



Better Together

Acts 2:42-46 & Eccl 4:9-12 June 24, 2018

I. Introduction:

- A. “Better Together” is a slogan that many secular and Christian organizations have been using in these days! It is the slogan of the conference our church is a part of – Converge World Wide - “Better Together,” one of our staff members always signs her emails with the words “Better Together,” and that is the theme of our series this summer – “Better Together”
 - 1. You have heard the old saying “Two heads are better than one!” Simply means it is helpful to have the advice or opinion of a second person when you are stuck or just when you want to excel even more in what you are doing!
 - 2. Maybe a synonym for this phrase “Better Together” would be synergy – simply when we team with others we are more likely to produce beyond what we could do on our own!
- B. And we need to know that while “better together” is a fantastic slogan, the fact that we are “Better Together” is God’s idea not man’s!
 - 1. The fact that when other believers are in our lives in a significant way we can thrive beyond what we could do by ourselves!
 - 2. As a church, we can carry out our mission of bringing people to Jesus and becoming more like Jesus “better together” than we can individually.
 - 3. God has designed the church to be a “better together” experience
 - a) The image God gives us regarding the church is that of a body where we are members of one another and interdependent upon one another and held together by one another.
 - b) We have differing gifts that we are supposed to use to build us up and supply what each of us lacks so we can be better together in our lives and mission.

4. Proverbs 27:17 says “Iron sharpens iron so one man sharpens another” – simply the way that you use steel to sharpen steel in the same way God uses one person to sharpen another person!”
- C. So, the theme of my message today is very simple “we need to be together because we are better together!” repeat
- Let’s start by looking at the fact that

II. We Need to Be Together

- A. So by nature just being the church demands that we are together!
1. The word church means a “calling out of.”
 2. It is simply the assembly of a group of people who have been called out of everything else they are doing and everyplace else they are to gather for a specific purpose.
 3. Moraine Valley Church is the actually the assembly of believers together, not the building we meet in, who come from all over the southwest side of Chicago and from everything else we are doing to gather together in order to exalt Jesus, be built up and equip the believer for life and ministry.
 4. So we all are gathered here today not at church but as the Church
- B. Hebrews 10 instructs us that we should not forsake our assembling together
1. Read v24-25.
 2. It is the habit of some not to assemble with us on a regular basis.
 - a) Stats today are that many Christians feel going to church one to two times a month makes them a faithful member of their church.
 - b) This verse would tell me if this is what you think you are not a faithful member but rather unfaithful to God’s Word!
 3. Note what takes place when we are together – we are not to be passive but actively engaging in each other’s lives, stimulating and encouraging each other’s growth!
 4. It seems there was a tendency back in the first century, just as there is today, for believers to think they can do this Christian life without gathering together with other believers. It seems that people are ignorant of just how important togetherness is for the Christian life and mission!
 5. And it is even more important for us today than it was back then for us to be together as the return of Jesus is that much closer! Read v25d

- C. The example of the early church teaches us that being together was at the heart of the church experience. Turn to Acts 2:42
 1. Read v42 – devoted to fellowship – that means they were devoted to each other and the verses following give us a glimpse of what that devotion to one another looked like
 2. Read v44a were together! First, we see they gathered together and lived life together.
 - a) Then it said they held their possessions in common and helped each other out as needed
 3. Read v45 – Not just once a week but day by day they were together in the temple and together in their homes eating together!
- So we see by the very nature of the church, the instruction of Scripture, and the example of the early church we need to be together. And the reason we need to be together is because ...

III. We are better together!

- A. Eccl 4:9-12 may be the foundational passage in the Bible about us being better together, the synergy that our relationships together produces in our lives! Turn
- B. Any hockey fans? Do you understand the value of the “power play”?
 1. One team is penalized so the other team has a one-man **advantage**, 5 on 4.
 2. This advantage creates many new possibilities for the team with the one-man advantage to score and makes it much more difficult for the other team to defend.
 3. Togetherness is God’s power play designed to give you an **advantage** in life.
- C. The first **advantage** we see is you can accomplish more together than you ever could alone. Read v9.
 1. That refers to two people working together so that the result of their combined efforts is greater than could be expected if each one worked alone and their individual results were added together. That is synergy That is we are better together
 2. This is the advantage that a 2 on 1 in hockey has over a 1 on 1.
- D. The second **advantage** you can gain from the power play of togetherness is there will be someone to lift you up when you fall. Read v10

1. I have news— Life is bigger than you are strong and bigger than you are smart!
 2. There will be times when you are going to be discouraged or down, times you will be tired out, worn out or burnt out, times you will not know what to do or are confused about what to do. And times the Devil will be all over you!
 3. But togetherness gives you someone there to lift you up.
 4. They will provide wise counsel, speak the truth, give perspective and unconditional love, encourage, pray, maybe even exhort you to do what you need to do even if it is very hard.
- E. The third **advantage** you can gain from the power play of togetherness is you will be able to do things together that you could never do alone. Read 11.
1. A friend of mine was a Special Forces trainer in the Marines and he told me that you have all these big bad marines out in the field at night sleeping in their sleeping bags alone and by morning you find all these guys huddled up together in order to keep warm.
 2. There are so many things in life that you cannot do alone that you will now be able to do together.
- F. Finally, the fourth **advantage** we can gain from the power play of togetherness is together we can overcome your enemies. Read v12 a-b
1. There are enemies in your life:
 - a) World —that will seek to sweep us up into its ways
 - b) Our Flesh — will be attracted to what the world offers.
 - c) Devil — A personal evil angelic being is behind it all, seeking to destroy us!
 2. Illustrate — Let's say that you have 100 units of strength or wisdom and an enemy comes against you that has 150 units of strength or wisdom. He will beat you. But if you add in another believer who has 75 units of strength or wisdom together you will have much more than enough to beat your enemy.
- G. And as we see at the end of v12 as our numbers grow of people who we do life together with so does our advantage Read v12c
1. Illustrate with thread!
 2. I need a strong young man! 1-2-3
- H. We truly need to be together because we are better together! And this summer we are going to be doing a series called “Better Together”

1. I will be sharing this series with some of the others here who are gifted preachers like Mike Locke, Gary Olson, and Craig Moore, and even next week excited to have our old youth pastor and now missionary in the Philippines Bob Long with us.
- So let me close with a few thoughts...
- IV. Application
- A. When you think of better together, whom in your life do you think of?
 - B. Whom might you be able to reach out and connect with to be intentional to be together so you can be better together? What would be your next step in making that happen?
 - C. Do not **hesitate** - take that next step and find out that not only will you be better but they will be better as well!