

Protection in Community DJ Curry

They are more than a uniform or a badge. These men and women both protect and serve. Those who have decided to take on a life of service do so while placing most of their personal desires in the backseat and even lay their life on the line if need be. The old Police Sergeant has taken notice that more and more have lost the understanding of what service is in the community and watched as most have willingly handed it all over to just a few. Shouldn't the whole community be involved in serving the community?

God designed us Christians not as lonely individuals but as grains of sand on a beach and stars in the sky together in the rich display of community (Gen 22:17). The Bible emphasizes that we should navigate the choppy ocean of life with the bright stars that make up His church. It is not for us to journey alone.

Two *are* better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls, For *he has* no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm *alone*? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken. (Eccl 4:9-12 NKJV)

God's intention for the Christian community goes beyond mere companionship; it extends to the powerful shield of protection and service. Those who help when one falls, give aid against the chill of evil and stand with you in a fight. The community of believers acts as a fortress, offering a collective strength that guards against the trials and tribulations of life. Building each other up in times of challenge or spiritual warfare, the unity within a community becomes a powerful defense mechanism. Just as a shepherd protects the flock from predators, the church safeguards its members. We are urged to "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal 6:2). This divine order reminds us that we are called not only to receive support but also to extend a helping hand to our fellow believers, not forsaking them when you see them in trouble.

Furthermore, the Christian community stands as a testimony to the love and compassion of Christ. Jesus Himself prayed for the unity of believers in John 17:21, recognizing the spiritual strength that arises when His followers stand together. "(T)hat they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me" (John 17:21). In unity, the church also becomes a beacon of hope, radiating the light of Christ to a world in need. As we immerse ourselves in the warmth of Christian unity, let us cherish its protective embrace. Together, we form a formidable force against the enemy's schemes, and in unity, we reflect the love and grace of our Savior. Let our hearts be attuned to the beauty of community, where protection and service are found, burdens are shared, and the body of Christ stands as a testament to God's design for His people. We are much more than our Sunday best but a valuable part of the church. Let us never forsake the Father by turning our backs on one or more of our brethren.