

18th May 2020

Loyalty

**“The scholar does not consider
gold and jade to be precious treasures,
but loyalty and good faith.”**

Confucius, The Ethics of Confucius

If you look through your purse or wallet, I'm sure you'll find some "loyalty" and "membership" cards, things we carry with us to show we belong to something with other people of like mind: a favourite store; a national football team; a political party. Loyalty matters. But it matters most when we are committed to good relationships with each other.

Two friends got lost in a forest, and they were very scared. So they promised each other that they'd stick together, no matter what. Suddenly, a large bear appeared. As it got closer, one of the friends quickly climbed as high as he could up a big tree. His companion was no use at tree-climbing, so he threw himself on the ground, closed his eyes, held his breath and lay as motionless as possible. "Bears won't eat dead people," he thought. Sure enough, the bear came up to where he was lying, sniffed around his head and then trundled away. When the bear was out of sight, the man from the tree climbed down.

"Phew! That was close!" he exclaimed. "But I saw the bear whisper in your ear when you were lying down. What did he say to you?"

"Oh, nothing much," the friend replied, "apart from warning me to make sure I avoid the company of people who leave their friends alone in times of danger."

Loyalty is important, especially in times of danger and anxiety, such as we're going through just now. Thank God, many of us are finding new ways to express our loyalty to people who are important to us. So, when all of this is over, let's remember to stay loyal. Keep telling people you love them. Keep reminding people they really matter. After all, loyalty's not just for difficult times. It's for *all* the time, isn't it?

A prayer for today

*Loving God, your loyalty to me is unending; may my response be worthy of your love.
My loyalty to family and friends really matters; may it always be so. Amen*

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon

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