

A Vision for Community I

The bible presents us with promises and challenges of building community.

A community is where people experience common unity.

In community we experience common values, orders and resources.

Communities are the seat of religious, political and economic activity.

I

Communities are places of opportunities and boundaries.

- The boundaries are how we order life together.

Eden is our first model of community space, environment and order.

^{NKJ} **Genesis 2:15** Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden **to tend and keep it.** ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden **you may freely eat;** ¹⁷ "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil **you shall not eat**, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

When we follow the permission boundaries, we live.

When we violate the prohibition boundaries, we die.

- Violation of God's standards brings chaos, destruction and death.

II

Communities are concentrated places of evil.

Communities are places of temptation. **Genesis 3:1-7**

^{NLT} **Genesis 3:1** The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "**Did God really say** you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?" ² "Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. ³ "It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'" ⁴ "You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. ⁵ "God

knows that **your eyes will be opened** as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil." ⁶ The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. **So she took some of the fruit and ate it.** Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. ⁷ At that moment **their eyes were opened**, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

NKJ **1 John 2:16** For all that *is* in the world -- **the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life** -- is not of the Father but is of the world.

- Temptation can begin with what we are **looking for**.

When we experience failure, we can feel guilt, shame and hiding.

Penitence bring the blessedness of grace, **righteousness** and **peace**.

- **Psalm 32** is Psalm of the joy of forgiveness

NLT **Psalm 32:1** Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, **whose sin is put out of sight!** ² Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! ³ When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. ⁴ Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. **Interlude** ⁵ Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the LORD." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone. **Interlude** ⁶ Therefore, **let all the godly pray** to you while there is still time, that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment. ⁷ For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory. **Interlude** ⁸ The LORD says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you." ⁹ Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control." ¹⁰ Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the LORD. ¹¹ So rejoice in the LORD and be glad, all you who obey him! Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!

The mind, emotion and body are not **designed** to carry **unsolved** guilt.

III

Consider **Matthew 4:1-11**

^{NKJ} **Matthew 4:1** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And when **He had fasted forty days and forty nights**, afterward He was hungry. ³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "**If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.**" ⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" ⁵ Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, "**If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In *their* hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.**" ⁷ Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'" ⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, "**All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.**" ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" ¹¹ Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

Jesus gives us the model to overcome temptation.

Temptation can come in the wilderness. **Vs 1-3**

- This temptation is abuse of power for selfishness.

Temptation can happen at the temple, a palace of worship. **Vs 5-6**

- Make a name for yourself.

Temptation can happen in the place of high achievement. **Vs 8-9**

- Gain all the power and wealth you can imagine
- Prestige at the expense of worship.

- Fame at the expense of a allegiance.

^{NKJ} **1 John 2:16** For all that *is* in the world -- **the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life** -- is not of the Father but is of the world.

^{NLT} **1 John 2:16** For the world offers only **a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions**. These are not from the Father, but are from this world.

- You can overcome *the community crave*.
- You can overcome the *dominate community lust*.
- *You must have the word inside you, "it is written."* **Vs 4, 7, 10**