



BETTER

Better Together

#npbetter

Week 4
4 of 12

June 28, 2020

Bottom Line: Doing life alone is dangerous.

Icebreaker: If you could live anywhere on this planet and take everyone that you love with you, where would you choose to live? Why? Outside of your family, who would you most want to be there?

Key Verse: *Two are better than one, for they have a good return for their labor.* Ecclesiastes 4:9 NIV

Solomon did more than rule from his throne. He was a great people watcher. He started with his own life and then watched the lives of others. He observed that whether king or pauper we are all much alike. As he scanned the world around him, he observed that in general we lack **comfort**, **contentment**, and **community**. He concluded it was better to have never existed than to live in a world without comfort for our souls. Without contentment, we are consumed with covetousness, comparison, competition, and consumerism. Solomon says it is all chasing the wind, and it is better to have a small handful with peace than the strife that comes from the continual chase. Without community we are lonely, restless, and life is meaningless.

Solomon, the man who had everything, concluded that **friendships**, successful relationships, are better than anything else. He realized that life in community with friends is far better than self-pursuits. With friendships, we are much more likely to find **success**. We get a “good return” for our labor. Things work better and more easily for us. Within solid friendships we get the **support** we will eventually need. We will all have times when we fall or fail, and we need someone else to pick us up and help us get started again. A true and trusted friend is there no matter what. A true friendship provides **encouragement** in the pressures and challenges of the environments in which we find ourselves. Work, family, personal life can be difficult. We have health, financial, and emotional struggles. A friend gives the encouragement we need to see beyond our current circumstances. Closely tied to that, the friend relationship is a source of **strength**. We are strengthened to withstand the winds and waves of life and not crack or break under the pressure. Often a solid friend is the difference maker.

Solomon asserted that friendships are more than popularity. Popularity caves under adverse circumstances and is meaningless. Friends make the journey with you.

THINK IT OVER >>>

What impacted you most from the message?

Solomon's words are relevant and practical for 2020. What verse from chapter 4 spoke most deeply to you?

Solomon says there is no comfort for the oppressed or the oppressor. How do you see that truth today?

Solomon says comfort for your soul is more valuable than the accumulation of wealth and possessions. How have you discovered this truth?

“The turmoil of an overachiever.” Have you felt it? Have you overcome it? If so, how?

Comparison, using others as our standard, robs us of the ability to “rejoice with those who rejoice.” Reflect and discuss. How does this damage us?

Solomon is talking about balance. Why is balance so hard?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

When we are envious we are saying, “You should not have it because I am better and more deserving than you.” Agree or disagree? Explain your answer.

There is a difference between loneliness and being alone. But there is a certain emptiness and meaninglessness to life when we look around and realize we have no friends. Have you considered who will be with you when your work life is over? Are you building community for the future? What do you need to do?

Share about some friendships that help you find the success, support, encouragement, and strength you need. For whom are you working to provide that kind of friendship?

Someone has called this kind of friendship “trench-ship.” These are friends who will fight in the trenches with you. Discuss how we can find these friends and be these friends.

NEXT STEPS

1. Evaluate the state of your friendships, and start a strategy to build for your future.
2. Determine how you can focus more on what truly matters now.
3. Be intentional about being a better friend to a few specific people.
4. If you are not part of a NewPointe Group, visit new.org/groups.

EVALUTION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: Doing life alone is dangerous.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: 2 Corinthians 1:3-6

Tuesday: 1 Timothy 6:6-12

Wednesday: Hebrews 10:24-25

Thursday: John 15:12-15

Friday: John 13:35

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.
(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)