

Going it alone is clearly not God's plan. From the very beginning we see that when Adam was alone, God quickly fixed it. *"It is not good for man to be alone."* (Gen 2:18). Eve was created.

We are relational beings. God put that in our DNA. Why? Because we have a relational God and we are created in His image. We were created for relationship with God and with each other.

The Cross is an excellent symbol, visually demonstrating this principle, pointing both vertically to God - Jesus the Divine Sacrifice lifted up for the sins of the world, while also suspended on a horizontal beam, arms spread wide, reaching out to all of humanity, drawing us together into a perfect love relationship with Father God.

When Jesus responded to the question of what is the greatest commandment, the simple answer was love. Love trumps it all. The first and greatest commandment:

"And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these." (Mark 12:30-31, NLT)

Ignoring either the vertical or horizontal relationship leaves us vulnerable and feeling empty. You see we need God and we need each other. I believe that God planned it that way.

I'm not going to spend any time with the Wednesday night crowd on the necessity of making God your 1st love. What I do want to emphasize tonight is that we can't have our number one without the other.

The Apostle Paul likens the Church to the body. He used the term "body" more than 30 times in the New Testament. We are one body, the body of Christ.

1 Cor 12:12, NLT - *"The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ."*

The human body clearly illustrates the interdependence needed in our horizontal relationships with each other. These relationships exhibit:

- 1. Love.** The world will know we are Christians by our sincere LOVE. Living in harmony.
 - 1 Peter 1:22, NLT - *"You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart."*
 - Romans 12:9-10, NLT - *"Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other."*

- Rom 15:5-6, NLT - *"May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

2. **Mutual edification and encouragement.**

- 1 Thess 5:11, NLT - *"So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing."*
- Col 3:16-17, NLT - *"Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father."*

3. **Serving one another.**

- Gal 5:13-14, NLT - *"For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself.""*
- Gal 6:2, NLT - *"Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ."*

4. **Accountability - Pray for each other.**

- James 5:16, NLT - *"Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results."*

God's agape love is what binds us together! It's the great adhesive that holds even when the enemy does his best to divide us. Satan loves to divide and conquer, isolate and decimate, but greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world.

Some points on establishing relationships:

1. Be intentional.
2. Be persistent.
3. Be faithful.
4. Just do it.

Don't be the "Lone Ranger." Fulfill your God-given role in Body Ministry. Your walk will be stable, your satisfaction complete, and the Body of Christ will surely benefit from your performing the Kingdom purpose God has intended.