

## *Two Are Better Than One*

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I remember years ago watching a documentary on PBS concerning cheetahs. The cheetah is the fastest animal in the world. They usually hunt in packs of two or more and therefore are exceptional predators. The cheetahs boldly walk up to a herd of antelope choosing a particular one to single out for the kill. The territory-holding male antelope will usually allow the cats to come within 50 yards before turning to run. Very seldom do cheetahs work alone, because, although they can run very fast for short distances, they tire quickly. Working together facilitates effective hunting and protection. Cheetahs that are by themselves are usually sick and are often killed by their own kind. These "loners" typically do not live very long.

God, in His infinite wisdom, determined in the beginning that plurality was better than singularity. The preacher wisely said in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, *"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."* In short, the benefits of good companionship far outweigh those benefits of being alone.

When God created the heaven and the earth, He created man alone, and then determined, *"it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him,"* Genesis 2:18. Adam searched the whole animal kingdom but found no suitable help meet, so God created woman from Adam's own side. She was, for man, the perfect helper. Because she was taken out of man, God determined that a man shall *"leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh,"* Genesis 2:24. From the very beginning, God said it is not good for man to be alone. God had in mind three purposes for marriage: companionship (Genesis 2:18), propagation of the race (Genesis 1:28), and the prevention of fornication (I Corinthians 7:2). God made known His intentions for the family within the pages of the Bible. We simply cannot leave God's pattern and expect happiness to result!

God has also left a pattern that we must follow in our worship of Him. We are not to be as hermits and separate ourselves from the brethren, but God commanded that we congregate together. You cannot effectively worship as God intended when you are at home alone. Together, we are able to build up, lift up, and hold up each other. There is strength in numbers when we stand in unity for the cause of Christ. This is why the command was given in Hebrews 10:24-25, *"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."* Being absent from the assembly, deprives us of the benefit of the exhortation and supportive arms of our brethren. The potential for a Christian to fall from the grace of God is plainly stated in I Corinthians 10:12, and the watchful eyes of loving brethren may be the only thing that prevents it from happening!

In studying the Bible, we quickly see that God has also left a pattern for the organization of the church. In this organization, He expects there to be a body of men to oversee the flock. Their purpose is to

watch over our souls and to exhort and convince the gainsayers, Titus 1:9. Titus was left in Crete that he might ordain elders (plural!) in every city, Titus 1:5. The purpose of having a plurality of elders is to prevent one man from taking advantage of his authority and lording it over the congregation. This organization allows each elder to hold the others in check. Paul, exhorting the Ephesian elders, first warned them to take heed unto themselves, Acts 20:28. One person is more apt to fall to temptations than two or more and would thus be at a great disadvantage when overseeing the flock.

One person, being alone, is weaker and more susceptible to dangers; but a plurality gives strength, stamina and durability. This is evident in the animal kingdom, the human race and especially in the church. Let us look to one another, for two are better than one!