



**TASTE
AND
SEE**

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Two are Better than One

How can one keep warm alone? (Eccl. 4:11)

In the early days of Covid 19 a new term began to pop up everywhere: "social distancing."

We were told it was important to stay apart from each other in order to protect our health and stop the virus from spreading. Ever since then we have learned how to live with six-foot force fields around us (unless we are in Wal-Mart, where people still haven't figured out how to follow an arrow).

You might remember that it didn't take long before this terminology was tweaked. Within a few weeks the phrase *physical* distancing replaced *social* distancing on websites and news feeds as we realized that, in a stressful pandemic, we need social connection more than ever. If we are going to protect our health - emotional as well as physical - we need to stay connected to one another.

This was an important insight, and it's not just our public health officers who tell us this. The author of Ecclesiastes said the same thing three thousand years ago. "Two are better than one," he wrote, offering four different examples to prove his case. His insights are as true today as they were back then.

Better together

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor." (4:9)

Since moving to Portage at the end of December, Melanie and I have painted almost every wall in our house. Some people dread painting but it's one of the few home improvement activities we enjoy! That's because Melanie is great at "cutting in" - doing the finicky detailed brushwork in corners and by baseboards - and I'm good with a roller. By working together, we get a good return for our labour. This is one of the blessings of community and partnership, whether it is in a marriage or a workplace. As Helen Keller wrote, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

A little help

"If either of them falls down, one can help the other up." (4:10)

My mom still lives in her house in Lethbridge. One of the supports that allows her to stay there is a LifeLine - a sensor she wears around her neck that alerts someone if she falls while on her own. This is important technology for those who require assistance if they find themselves in a situation where they can't get to their feet again. But the reality is that we all have moments where we need someone to help us up, like this verse mentions. Especially in the midst of a pandemic, we may find ourselves stumbling emotionally, mentally, or even spiritually. We need people around who can lift us up and help us get back to our feet.

Warm me up

*"Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?" (4:11)*

The question posed in this verse is poignant. In a world that is sometimes described as "cold" we need people around us to offer shelter from the elements. On our own we are vulnerable; in the company of friends we can keep each other warm, even through a dark night. Who do you have around you that offers the warmth of acceptance and presence?

I've got your back

"Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves." (4:12)

We taught our kids early to practice the buddy system if they were going to be in a dangerous or unknown situation. There is safety and security when we enter those spaces together, and this is true for the spiritual realm as well. We know that there is an Enemy who wants to attack us, leaving us discouraged and defeated. The presence of a friend who will stand with us against his lies - reminding us of the truth of God's love - can make a world of difference. We can bear one another's burdens so we won't be overpowered.

"Two are better than one" for a whole host of reasons. So, even while we practice physical distancing, let's make sure we are staying socially - and spiritually - connected. Who do you have in your life that makes life better? Take a moment to

thank them today. Is there someone who needs your help? Make a point of reaching out to them this week.

Further Reading:

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Key Verse:

"A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." (v. 12)

Calibrating Prayer:

Lord, you never meant life to be a solo venture. From the first pages of the Bible you have called us into community so we can love, support, and strengthen each other. Show me someone I can encourage today.