

Banning Liebscher: How American Consumerism Opposes Biblical Community

Banning Liebscher, lead pastor of Jesus Culture Sacramento, says American consumerism—with its lack of intentionality—stands in direct opposition to biblical community. In a recent sermon, Liebscher explained this point as part of a larger teaching on the importance of seeing community not as a large, club-like crowd but as a web of intimate familial relationships.

“Sometimes you can come to church and there’s a sense of community because there’s a common connection,” Liebscher says. “Maybe you [love] Jesus or you all love the sermon so much that there’s a connection to that. And that’s important and that’s healthy. But we want to go from crowd to community to family. ... But here’s the rub—is that without realizing it, American consumer culture actually is opposed to biblical community. We don’t realize it, but American consumer culture—consumerism—actually is in opposition to building true biblical healthy community. Mainly because we’re looking for somebody to do it for us.”

To illustrate this point, Liebscher compares it to working out at the gym.

“They can’t work out for me—I’ve got to do that—but I’m looking for somebody to do as much of the other work as possible,” he says. “So I pay money so that I can show up to a place where somebody bought the weights, set them up, figured out what I need. I show up where somebody has put together the entire workout program for the day. They’ve put their time and energy into it. They’ve thought through it. They know what they’re doing. And they’ve also gathered a bunch of people so

we can do it together. I'm paying money, because I don't want to have to do that. I know I've got to do something, but I don't want to have to put the work into thinking through, like, *What do I actually have to do?* So I want to show up with very little effort mentally and go, 'What are we doing today?' They say, 'This is what we're doing.' I do it and I leave. So that's consumerism.

"That thing right there is opposed to biblical community, because community doesn't work like that. ... Community takes intentionality. I can't just show up and expect community to happen."

Watch the full clip posted by Jesus Culture's official YouTube channel [here](#).