Wired for Together: Why Biblical Community Is Not Optional

There is a scene in the film "Cast Away" that has stayed with millions of viewers long after the credits rolled. A man stranded alone on an island, desperate for connection, begins talking to a volleyball he names Wilson. When Wilson eventually drifts away on the open ocean, the grief is real and visceral, even though the audience knows Wilson was never alive. That reaction reveals something profound about the way human beings are made. We are not wired for isolation. We are wired for community, and when we are stripped of it, something in us breaks.

This is not simply a psychological observation. It is a theological one.

Made in the Image of a Relational God

When God speaks at the moment of creation in Genesis, the language is striking. He does not say "I will make mankind in my image." He says "let us make mankind in our image." That plural pronoun points to the eternal community of the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, existing in perfect relationship with one another before anything else existed. If you are made in that image, then relationship is not a feature of your humanity. It is the foundation of it.

This is why, in John 17, when Jesus prays over his disciples and over every person who would ever believe in him, the prayer he chooses is not for prosperity or protection or peace of mind. The prayer Jesus prioritizes is that his people would be one with each other, just as he and the Father are one. Of all the things the Son of God could have asked for on your behalf, he asked for unity and connection. That should tell us something about how seriously God takes community.

Community Is Not Optional

There is a subtle but dangerous lie circulating in modern Christianity. It sounds something like this: you can follow Jesus on your own. You can read your Bible at home, pray in private, and skip the gathering of believers without losing anything essential. It feels reasonable in a culture that prizes independence and personal preference. But it is simply not true.

The apostle Paul writes in Romans 12:5 that in Christ, those who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. You are not a standalone unit. You are a part of something. The body of Christ is incomplete without you, and you are incomplete without the body of Christ. Biblical community is not an add-on to following Jesus. It is woven into the very fabric of what it means to be his disciple.

Jesus himself identified the marker that would set his followers apart from everyone else. In John 13:34, he gives a new command: love one another as he has loved his people. And then he says

that this love for one another is exactly what will tell the watching world that his disciples belong to him. Not a bumper sticker. Not a religious uniform. The way believers love each other in community is the evidence that Jesus is real and alive.

You cannot love one another by yourself. That is the point.

What Biblical Community Actually Looks Like

The early church described in Acts chapter 2 gives us one of the clearest pictures of what this kind of community looks like in practice. After Peter preaches the gospel and three thousand people respond in a single day, the new believers are immediately integrated into an existing community of faith. What follows is remarkable.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to breaking bread together, and to prayer. They shared their resources with anyone who had need. They met together daily, ate in each other's homes, and praised God with glad and sincere hearts. The result was that the Lord added to their number daily.

Three things stand out from this picture.

First, intentional relationships. The word "devoted" carries the image of actively rowing against a current to stay in place. You do not drift into meaningful biblical community. Life will always pull you toward isolation. Work gets busy. Schedules fill up. Fatigue sets in. Biblical community requires constant, deliberate energy to stay engaged. The early church had to work to remain devoted to one another, and so do we.

Second, shared experiences. Trust is built through doing things together. The early believers experienced God's power at work among them, sacrificed for one another financially, and watched people come to faith day after day. These shared moments created a bond that no amount of casual conversation could manufacture. When we do things together as the people of God, we accumulate a history with each other and with God that reminds us he is still at work, not just in the grand story of the church, but in our individual lives as well.

Third, spiritual encouragement. The early church gathered around practices that pointed their hearts back to Jesus. Scripture, communion, prayer, and worship were not background noise. They were the center. C.S. Lewis wrote that to love at all is to be vulnerable, and that the only way to protect your heart from being broken is to give it to no one and lock it away. But in that locked casket, he warns, it will not be broken. It will become unbreakable, impenetrable, and irredeemable. Biblical community asks us to take the risk of being known and loved and shaped by others, because that is exactly where transformation happens.

The Definition Worth Returning To

Biblical community is not simply about finding friends. It is about becoming more like Jesus through relationships that form your faith.

You may have plenty of community in your life, and that is a good thing. But not all community is biblical community. The community that forms your faith is the one centered on scripture, shared spiritual experience, and the intentional practice of the one another's that Jesus commanded. That kind of community does not happen by accident. It requires devotion.

The world is watching to see if the love of Jesus is real. The answer they are waiting for is not an argument. It is a community.

Here is a list of all scripture references mentioned or alluded to in the sermon:

Acts 2:42-47 - The early church devoted to teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer

Genesis 1:26 - God speaks in plurality ("let us make mankind in our image"), pointing to the Trinity at creation

John 17:20-21 - Jesus prays for the unity of all believers, that they may be one as the Father and Son are one

John 13:34-35 - Jesus commands his followers to love one another, saying this will mark them as his disciples

Mark 3:9 - Jesus instructs the disciples to prepare a boat so the crowd does not press in on him

Romans 12:5 - In Christ, the many form one body, and each member belongs to the others

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 - The benediction spoken over the congregation, asking God to sanctify believers completely in spirit, soul, and body

Alluded To Without Direct Citation

3 John 1:2 - The prosperity and health prayer the pastor references but attributes to another speaker

Psalm 23:5 - The "prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies" reference the pastor mentions but does not apply to believers in this context

1 Peter 5:8 - The enemy prowls around seeking whom he may devour

1 Corinthians 12 - The body of Christ being incomplete without each member, alluded to in the Fernando quote