

48



November 28, 2020

A DAY FOR RELATIONSHIPS

God is love, so the Christian religion is one of loving relationships. Christianity presupposes relationship with God (vertical) and with one another (horizontal). To “have love” for one another is so important that Jesus Himself described it as being a true indicator of discipleship (John 13:35).

The Lord also set apart a special day, the Sabbath, for us to regularly connect with Him and with our brothers and sisters. But it sometimes requires sacrifice. In places such as the Amazon region, for example, where people may have to travel long distances to church, some families start their journey on Friday evening, returning home on Sunday. And they do that not because they have time to waste, but because they see it as a spiritual exercise that strengthens their love for God and for their neighbors. They see fellowship with other Christians and worshipping God together on Sabbath as essential for spiritual growth.

In the apostolic era, there were already some who were quite lax on gathering together regularly with fellow believers. But God warned them and us that the act of gathering with others would increase in importance as the day of His coming approaches (Heb. 10:25). In Leviticus 23:3, the Lord also stresses the importance of

strengthening connections with one another on Sabbath: “Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation” (italics added). The word “convocation” (Heb. *Miqra*), means meetings, assemblies, gatherings; and the Lord considers them as being holy and an integral part of Sabbath keeping.

In the Adventist Church, our connections with one another have an even broader dimension. By returning tithes and giving Promise to the church, the outpost of the storehouse, we strengthen the connections with our brothers and sisters from around the world that are doing the same. We exercise our mutual trust, and we testify that we are connected, that we love and care for each other, and that we have a common goal—to work for God not only as individuals but also as a well-organized army, speeding the final preaching of the gospel and Jesus’ second coming. Working together, we do more, we can go farther and faster.

APPEAL: As we come into God’s presence today, let us worship Him in community and strengthen our ties to each other by returning our tithes and bringing our Promise to His storehouse!

PRAYER: We are Yours, Lord! Please accept our worship today! Amen!