Conversations on Community: Dr. Gilbert Bilezikian with Erin Feffer

Preview

Dr. Gilbert Bilezikian and Erin Feffer explore the nature of biblical community and God’s intention that all people live in unity and love as He does within the Trinity.
Key Concepts

Definition of Biblical Community
- The Church as community is not an option — it is mandated in Scripture.
- It is deeply rooted in the very being of God.
- God is the primary community, and He creates community.
- It is not a human device, and it’s not something that God wills, but something that is God Himself.
- Community is the aggregation of people, but biblical community is more: it’s the reflection of the oneness of God.
- There is something sacred attached to community, and we must receive from Scripture the guidelines that create community.

Scripture’s Guidelines for Community
- The most important guideline is finding common ground, which is our commitment to Jesus Christ, who not only came to save individuals, but also to bring individuals together as the Church.
- The Church is not incidental; it’s been what God has been doing from eternity to eternity.
- We must be careful in how we organize ourselves in our churches so it reflects authentic community.

The Oneness of God
- Jesus’ last desire was for His followers to be one as He is one with the Trinity.
- The same life that goes on in the Trinity should go on in the human community to reflect that oneness — a current of love that flows through the Trinity.
- There is no biblical community unless it has the same dynamic as the Trinity — people loving each other, supporting each other, giving to each other, sharing life together, and caring for each other.
- This type of oneness doesn’t just happen — it’s not natural.
- We must surrender our lives to God first, and then we are able to find each other and accept each other.
- It doesn’t happen in large groups like corporate worship; ideally it happens in small groups.
- This is what is done in Acts 2.

Obstacles to Community
- The influence of worldly values and practices is one obstacle to community.
- Another is cultural ideals that are individualistic and self-gratifying.
- Watch out that you don’t become conformed to non-community values.

The Role of the Individual in Community
- Every Christian should be a community builder.
- We are called to participate in, enhance, and expand community.
- This is exemplified in the cross.
Words of Wisdom to the Willow Creek Congregation

- God has performed miracles here since 1975.
- Recognize your privilege.
- Community should be the priority in Christian life.