

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

We are not meant to do life alone. We were never designed that way. We were created to be in community. It's in community our flaws are on display and refined. When we surround ourselves with people walking with the Lord and have godly character, our sharp edges are smoothed and we are challenged to become the man or woman God has created us to be. We all stumble; it's a part of our humanity. But in community, we are picked back up, not left on our own to struggle and figure it out.

What can be tricky is people are people and we can miss the mark and hurt someone (either intentionally or unintentionally). No one likes getting hurt, and our default can be to isolate ourselves when we are. Many have been hurt by people in the church and because of it, have a hard time trusting people in church and either leave or refuse to get planted. It's easier to stay on the fringes because at any sign of disagreement or potential hurt, we can remove ourselves from the equation. It's easier that way.

But what if it's not God's design? What if His design is for us to work through our disagreements, hurt, and pain together? Having the hard conversations, wrestling with the pain, and choosing forgiveness refines us and makes us more like Christ and less like the world. When this is the path we choose, it shows those around us it is possible to disagree and still love one another.

The enemy would love nothing more than for us to live and do life alone. Doing so is a very dangerous place to be. When predatory animals hunt, they will isolate their prey because when in packs they are less likely to get caught. We find protection and strength in numbers, and that is found in community. If you have been hurt, we challenge you to try community one more time. Get plugged into a Connect Group. Join a serve team. After one year you won't even recognize yourself because of how God will shape and mold you due to the community you are planted in.

Prayer

Father God, thank You that You did not create us to do life alone. Give us the grace to work through the hard conversations and any hurt we may feel. Grace us with the ability to have thick skin and a soft heart. Help us to be quick to forgive and move forward. We rebuke the spirit of offense, as it has no hold over our heart or life. Surround us with godly men and women who challenge us to become everything You have created us to be.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Additional Scriptures:

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 | 1 Corinthians 1:10 | Colossians 3:13