

THE BIG IDEA: Biblical Community acts on our Eternal behalf.

The Take-Off

Have you ever been through a rough situation in your life? Obviously, we all can relate to rough situations in life, due to the fact that we live in a sinful world. Often times, we need someone to lean on. This is made apparent by our simple need of a savior. We see this need for Christ, but we also want someone who will stand with us who can help us in our difficult times. We see this when a family member is sick and we call on our friends to talk or to pray and we see it more vividly when a loved one passes away because we see our friends and family come to comfort us. God made man in His own image and from this we get to experience the many attributes of God in our daily lives. One of these attributes comes in the form of relationships. No one desires to walk through this world alone. Even the most secluded introverts have found a safe haven in companionship of fellow humans, it's just normally in a smaller amount than others. As we have gone throughout this series of being BattleReady, we have looked at the King who has won and given us victory, we have looked at the loser who constantly attacks trying to kill, steal, and destroy. We have also looked at many weapons which God has given to us, so that we are able to withstand the trials of the devil. Today we are going to look at many different passages of scripture, but will have a main focus coming from Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, as we look at the weapon of Biblical Community.

Now I understand that the term Biblical community may sound strange to define so specifically. So before we go any further, I want to give you an understanding of what Biblical community is. 1 John 1:7 says ***“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”*** Speaking to believers, if we are walking in the light of Christ, which is in the process of purifying us, then we have fellowship (community) with one another. As believers, our common ground is not in something as temporal as being a human, but our common ground is found in the eternal fellowship of Christ. Biblical community is a group of believers who have been and who are being changed by the power of Christ and His work in our daily lives. The difference between community and Biblical community, is the aspect of all things eternal. Community is defined as a group of people who have similar attitudes or goals. That's why, at many colleges there are student athlete housing, because they want these students to have the same attitude or goal of making the schools name great. But have you ever had a goal or attitude that changed? The answer for everyone is a resounding YES! That is why the difference between community and biblical community is so important. Biblical community places us all on the same ground of needing Christ and having fellowship with those who have experienced this gift.

Let's Read **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**

1. Biblical Community Corrects

- a. Biblical Community corrects when we fall.
 - a. Ecclesiastes 4:10 - Biblical Community corrects the lie that when we fall we are a lost cause to everyone.
 - b. It leads us to be lifted up to where we are able to battle together again.
- b. Biblical Community corrects our pride.
 - a. Hebrews 10:24-25 - Biblical community corrects the thought, lie, that we do not need any one else to help fight.
 - b. Biblical community cultivates the heart of a band of brothers fighting as opposed to the idea that we battle alone.
- c. Biblical Community corrects our impurities.
 - a. Proverbs 27:17 - As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.
 - i. To be purified ready to battle some impurities have to be ground off so that we are made sharp and ready to battle.
 - ii. Biblical Community corrects by having others help us grind off these impurities.

2. Biblical Community Comforts

- a. Biblical Community comforts by keeping warm.
 - a. Ecclesiastes 4:11 - Warmth comes from another, not one who sleeps alone.
 - i. In biblical community, we experience the warmth of others who are sharing in our trials and who are fighting with us.
- b. Biblical Community comforts by bearing our burdens.
 - a. Galatians 6:2 - Pain is found and can be burdensome to one who has to bear the weight alone.

- i. Biblical community comforts by bearing the burdens of one who is trying to carry the burden alone.
- c. Biblical Community comforts by sharing in the presence of Jesus.
 - a. Matthew 18:20 - Jesus said He would be there where two or more are gathered in His name.
 - i. There is no greater comfort than the presence of Christ in our life.
 - ii. When we are in biblical community, the presence of Christ is made apparent and is a weapon that stands against the lie that community is easy.
 - 1. Community is not always easy, but when we are in the presence of Christ our community is joined in the recognition of His presence.

3. Biblical Community Combats

- a. Biblical Community Combats together.
 - a. Ecclesiastes 4:12 - A cord of 3 is not easily broken.
 - i. when someone attacks and we stand alone, we are more easily broken.
 - ii. If we stand in biblical community then there is strength among the body.
- b. Biblical Community Combats through preparation.
 - a. Proverbs 27:17 - sharpening is a form of preparation for the coming battle.
 - i. Battling while being dull means that we are more likely to miss our target and go off course.
 - ii. Biblical Community sharpens us to make us ready for battle.
- c. Biblical Community Combats under the same weight.
 - a. Galatians 6:2 - Biblical community bears the burdens of a brother and sister.
 - i. When we bear the burden of one another, it is like carrying our brother in battle who has been wounded. We do not carry for our glory but we carry the weight of their burden to ensure their safety of making it home.

The Landing

All of these acts that Biblical Community commits are done to help us in the battle. They are not easy and are not easy to hear when you are the one in need. Satan will try to make it uncomfortable and really awkward for you, trying to pin you against your brother. But we do not fight against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual forces of evil.

So as we close, my encouragement to you is find that biblical community that is here for you to battle on your eternal behalf. The Gathering encourages community with such vigor due to the difference it makes in our sanctification. I want you to see that community makes a difference in the battle and how it can change your ability to fight for the things that are of eternal significance. **1 Corinthians 15:33** says ***“Do not be deceived: *“Bad company ruins good morals.”**** The community you associate yourself with can and will affect your ability to see the battle and who you are fighting against. There is a reason that Biblical community is more important than community. Community looks after the temporal things, but biblical community should look after your eternal wellbeing.

Now some of you need to get into a biblical community by joining a community group here at the gathering. Or maybe you need to continue being in a biblical community here as a corporate worship experience.

Now others, you do not even know what it is like to have community with God. You do not have a relationship with God who created you and who loves you, but you recognize that this life is too much to handle on your own, and you need that biblical community first with God and secondly with His children. This is a time for you...