

The Blessing of Community Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

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We find comfort in life's blessings—the celebrations of birthdays, family gatherings, new homes, abundant meals, etc.

Yet, even with all the joys of this world, according to Scripture, this place is not our true home. The world remains under the Curse and is decaying more and more each day.

Many today reject the evidence of God's eternal power and divine nature which is revealed through creation's beauty and order.

Romans 8:20-21, *"For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God."*

Consequently, these people who've rejected the evidence of God have been handed over to depraved minds, following Satan, the prince of this world, and who reject God's children with hostility.

Although we strive to put on the Armor of God, we often find ourselves vulnerable to self-doubt, anxiety, and sorrow as we navigate life's valleys.

That's why today's message is a call to recognize our need for God's love and comfort.

Love and comfort shared not only by Him but also among our families, friends, and church communities.

What we must understand is that we're not called to walk this Christian journey alone; we're called to walk it together.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, "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."

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In the opening verses of the Bible, we read, *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."*

Through His spoken word, God brought forth light, formed the sky on the second day, and created dry land, seas, plants, and trees on the third day.

On the fourth day, He placed the sun, moon, and stars in the sky, and on the fifth day, He filled the waters and skies with living creatures.

Then on the sixth day, God brought forth animals and then declared, *"Let us make mankind in our image."*

Forming man from the dust, He breathed life into him but seeing that *"it was not good for man to be alone,"* God created a *"suitable helper"* for him, forming woman from his rib as a companion and wife.

This creation story is a powerful reminder that relationships and companionship were integral to God's design from the very beginning.

Our need for connection with others was always part of His divine plan. This divine truth shines even more brightly in Jesus' final testimony before the cross.

When God said, *"Let us make mankind in our image,"* He revealed the eternal communion of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—a unity we call the Trinity.

Their wills, actions, and purpose have always been perfectly in sync, free of any division or strife, bound by perfect love and harmony.

In His final prayer, Jesus extended this divine unity to believers, asking that they be included in this holy relationship.

Just as God is united within Himself, He calls us to a similar unity within His body, the church.

Aware that the Devil would *"prowl around like a roaring lion"* to harm God's people, Jesus prayed for the Father's protection over them, securing them with *"the power of His name."*

John 17:11, *"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."*

Imagine, the same power that spoke creation into existence now guards us, His children!

This protection is received not only by joining in the Trinity's fellowship and being *"sanctified by the truth"* but also by uniting with other believers. Christians are called to be one body.

Ephesians 4:4-6, *“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”*

So, we rejoice, knowing that even as we walk through dark valleys of trials and tribulations, we’re led by our Good Shepherd and strengthened by one another in unity.

Imagine going to a funeral, getting bad news from a doctor, facing bankruptcy, or losing one’s job without the tender loving care and support of both the Good Shepherd and His sheep!

Living in a broken and decaying world with joy within one’s heart is far from easy! We’re not meant to carry the burdens life throws our way alone.

That’s why we’re truly blessed to have continual access to God’s throne of grace and the invitation to trade yokes with Jesus, Who offers us a burden that’s light!

That is why we must learn to lean on one another, as well as on Christ, to help us through life’s heaviest trials.

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So, as we seek to live faithfully in a world that often feels distant from our true home, we should rely not only on God's love but also on the strength of community to bear the weight of life’s trials.

When Paul exhorts the Galatians to fulfill the *“law of Christ”* by carrying each other's burdens, we see this principle echoed throughout Scripture.

Moses, overwhelmed with the task of judging Israel alone, heeded his father-in-law's advice to appoint trustworthy men to share the load.

Similarly, in the story of the Good Samaritan, it's an unlikely helper—a Samaritan—who stops to care for an injured man, reminding us that compassion transcends social and cultural boundaries.

Nehemiah inspired unity among the people, encouraging families, priests, nobles, and tradesmen to rebuild Jerusalem's walls, relying on each other's strength and God's protection.

Even as Naomi felt hopeless after losing her sons, her daughter-in-law Ruth showed unwavering loyalty and love, choosing to stay by her side.

These stories reveal that, driven by love for God and others, we're called to lift each other up, knowing that God's comfort flows through our acts of kindness and support.

Having seen these examples of God's comfort and how others have borne one another's burdens, let us look inward and remember when we cried out to Christ in our needs, He met us with comfort.

He lifted us, led us, and sheltered us through storms we never thought we could endure alone. Imagine how much harder those dark valleys would have been without His presence.

Now, consider: who in your life might be feeling isolated, burdened, or overwhelmed? How can you offer them the love and support you've received from God?

Each of us should look around and consider those who may be struggling. Those who need a word of encouragement, a listening ear, or a helping hand.

This call extends beyond just family and friends—even to those who may oppose us.

If there are people you find difficult to love, perhaps those who've hurt you or who you don't understand, how might God be calling you to show grace and mercy toward them?

We need to cultivate an awareness of those around us, actively seeking ways to bear their burdens and be vessels of God's comfort?

Didn't Christ die for all? Just as the Good Samaritan extended mercy to a stranger, we must carry each other's burdens as Christ carried ours.

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And, as we carry each other's burdens, we're called to walk side by side, encouraging and strengthening each other's faith.

King Solomon reminds us in Proverbs 27:17, *"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."*

Recognizing the signs of the times and the approaching Day of the Lord, we need to heed the author of Hebrews.

Hebrews 10:24-25, *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*

With news of wars, earthquakes, famines, and persecution filling our world, it's easy to become indifferent to others' suffering, yet now, more than ever, we're called to love and support those in need.

Jesus reminds us that whatever we do for "*the least of these*," we do for Him.

Therefore, our care should extend beyond physical needs but should include the spiritual well-being of others, for living in a fallen world brings many temptations.

We're to teach and admonish each other, confess our sins to one another, pray, and give generously.

Above all, we should share the Gospel, not only by learning the Word but by living it daily—through our words, actions, and generosity—so that Christ's love is evident in us.

Mother Teresa's life was a powerful testimony to the impact of selfless generosity in service to God.

Born in Albania, she joined a convent at a young age and later moved to Calcutta, India, where she encountered extreme poverty and suffering.

Deeply moved by the plight of the "*poorest of the poor*," she felt called to devote herself to caring for those abandoned and forgotten by society.

In 1950, she founded the Missionaries of Charity, a religious order focused on serving the destitute, sick, and dying.

Through her acts of kindness—feeding the hungry, caring for the lepers, and comforting the dying—she became a living example of God’s love and compassion.

Her impact was profound, not only in bringing tangible relief to countless suffering people but also in inspiring millions worldwide to see Christ in those who suffer.

Through her humility and faith, Mother Teresa exemplified how living out God’s love can transform lives and serve as a beacon of hope, showing the world the power of generosity rooted in faith.

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God designed us not to walk alone but to build each other up and carry each other’s burdens. Every act of love, gift, and encouragement strengthens the whole body of Christ.

Life is brief, and what we do in this world truly matters, especially as we remember it’s not our true home.

Each of us has something to give—whether to meet physical needs or to uplift others spiritually.

If you’re blessed with abundance, don’t hoard it for a “rainy day,” but instead, trust God and give generously to those who’re hungry, thirsty, homeless, or in need, as though you’re giving to Christ Himself.

If you’re gifted with wisdom and teaching, teach with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength—not for human praise but to build up and edify the saints in their faith.

If you’ve survived trials and, by God’s grace and strength, found shelter in Him, share your testimony so others might find hope in their struggles.

When you see sin in others, approach them in prayer, gentleness, and kindness, encouraging them toward repentance and holiness.

Stand alongside those facing depression, reminding them of God's undying love and how precious they are to Him.

And if you feel called to share the Good News, do so boldly, undeterred by potential criticism or persecution, rejoicing that God has chosen each of us, ordinary as we are, to do extraordinary things in His kingdom.

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Conclusion

So, as we step out to serve, let's remember that each act of love, each gift, and each word of encouragement isn't just helping an individual—it's strengthening the entire body of Christ.

When we share our resources, offer our wisdom, and lift others up in their struggles, we're fulfilling our calling to carry each other's burdens and walk this journey together.

Every time we give or serve, we're not only supporting a brother or sister in need, but we're also building a community that reflects God's love and unity.

Let us go forward as one body, united in faith and compassion, bearing witness to the world that we're known by our love for one another.