

1. If you have your bible today and you would like to follow along with me, we are going to be looking mainly in the book of Genesis chapter 2.
2. So, in the month of August we engaged in a series that had a central theme. And that theme is, "Better Together". We are just better together.
3. Our biblical focus during that series was the book of Ecclesiastes chapter 4. In Ecclesiastes chapter 4, Solomon the writer made some very powerful observations about the benefits of togetherness.
4. He begins by saying in verse 9, two are better than one because... and then he spends the next four verses describing how two are better than one. How we are better together.
5. But out of that I felt the Lord question me to lead us into asking a highly important question.
6. We are better together; I think we are all in agreement about that fact. But the question is... "What is Together?" What is together?
7. At first I resisted the idea of spending a few weeks answering that question, in my mind it was what I considered a duh question.
8. What is together? Well duh, it's \_\_\_\_\_ fill in the blank.
9. But the Lord challenged me to not assume that together is easy for us to define, or even live by. Because as I'm sure you have found over the years, together means different things to different people.
10. In fact, it is possible to be together, but yet not be together.
11. It is possible to be physically with or near someone, but yet mentally, spiritually, and emotionally be so disconnected from them that it is like you are strangers.
12. Two people can live in the same house, and even sleep in the same bed, and really feel like they are living in two different worlds.
13. It is possible to be driving down the road with someone, and be sitting 12 inches apart from them, confined in a closed in space with no way of escape, and wish more than anything that you could get away because the tension and the turmoil and the separation are more than you can bear.
14. It is possible to come to church with the same people, week after week, month after month, year after year, and still be strangers.

15. So for those reasons and many more, figuring out what together really means is something very powerful and necessary.
16. And because of that, two weeks ago, we began by talking about the fact that **alone is not God's desire for our lives.**
17. That is not to say that God never wants us to be alone. I must confess that I like me some alone time. When we talk about alone we are talking about long term, deeply significant loneliness.
18. And the illustration of that principle is found in Genesis chapter 2.
19. In Genesis chapter 1, we have the seven-day account of the creation of the world and everything in it.
20. Then in chapter 2, we find a more detailed description of God's creation on day 6.
21. On day six, God creates Adam, shows him everything he has created. Gives it all to Adam and tells him to rule and subdue it.
22. He tells Adam to increase and fill the earth. On top of all that, God places Adam in this beautiful garden with every kind of food he could imagine, and he says here. This is yours.
23. So in my mind, here is Adam. He is on top of the world. He has every earthly thing at his disposal. But God looks at Adam, at the end of everything he has created, and he says to himself, as good as all of this is, there is still something missing. Adam is alone.
24. We find God's exact words in **Genesis 2:18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."**
25. I want to point out again that the answer to the alone problem was much more detailed than God giving Adam the woman Eve.
26. I'm not trying to downplay your rightful, beautiful and wonderful place ladies. But the picture here applies to much more than just marriage.
27. The answer to Adam's alone problem was that God wanted him to be one with someone else. Now. In this case, God offered Adam marriage as a source of alleviating his alone problem, and allowing him to be one with someone else.

28. But we find in the New Testament book of John that Jesus had something to say about being alone, and being one. And in this case, Jesus is talking about how we relate to other believers.

29. John 17:20-23 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one-- 23 I in them and you in me--so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

30. How many are still hanging with me this morning? I am taking you the long way around to get to the point, but I want us to have the proper perspective of what God was doing in Genesis chapter 2.

31. So, in Genesis chapter two, God is painting a picture of what alone is and what one is, and this picture is to be applied to our relationships with other believers.

32. So not let's dig in in chapter 2 for just a little bit.

**TEXT:** Genesis 2:24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

What God desires for us as believers is for us to be...

**TITLE:** Family

1. The illustration or relationship God uses is that of marriage. To be clear. Marriage is not THE answer to our alone problem. It is AN answer, but it may not even be the best answer.
2. I say all that to say. If you are single that in no way signifies that you are second best. You are not second best. Married people are not better, or necessarily even better off than you are.
3. Here's what the Apostle Paul had to say about being single. 1  
Corinthians 7:7-8 But I wish everyone were single, just as I am. Yet each person has a special gift from God, of one kind or another. 8 So I say to those who aren't married and to widows—it's better to stay unmarried, just as I am. (NLT)
4. So, with that groundwork in place. Let's go back to the illustration of a man and woman coming together in Genesis chapter 2.
  1. In verse 24 there are four people mentioned. (bring up on stage)
  2. There is the mother and father. (leave his mother and father)

3. Then there is the man. He is the one doing the leaving and cleaving (KJV).
4. And then there is his wife.
5. What I want us to focus on for just a minute is the man. I want us to see the transformation that takes place in his relationships. Keeping in mind that this is a picture of what God wants for us to experience, not only in marriage, but in our relationships with other believers.
6. I want to sum up this transformation in two words. They are...
7. Separation and unification. (say that with me)

### **Separation.**

1. So the separation is seen in that the man, leaves his father and mother.
2. Rather than focusing on what leaving means, I would rather focus on what leaving doesn't mean.
3. When I think in terms of a man leaving his father and mother so that he can become unified and one with his wife, we need to know that he is not giving up something. The man is not losing something. He is leaving. And there is a difference.
4. When a man leaves his father and mother, he is not disowning them.
5. He is not cutting off all contact with them.
6. He is not refusing to ever see them or be around them.
7. He is not saying, I will never speak to you on the phone or text.
8. He is not shutting the door to their sharing wisdom with him, should he choose to seek it.
9. He is not saying, from this point forward you are dead to me.
10. He is not saying, well I'm no longer going to honor you as my parents like the bible says because that part of my life is over.
11. When I left my parent's home to marry my wife. I did not love them less. If anything I loved them more.
12. When I started paying for, and being responsible for all of my bills, and putting food on the table, I started to appreciate the sacrifices they had made for me all my life.

13. So leaving them was not losing them. The point of a man leaving his father and mother is not so he can lose them; it is so the man can gain something more.
14. That something else can be added to his life.
15. So there is the separation.
16. The next part is what we will call...

### **Unification.**

1. The NIV says the man leaves his father and mother for the purpose of being united with his wife.
2. The NLT says so he can be joined to his wife.
3. The KJV says that he cleaves to his wife.
4. And the message bible says that he embraces his wife.
5. Now, we will spend most of next time talking about what all those words mean. What it means to be united, joined, to cleave and embrace.
6. For today we will move to the final part of the equation.
7. The man leaves, and he cleaves, unifies, embraces, and joins with his wife for the purpose of becoming one with her.
8. In the biblical sense, they become one flesh.
9. One more time so we are clear. Leaving his father and mother so he can cleave to his wife, doesn't mean that this son ceases to be the flesh and blood of his parents.
10. When he leaves, he is still their flesh and blood. But the amazing transformation that takes place, is that while he is still flesh and blood with his parents, he now becomes flesh and blood with his wife.
11. How many are still with me this morning.
12. Now. I am probably the last person on planet earth to get this, but here is the concept that occurred to me.
13. This wife, this woman in the picture, goes **from being not family, to being family.**
14. The transformation that takes place in the man's life, is that while he is still family with his parents, he now becomes family with his wife.
15. The both of them go from being not family, to being family. (let the actors go down)

16. I cannot think of a better, more complete picture of what God desires to happen between believers in Jesus Christ.
17. As believers in Jesus Christ. As Christ followers. As Christ lovers. What God desires to happen in each of our lives is that we are transformed from being not family, into being family.
18. God's picture of what us as believers. Us attending the same church, looks like is that we become family.
19. Tell me if that's not what you see again in **John 17:21-23** "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one-- 23 I in them and you in me--so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.
20. What does God desire for me, and you, and you, and you? Is that we become family.
21. Before Jesus we were not family. But after Jesus, we are family.

#### Conclusion:

1. And just so we're clear. I'm pretty sure that God doesn't desire that we be some dysfunctional, out of control, self-seeking, self-serving family.
2. Some family that only deeply relates to one another a few times a year.
3. He wants his family. His spiritual family and church family to be unified by love. A deep love for one another.
4. It's not that you are no longer a part of the family that gave you your name. It's just that now you are a part of an even greater family, where in Jesus Christ we all have a new name.
5. **God's desire for us as believers is that we be transformed from not family, to being family.** Anything less than loving family is missing the fullness of the blessing God has for our lives.
6. From not family, to being family.
7. I asked my son if I could share this story and he said I could.
8. Many of you know that a few weeks ago, my wife and I officially became grandparents times 5.
9. Our son and daughter-in-law adopted 5 wonderful children that we are absolutely in love with.

10. We had gone to be with them in the courtroom when they all appeared before the judge.
  11. Now technically, all the paperwork had been signed a week or so before. So in our minds this was somewhat just a formality. But when we got there, it turned out to be anything but a formality.
  12. There was actually a powerful transformation that took place.
  13. The attorney for the state was questioning my son and daughter-in-law. And the purpose of the questions were to make sure they understood the gravity and the responsibility they were taking on.
  14. The questions the attorney were asking were so intense that at one point I thought to myself, she better not treat my 30 year-old baby (LOL) badly.
  15. However, I was totally overwhelmed with emotion when the attorney asked the last two questions.
  16. She said. Do you understand that from this moment forward, in the eyes of the state, it will be as if these children were your natural born children?
  17. New birth certificates will be issued and your names will be listed as the mother and father, just as if you were present on the day they entered the world.
  18. From not family to family. From that moment forward they would be unified together. They would be one family unit.
  19. I was so overwhelmed by the beauty of that thought.
  20. And yet, this idea of adoption is exactly how Paul describes our relationship with our heavenly father in the book of Galatians.
  21. **Galatians 4:4-7** But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. **6** Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." **7** So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.
1. That is some of the most powerful scripture I have ever read. When we accepted Jesus as our savior, he removed that old life from us. That life of slavery, and instead he gave us a life in which we are his child and an heir of everything that exists in the kingdom.
  2. Somebody say amen to that truth.

3. But tucked away in there is also another truth. And that is our relationship with other believers.
4. If you know Jesus Christ as your savior, that person sitting next to you, in front of you, behind you, across the aisle from you. They are your family.
5. I'm a child of the king. You're a child of the king. They are a child of the king. And because we are all children of the king, then you are my brother and you are my sister.
6. In Christ it is as if we have been related to and bonded to one another from the very beginning. And because of that it makes us related as if by blood.
7. As a matter of fact related exactly by blood. The blood of Jesus.
8. The blood running through your veins and the blood running through my veins is the blood of our father and our savior Jesus Christ. We belong to him and we belong to one another.
9. God's desire is that we be one. Not all the same but definitely one.
10. Let's stand and take a few moments to thank God for this wonderful gift of family.
11. Salvation call. Do you want to be a part of the family?
12. This may not apply to everyone, but if it does will you take action? Do you need God to help change your view of other believers into one of family? If so, ask him.
13. This applies to everyone. I want to ask for 100% cooperation.
14. Will you ask God, how many people in our community are not family, they don't know Jesus, that you want to add to the family at BFA?
15. Wait for a number. Let God give you a number. Don't be afraid if it is a big number.
16. And now will you ask God to use us to see that they become family through a new birth in Jesus Christ.
17. Lord, build in us the bonds of family.