



THE POWER OF KINGDOM COMMUNITY



FROM
LOUIS
HEART
TO
YOURS

In this unusual time we find ourselves in, we realise the importance of Kingdom Community as part of God's plan and strategy to deal with the effects of uncertainty, loneliness, loss and lack that has led to tremendous anxiety.

During this period of COVID-19, we've heard amazing stories of people that were cared for, comforted, supported, counselled, provided for both financially and with basic needs such as food because they BELONG to a community.

We also heard of people that experienced a tremendous sense of LONELINESS without any ENCOURAGEMENT and FRIENDSHIP. People that experienced LOSS without COMFORT and SUPPORT. People that experienced LACK without any SUPPLY or PROVISION due to not BELONGING and CONNECTING in a caring COMMUNITY.

As believers, we know that we've been created for community, made in the image and likeness of a God, who Himself is a community. God created us out of community, to form a community and to be blessed in community. He did not intend for us to live in isolation and autonomy but created us to thrive in two essential communities: a *loving, dependant, worshipful* community with Him and a *loving, interdependent serving* community with one another. The other forms of community flow from these two essential expressions and involve people of different walks of life, different faiths, churches and businesses.

Ephesians 2:19-20 in The Passion Translation reads:

[19] So, you are not foreigners or guests, but rather you are the children of the city of the holy ones, with all the rights as family members of the household of God. [20] You are rising like the perfectly fitted stones of the temple, and your lives are being built up TOGETHER upon the ideal foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, and best of all, you are connected to the Head Cornerstone of the building, the Anointed One, Jesus Christ himself!

More than ever, we have realised that Kingdom Community is a powerful antidote in combatting the loneliness and loss that we are battling as a society. The word COMBAT can be defined as "fighting between armed forces". That's such an apt description of our current situation.

kingdom COMMUNITY

Let's take a closer look at this powerful weapon that we have at our disposal to combat loneliness and loss. Community can be defined as a group of people bound together in a SPECIFIC LOCALITY (these days it can be either geographically or virtually) by COMMON INTERESTS or CHARACTERISTICS, in our instance, it's the Kingdom of God.

A Kingdom Community speaks of common unity where we share certain commonalities like governance (what's allowed or not), privileges, conduct, behaviour, common culture, values, passion, purpose and ultimately, heritage.

Certain pillars constitute a healthy community where people have an understanding of:

1. **Belonging** - meaning I am connected and that I give and receive love.
2. **Mutual Responsibility** - I am valued and I add value. As a member of His household, I take responsibility and therefore, I have ownership and authority. My contribution is significant. I'm not just a consumer but a contributor.
3. **Wellbeing** - when people experience community as happy, comfortable and healthy, they want to be part of it. We need a healthy environment to thrive, not a toxic one that exacerbates loneliness and loss, thereby heightening anxiety.
4. **Progress** - people want to be part of something successful that has forward momentum and growth,

without stagnation. Where there is health, growth follows naturally.

5. **Protection** - meaning "to defend and guard against damage caused by outside forces." The vision, values and mandate we carry are safeguarded and we feel protected.

There are four dynamics of community that are important in this context:

1. **The Blessing**
2. **The Discomfort**
3. **The Complexity**
4. **The Benefit**

1. The Blessing:

We experience the blessing when we understand God's intention and purpose with community. When we're ignorant of His purpose, we get disappointed, and we CAUSE disappointment.

2. The Discomfort of Community:

Inconvenience, distress, uneasiness, hardship, irritation and even mild pain are things that we experience as we deal with the discomfort of community. Selfishness, comfort, exclusivity vs inclusivity, long term commitment and the fear of the unknown are just some of the variables we have to consider that can make life very uncomfortable, as we can all be self-centred creatures of comfort to a certain degree. The call of God certainly seldom looks like what we had in mind.

3. The Complexity:

My life is simple and it works until you add another person to the equation, then it becomes inexplicably complicated. Due to the dynamics of relationships that involve individuals, generations, gender, personalities, culture, system and structures. It takes DETERMINATION to be part of a sustainable community.

4. The Benefit:

This is the advantage, privilege and the good that comes out of a situation, an investment or community. We have access to diverse gifts, talents and skills of people that can minister to our loneliness, our loss, lack and anxiety.

There is both blessing and benefit in community. However, unless we are prepared to embrace the complexity and discomfort that constitutes community, we will not enjoy the blessings and the benefits of that community. We need to count the cost so that we're not taken aback when challenges arrive.

When we do not understand God's intention and purpose with community, we lay ourselves vulnerable to being hurt and in turn inflicting that disappointment onto others. We come into community through Grace and live in community through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Only after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit did believers become a "common unity" =

C O M M U N I T Y

May we experience His grace to enable us to exit our 'self-centred Kingdoms of One' and become excited about the expansive work of His Kingdom, living in synergy with Him and in life-transforming, productive relationships with others.

Your friends

Louis & Edna



LOUIS & EDNA
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