved but not completely known is superficial. To be known and not loved is painful – you feel rejected. But to be fully known and still be fully loved is empowering. That is how God loves us, and that's how He wants us to love one another. Remember, we were created for relationship, for intimacy. If our children or disciples do not experience that intimacy or closeness, they will sooner or later gravitate to others (*peers or barkada*) and eventually to the world's influence. Before you know it, you already have lost your chance to influence their lives for the better. GOD made us for relationship; He made us for intimacy. **As believers, we experience that intimacy through Christ, the embodiment of God's unconditional love and acceptance.**

2. WE ARE TO DEVELOP DEEP RELATIONSHIPS

The power of influence is proportionate to the closeness of the relationship. The closer you are with somebody the greater will your influence be. Similarly, the closer children are

to their parents, the less they are influenced by their peers. The closer they are to their friends, the less their parents are able to influence them. That is the power of intimacy: **Who you are closest with will have the greatest impact in your life.**

When we want to impact the hearts of our children, family, or disciples, we have to make sure we develop relationships. Jesus knew the importance of deep relationships. In **John 14:15**, He makes obedience a marker of love. In the same manner, an intimate relationship in the family, in friendships, and even in discipleship should be one that brings us closer to the Lord. There are over 100 verses in the New Testament that talk about **"ONE ANOTHER"**—*love one another, encourage one another, care for one another, bear one another's burden, forgive one another*, and these will be hard to practice if all we have are shallow relationships.

How do we create depth in our relationships? We have to be intentional in focusing on the heart. We have to connect emotionally. To do this, we have to apply the previous principles: **modeling** will earn respect; **open communication** will help us know fears and what are truly in their hearts. **Time** will be instrumental in developing intimacy.

While **Biological Intimacy** is a given because all of us belong to a family, there are other forms of intimacy. **Emotional Intimacy** is connecting with others and understanding their hopes and dreams. It is also being able to be vulnerable with each other. Such as, when we share our own failures and the stories where they can learn from us. **Experiential Intimacy** happens when we share moments together during date times, eating out, playing and having fun together, where listening and magic moments happen. The most important though is **Spiritual Intimacy** with God through His Word and His commandments. Be intentional in utilizing all of these to develop deeper relationships!

3. RELATIONSHIPS ARE FRAGILE: HANDLE WITH CARE

We need to take care of the relationships entrusted to us. Beware of losing your temper or being careless with words. It can wound the spirit. Beware of favoritism, it can affect relationship and intimacy. Be careful with gossip, it can destroy trust. Beware of not keeping your word or promise, because our commitment is measured through these “promises”. What about unresolved hurts? Do you just overlook them hoping that they will go away? We need to do something about it too. Be careful that you don't disrespect your children or disciples. The Bible is very clear: do unto others as you want them to do unto you (**Matthew 7:12**). You can never go wrong when you practice mutual respect.

4. WHEN CONFLICTS ARISE, SEEK RECONCILIATION

Our usual tendency when something is not right in our relationships is to deny, flee or run away, or fight with a prideful attitude—not to reconcile, but to prove a point. Because relationships are important, we must seek reconciliation. Even Jesus taught this in **Matthew 5:23-24**. We were told to seek to make things right first even before coming to God in worship! Part of worshipping God is **restoring relationships**. We also know that this is *not always possible* as Paul wrote in **Romans 12:18-19**. Forgiveness is always possible, because it depends only on the one doing the forgiving while restoration or

reconciliation must be the work of everyone involved in the conflict. Yet even if Paul acknowledged this, he reminded us to willingly give up desire for vengeance and instead learn to surrender and lift these things to the Lord. **Ephesians 4:1-3** is a good reminder for us. We are to walk in a manner worthy of our calling as followers of Jesus. We must know that the heart of GOD is for building RELATIONSHIPS. With all humility, gentleness, patience, and tolerance, we have to be DILIGENT to **“take every effort...to preserve the unity of the spirit”**. This applies to all believers.

Reconciliation is crucial in INTIMACY. Ask these **3 MOST IMPORTANT QUESTIONS** when dealing with conflicts and problems:

1. **HOW CAN I IMPROVE?** Listen intently and humbly.
2. **HOW HAVE I HURT YOU?** See where you have failed.
3. **WILL YOU FORGIVE ME?** Do this with sincerity. Partner with the person for accountability and make sure that you will improve in that specific area.

Do not neglect developing and restoring relationships. As Christ has restored us to GOD (**2 Corinthians 5:18-19**), we have the ministry of reconciliation and are expected to forgive each other as the Lord has forgiven us (**Ephesians 4:31-32**). May we all have better intimacy or closeness in our relationships moving forward!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. **Self-Check.** How intimate is your relationship with your family and Dgroup? Do you know their fears and concerns?
2. **Setting It Right.** Have you caused someone to have a “wounded spirit”? How will you initiate reconciliation?
3. **Living It Out.** The greatest gift we can give others is reconciliation to God through Jesus. Who will you share this truth to this week?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for loved ones to first have a vertical relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Be a mediator and peacemaker in your family, and other relationships. Share the truth that one has to be reconciled with God through Jesus Christ—that we are able to forgive because we ourselves are forgiven.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends