



# KINGDOM CULTURE VIDEO TRANSCRIPT WEEK EIGHT

## Teaching Video Transcript | Week 8: Kingdom Culture is Community Oriented

We were made for the connections of community. Let's look at something that maybe you've noticed or maybe you haven't. If you read the story about creation in the book of Genesis, in chapter one you will see God create everything that is and every time God creates something what he creates is pronounced as good. In chapter two of Genesis we zoom in for a closer look at creation, particularly a close up view of the creation of the first humans. And here we hear something very different. God said: "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." (Genesis 2:18, NKJV)

Let me share Pastor John Ortberg's observation on this. He writes: "What is striking is that the Fall has not yet occurred. There is no sin, no disobedience, nothing to mar the relationship between God and man. The human being is in a state of perfect intimacy with God. Each word he and God speak with each other is filled with closeness and joy; he walks with God in the garden in the cool of the day. He is known and loved to the core of his being by his omniscient, love-filled creator. Yet the word God uses to describe him is "alone." And God says this aloneness is "not good."

Sometimes in church circles when people feel lonely, we tell them not to expect too much from human relationships, that there is inside every human being a God-shaped void that no other person can fill. This is true. But apparently, according to the writer of Genesis, God creates inside this man a kind of "human-shaped-void" that God himself will not fill.

No substitute will fill this need in you for human relationship. Not money. Not achievements. Not busyness. Not books. Not even God himself. Even though this man was in a state of sinless perfection, he was "alone." And it was "not good."<sup>1</sup>

It is not good to be alone in life. We all need relationships. It doesn't matter if you are married or single or an introvert or an extrovert we all need significant relationships in life. And when God created the church he created us to be in relational community with other followers of Christ.

So we understand that we were created to be in community, but the importance of us being real life-giving community comes into focus when Jesus prays for us. In John 17 Jesus prays to God the Father and he prays for his 12 disciples who are with him. He prays for the unity of their community saying: I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. (John 17:11, NIV) Pastor Andy Stanley points out that the significance of Jesus' prayer that they may be one as we are one cannot be overstated.

"Jesus is praying that his disciples -the man who for three years had disappointed him and misunderstood him and would ultimately abandon him (in other words, human beans like you and me) – would experience something amazing. He prayed they were experience the same quality of relationship with each other that Jesus had been enjoying as part of the Trinity since before the beginning of time."<sup>2</sup>

As Jesus' prayer continues he turns his prayer to pray for those who will come to believe in him in the future. (Jn 17:20) Isn't that so amazing? Jesus is praying for you and me more than 2000 years before we came to faith in him. And what was he praying for us? Praying to the Father Jesus says: I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one... (John 17:21a, NLT) Jesus is praying for our unity with one another in the church and in our lives.

Jesus was praying for us while he was on earth, before his death and resurrection. After his resurrection we read in Acts chapter one that for 40 days before he ascended into heaven he gave his disciples instructions and spoke about the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3, NIV) and told them to wait for the coming Holy Spirit. Jesus was laying the foundation for the creation of the church, the community of believers. And from Acts chapter 2 through the end of the New Testament we see the implementation and the ups and downs of this divinely ordained community.

In his first letter to the church in Corinth the Apostle Paul writes specifically about being in community in the body of Christ and he makes it clear that we need each other and that we are better together. He makes it clear that we each have different gifts but that the body of Christ needs those gifts and we must work together. He makes it clear that God creating the body of Christ and that we need to maintain its unity even to the point of suffering with those who suffer and rejoicing with those who rejoice. (1 Cor 12:26, Rm 12:15) Why? Because we are a community through our common faith in Jesus and we need one another!

Through-out the New Testament letters to the churches the Apostles who wrote these letters continually encouraged the churches to be the body of Christ to one another and the world. Being a Christian carries a calling to be an active part of the body of Christ. It's a non-negotiable calling to be engaged with other Christians to fulfill the mission of doing the will of God on earth as it is in heaven.

We humans tend to be self-centered. And we tend to think about "what's in it for me?" But being a Christian is about being focused on God and his will and how we can live that out with and for others. When Jesus prays that for the unity of the church he also prays that the church would be united with the Trinity. And he prays this ...so that the world may believe that you have sent me. (John 17:21b, NIV) Jesus is reminding us that the mission of Kingdom of God goes beyond us. And he's telling us that a tangible sign to the world of skeptics, cynics and unbelievers is a united body of believers to live out biblical community. God has called us into the community of believers by his Spirit. Community is not optional. Being in authentic community can be amazing and it can be trying, but it's not optional.

A lot of times people think of church as a building, but we know it's not a building; it is the community of seeking God and following God together. During this pandemic we are living through an unprecedented time in human history where the church building is no longer the central gathering place and that brings some challenges. But the church has never been a building, its always been a community of people who live out the kingdom culture with each other and in the world. So my brothers and sisters in Christ lean into the community of the body of Christ. Do whatever it takes to create and sustain community centered around your common faith in Jesus Christ!

*Valley Brook Community Church All Church Study: Video Transcript Week Eight*

<sup>1</sup>John Ortberg in *Creating Community, Multnomah* © 2004, p. 30

<sup>2</sup>*Creating Community, Multnomah* © 2004, p. 41

