

Transformed – teen devotion – February 11, 2018

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Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: 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. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Ally #3 – The Church

Loneliness is not fun. In fact, it's awful. It's one of the worst feelings anyone can experience. You have probably felt lonely at some time in your life. Being alone itself is no fun. Yet suffering alone through trouble, hardship, break ups, broken friendships, temptations, and anything in between feels even worse. In fact, it can be bad for us.

The devil comes after you with the temptation that church isn't important and you don't need to go. He wants you to think that there is no one who cares for you. He wants you to believe that you are absolutely alone. The devil also tricks you into thinking that you can handle life alone. He wants you to think you can handle temptation alone. He tricks you to think you can walk through life alone so that you might even purposely isolate yourself.

But here's the truth: You're not alone. In fact, it's good for us to seek out Christian friends to help us face life and the trouble it brings.

King Solomon wrote the passage that we focus on today. He was a man familiar with popularity and admirers. He was the wealthiest king of Israel. He was the wisest person to ever live. Foreign kings and queens sought his advice. If anyone had it all, it was him.

But Solomon was also a man familiar with great loneliness and sorrow. Read the book of Ecclesiastes. Despite all his wisdom, riches, power, and influence, he felt alone. He realized the importance of community, the importance of being together. You can read it in these words. One person is overpowered easily. Two people can actually defend themselves. Two people will help each other out. Two people can keep warm. But three? That's even better. A cord of three strands is not easily broken.

Solomon is making the point that community is key in your life. The most important community is your Christian community. This Christian community is most easily and readily found at church. When believers come together, they can endure great hardships. They can survive great atrocities. They can withstand the worst things imaginable. They can face temptation.

Why? Not just because they have each other, but because they have their God and Savior Jesus. This Christian community has God's Word.

You have a community of fellow believers who suffer through many of the same things that you do. They face the same temptations and struggle with the constant battle against sin. This community gathers at your church and is there to help you. You are the two that defend each other, who keep each other warm. This community warns us about sin, false teachers, and the devil. This community comforts us with the truth that God is with us, that God forgives, that Jesus has already won the war by rising from the dead.

The people aren't even the most important part of this community. Solomon talks about a cord of three strands. The third strand is the God who protects you, forgives you, provides for you, and carries you in times of weakness. God is the one who is your strength and comfort.

Prayer: Dear Lord, help me see the blessings of your Church and its community. Help me rely on you and your grace, strength, and mercy to get through hardships and trials. Amen.

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