

## The desire to connect?

1 Ecclesiastes 4:1-12 & Mark 12:28-31

### Ecclesiastes 4:1-12

<sup>1</sup> Again I looked and saw all the oppression that was taking place under the sun: I saw the tears of the oppressed—and they have no comforter; power was on the side of their oppressors—and they have no comforter. <sup>2</sup> And I declared that the dead, who had already died, are happier than the living, who are still alive. <sup>3</sup> But better than both is the one who has never been born, who has not seen the evil that is done under the sun. <sup>4</sup> And I saw that all toil and all achievement spring from one person's envy of another. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. <sup>5</sup> Fools fold their hands and ruin themselves. <sup>6</sup> Better one handful with tranquillity than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind. <sup>7</sup> Again I saw something meaningless under the sun: <sup>8</sup> There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless—a miserable business! <sup>9</sup> Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: <sup>10</sup> If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. <sup>11</sup> Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? <sup>12</sup> Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

### Mark 12:28-31

<sup>28</sup> One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

<sup>29</sup> "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.' <sup>30</sup> Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' <sup>31</sup> The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

Bible passages taken from NIV 2011

**Agree or disagree?**

**What do you mean by "connect"?**

**Where do people look for "connection"?**

**Is it OK to "connect"?**

**Has God made us this way?**

**Is God the missing peace?**

## A Bible Study

### Pray:

Heavenly Father, help us to be considerate of each other and aware of others needs as well as our own. Help us to feel safe and confident to be self-aware. Give us faith to receive your word, understanding to know what it means and the willingness to put it into practice. May knowing you, and being known by you, be of great comfort and reassurance to us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Share, listen without comment:

Everyone has a desire to "connect": to know who they really are; be where they need to be; do what they need to do. Do you agree or disagree?

Why? Try and support your thought with an example you've observed in people.

### Be self-aware. Again listen to each other without comment:

Do you find you need to connect? Where are your "happy places"? Why are they places that you like to be? *(If meeting in a group maybe one or two might feel comfortable to share)*

**Read:** Ecclesiastes 4:1-12 and Mark 12:28-31

### Ask and answer:

What do we learn from these two passages about people's search to find "connection"?

Do you think that God has made us with a desire to connect?

Do you agree or disagree? Why?

What do you think is meant by "A cord of three strands is not easily broken"? Ecclesiastes 4:12b.

**Close with a prayer.**