



There's Strength in Community **by Catherine Gates**

*"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:
If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no
one to help them up. [...] Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." —Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, 12*

The challenge of finding community

Moving halfway across the country has a way of showing you just how much you need community. I've done it three times. And while I tend to meet people quickly, those moves made me keenly aware that deep, trusting relationships take time to form, and of how important those relationships are to me.

The same dynamic shows up in the workplace. While I was on the Workmatters team, I often met one-on-one with people to learn more about them and how I could support them. One recurring theme I heard from the women I met with was this:

"How do I find community with other Christian working women?"

Faith was often missing from business networking connections, and conversations in women's church groups often didn't include the realities of work. These women were longing for a safe, authentic community of peers who shared their values and ambitions. But finding that kind of community isn't always easy. It takes time to find people with similar values. It can feel intimidating to break into well-established circles. And fear—of rejection, of not belonging, of being misunderstood—can hold us back.

So is it worth the effort?

We need community

One of our most basic needs—right after air, water, and food—is relationship. Community is part of our design. It's also essential for growth.

In the workplace, progress depends on teams—groups of people with diverse skills and experiences. Even life's joys are richer when shared in community. And when hard seasons hit, the difference between **hopeless exhaustion** and **hopeful endurance** often comes down to who's walking with us.

Here's what community can offer:



- **Resources** to accomplish more than we could alone (Ecclesiastes 4:9–10).
- **Encouragement** when we want to give up (Hebrews 10:24–25).
- **Wisdom and perspective** to help us process and problem-solve (Proverbs 27:17).
- **Counsel** for navigating life's complexities (Proverbs 13:20).
- **Support** when we carry heavy burdens (Galatians 6:2).
- **Validation**—reminders that we are not alone in our experiences.

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” — Hebrews 10:24-25

Find Your Community

God created us to need Him **and** each other—in our personal lives and in our work. We are stronger when we support one another. We are less vulnerable when we don't have to walk alone.

So how do you overcome the real challenges that stand in the way of finding meaningful community?

- **Pray to clarify what you need.** You don't need a group of people who are just like you—but you do need women who share your values. For example, women in 4word Community Groups are diverse in background and profession, but they share two key traits: a deep commitment to their faith and a passion for their careers.

Ask God to show you what kind of connections you're truly longing for.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” — Philippians 4:6

- **Identify what you have to offer.** Community isn't a one-way street. It's about supporting, encouraging, and empowering one another. No matter your age, experience level, or job title, you have something to offer—wisdom, insight, skills, a listening ear.

“Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” — Galatians 6:2

- **Start small: Invite a couple of women to coffee or lunch.** 4word Community Groups are great places to meet like-minded women, but deeper relationships are built in smaller, personal settings. Invite one or two women you meet to coffee, lunch, or a walk—and see where the relationship goes. The investment of time and vulnerability will lead to more meaningful connections.



“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” — Matthew 18:19-20

- **Serve with a team.** One of the most effective ways to form deeper relationships is through shared service. Consider joining the volunteer team at your 4word Community Group or another organization you care about. You’ll build friendships while working toward something that matters.

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” — 1 Peter 4:10

Discussion Questions

1. What benefits have you gained from communities you’ve been a part of?
2. In what ways could building community at work make a meaningful impact?
3. What challenges do you currently face when trying to find or connect with others in community?
4. What steps can you take to build or become part of a community at work?
5. Who is God leading you to invite into community with you?



Catherine Gates is 4word Vice President Programs and Partnership. She is a speaker, writer, and leader in the faith and work movement. Catherine is passionate about helping women achieve more of their God-given potential with confidence by integrating faith into every area of life. Her diverse and circuitous career journey ranges from software consulting to project management, from marketing and sales and leadership training, to nonprofit leadership. She has been helping people integrate their faith and work since 2013.

Catherine is the author of *The Confidence Cornerstone: A Woman’s Guide to Fearless Leadership*. She has contributed to several faith-and-work Bible studies, numerous YouVersion reading plans, and books from other authors including the iWork4Him and sheWorks4Him publications. Catherine is on the steering committee for the National Faith & Work Association (NFWA.org) and holds a bachelor’s degree in Christian Leadership.

4word is a global community of Christian women in the workplace. Our mission is to help women in the workplace reach their God-given potential with confidence.

Why 4word?

At 4word, we know you want to reach your God-given potential so you can have a Kingdom impact on your workplace and the world. To do that, you need resources for



professional and spiritual growth - and a community of like-minded women to cheer you on!

The problem is your time is limited and meaningful connections are hard to find. This can leave you feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, and isolated on your life's journey.

We believe you shouldn't have to navigate work, life and faith on your own because God designed you for community. You are worthy to be surrounded by loving and supportive women who "get you."

We understand you face unique challenges as a Christian woman in the workplace, which is why we create easy-access opportunities for leadership development, spiritual growth, and connections to influential women around the globe.

Our Simple Empowerment Plan:

- Connect to a community: We offer virtual and in-person Community Groups specifically designed for working women – and we also have special groups for executive women.
- Access relevant content: 4word's podcast, blog, and our Community Group Discussion Guides are specifically geared to women in the workplace to help thrive on your journey.
- Get matched with a mentor: From our pool of over 220 amazing mentors we connect you with the right fit for a transformational mentoring experience through 4word's Mentor Program.
- Join a 4word Collaboratory: Accelerate your leadership growth through a **safe, guided program** where women like you - ambitious, faith-driven, and called - come together to grow as leaders and tackle real-world workplace challenges through the lens of Scripture and collaboration.