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LONELINESS

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This sermon was preached May 17, 1987, at the Bryan Station Baptist Church. Four years later, the Lord took my wife who was very precious to me. The truths taught in this message are now multiplied many times in my own life. Please take heed to the things that are taught.

Genesis 2:18, "And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." Verse 21, "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man."

I want to focus our attention upon the subject that I believe the Lord is telling us in verse 18, "it is not good that man should be alone." I will be preaching on a subject I have never preached on before in my life. The subject is **loneliness**. "Loneliness." One of your enemies is being lonely. Let us think about this today. The Bible says, "it is not good that man should be alone."

I believe this is why the Lord established His church. Jesus Christ, the son of God, became a man and lived as a man. There will be no loneliness for Him in heaven--he will enjoy His bride, His wife throughout all eternity.

We do not think about this subject very much. "Loneliness" is very much a part of every one of our lives. Lonely, being lonely. It is a

great enemy of the human heart. The Bible says, 'Adam, it is not good for you to be alone.' I'm glad God established marriage, that He made a woman, that men are to take a wife, and they are to dwell together as heirs of the grace of life.

When you are lonely, it is one of the most pathetic of human experiences. You can be in a crowd, and still be lonely. Sometimes loneliness comes early in our lives. Young people, children who have had to deal with the divorce or separation of their parents, find themselves feeling lonely. Can you understand that? Is there any way of understanding the feelings of a young child when his whole life is messed up and he feels alone? They are alone. Oh, somebody takes care of them, but it is not like it was.

Sometimes in our later life it comes through some experience that we have, some heartbreaking experience, maybe the loss of our loved one, and we find ourselves alone. We might be with our family, our friends, and yet we find that we are all by ourselves and no one understands. **Nobody understands**. We can be comforted by others, but still nobody really understands. A person may have all the necessities of this life, live in seemingly perfect circumstances and yet loneliness is a very real part of their lives. As an illustration: Adam was created and put in the Garden of Eden, had everything his heart could desire and God said he lacked one thing. He would be lonely, and it is not good for man to be alone. Therefore all the blessings of Eden could not satisfy Adam completely because he would get lonely there all by himself.

Did you know that heaven would be lonely if it were not for Jesus Christ? Yes, you could march up and down the streets of gold, but if it were not for Jesus Christ and His people, your friends, all the people of God who will be there one day, heaven would be a lonely place.

God created Jesus, the son of God, who became a man; and because He is a man, I believe God created Him a wife. One of the things that is very real--that the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven will never get lonely because He will always be with His wife. Every man, every woman who is married is only a figure and type of what our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His bride will be in heaven--that companionship, that closeness, that special love. God the father is satisfied through all eternity--He does not get lonely; but He became a man. For this reason, God provides Him a helpmeet. Ephesians 5:25-32, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man every yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Why do we get lonely? Everyone of you need to look into your heart today. I do not believe there is anyone who can say that they do not get lonely at times. Why? Because each and every one of us is a distinct creation of God. We are not alike, we are different. We need to realize that. We are not like someone who is run off of an assembly line. Every last one of us has feelings in our heart--things that we miss, things that we enjoy. We are different. Every person battles with temptations, doubts, fears, things that we must face. So there is a situation that exists in the innermost part of a person that no one can understand but you and the Lord. Your wife, or your husband, does not understand all about you. My wife, Doris says, "I know you like a book." She does not know me like a book; she does not know some things that are all the way down deep in there. And you do not know your wife; there are things down in there you do not know anything about.

Proverbs 14:10, *"The heart knoweth his own bitterness."* There are things in my life that become bitter to me and I get lonely. When you are by yourself, do you sometimes think about things and just burst out in tears?

But God knows. In Genesis 2, the Lord God said, "I know that man is alone, I know what he needs--a wife, I know he needs help, a help meet. Man and wife are to dwell together, they are to work together, they are to be companions to each other, they are to love each other, they are to encourage one another, they are to keep one another from being alone. Problems can begin when jobs, or something else, begin to separate man and wife for periods of time. There needs to be that fellowship. When you fail to have that, you get lonely. You might live together, you might sleep in the same bed, and still you are lonely. Loneliness is very real to many people and companionship is very important. How many people just live together...they are still lonely.

In the world we are living in,

people are living like a bunch of animals. They don't have companionship. If they no longer desire to be married, they divorce. Over 50 percent of marriages end in divorce. God never intended that. People move from one mate to another; live with first one person, then another. It is just a matter of time until these people will find themselves all alone. No one to love, and no one to be loved by. God never intended for it to be that way. God said that the man and his wife be joined together and that you would never be alone.

Let me say again that worldly goods and worldly things cannot satisfy loneliness. You can have much of this world's goods but with no one to enjoy them with, life gets very lonely. Ask Missionary Dempsey Henderson how he felt upon the death of his wife and his return to the mission field. He had a home, he had everything that he had before, except his beloved wife. He went back to the mission field all by himself. He was lonely.

How many people want to do things all by themselves? You might decide you want to go fishing. "Brother, how about going with me?" You know why? We do not like to go by ourselves. You might decide to invite someone over for dinner. Why? We do not like to be by ourselves. When a spouse dies, the wife or husband left says that they have no desire to cook anymore--they don't want to eat by themselves. Loneliness.

People want companionship, they want to be friends. People have an inward desire not to be lonely--that is built within us. Some people have a home, a good retirement with no real problems, and yet they would give it all just for that special person. Wouldn't you? How many of you who have lost your loved ones, would give everything you own if you could just be with that person who you loved? Yet, the others of us live with them day after day and don't appreciate them--that special person God has given to you. Only love, care, and people who care can cure loneliness. That is how God intended it.

Let us look at some ways that

people become lonely. First of all, loneliness can be very real when we lose a loved one. A wife can lose a husband or a husband can lose his wife, or you can lose your mom or your dad, or maybe one of your children. There is a loneliness that accompanies that loss which doesn't cease after two or three months. I have some names written down here. I'm not going to call them out, but we have people who have lost their husbands, or wives many years ago. I'm sure they became very lonely and are still lonely. You know something, I think God's children ought to give this some consideration and realize that some of these people are still very lonely. We need to care. Yes, we send them flowers, and go to see them once or twice in the first week or so. Then we forget all about them; but, that is not the end of their loneliness. I think the God of all comfort would have His people to realize that a person who has lost a loved one is lonely, and you can be a great help. You can't fill the place of that person, there is no way you can do that; but you can help from their feeling so lonely. Just show them that you care, that you are concerned. They are lonely, they live in a world all by themselves.

Another way a person is lonely, and I have experienced this, is when your children leave home. That might not seem very much to some of you, but I tell you what, I had two daughters who got married within six months time. We would get together and have a good time after their marriage, but when I would go to my study, sit there and think about them and that they were not there anymore, and I would just cry. If I had only known then what I know now--I now have not only daughters, but sons-in law, grandchildren, and three dogs!

Sometimes our children move away. This is why parents visit their children. They are a part of our lives, they fill an emptiness.

I still have a daughter who is lost. I go about my business sometimes and not think too much about that; but then I'll stop, look at her picture, and I get lonely again.

I'm sure people who have lost their loved ones can go back, look at those memories of things that they did before and they begin to get lonely.

You can be in the biggest crowd and still be lonely, still feel all by yourself. A student at your school can be surrounded by others and yet be in a little world all by themselves. That is why it is so important for young people to look at others who don't have friends and be friendly. Don't let them be lonely. How cruel we are sometimes.

You can be a member of this church, come every service, and be lonely. Do you ever recognize that? Some of our members do. I do not know their hearts, but I am sure they are lonely. I Corinthians 12:26, *"And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it."* I believe God's people should try to be a blessing to others.

Loneliness...it's a terrible thing to be lonely. People need to stop and think when they begin talking of divorce, of separation. I know what I am talking about when I tell of children being separated from their parents. I love my mother, but we were not always together. I can remember as a boy lying in bed and crying because I did not have a father or mother. Oh, I had parents, but I was not raised by them. It got very lonely without them. My God saved my mother in later years, my father died lost. Husbands and wives, when you start arguing and fussing among yourselves, you need to stop and thank God for your spouse, for your children. You need to make every effort to stay together, for the Lord's sake. Children, you need to show your parents that you love them and appreciate them. It can be very lonely without them.

We hear of people committing suicide. These people must feel that they are all by themselves, that nobody cares. Go to people, be their friend. If only we can see our responsibility in this. If only we could see how God could use us to be a blessing to others. The Bible tells us that "if you have done it unto my little ones, you have done it unto me."

We are all wrapped up in our

sealed houses, in our businesses, in our own little world, and we don't stop to think of others. Our God does everything that He does for others, not for Himself. God says do it for others, get involved with others. Realize that others have problems, others have fears, others have doubts, others are lonely.

There is also the loneliness of having a very serious disease. Most of us have good health. We have our aches and pains; but over all, we are in good health. Suppose a doctor was to tell you, you just have six months to live. Most of the time people begin to withdraw and live in a little world all to themselves. We have several members in our church who are seriously ill. I'm sure they feel very lonely at times. Take an interest in these people, tell them that you care, that you love them in the Lord.

Our saved children can sometimes feel lonely. We are living in a world that is a big mess. If they try to live a Christian life, they just do not have too many friends. There are not too many people they can associate with and be a friend to. When they live for Jesus Christ, the others begin to shun them, turn away, call them silly or stupid just because they want to live their life for Christ. There is always that pressure to conform to worldly ways just to satisfy their loneliness, to gain friends. I had a young man tell his dad just this week, "You know, dad, I just do not have any friends. I do not have anyone I can be friends with because everyone wants to live their lives ungodly." Our young people, saved by the grace of God, get awfully lonely. You know who ought to satisfy that loneliness? Those of you who are saved. Don't get in a little group and leave the others out, try to be a blessing to them. Try to fill that loneliness. You need to do that.

How many of you like to have friends? How many of you enjoy someone coming to you and wanting to be a friend to you? Just to be a friend, just someone to come and show a little concern. I don't think that there is anyone who does not like that. You can say you don't, but

you do--people want to be loved. You can do it. You can be a friend to those who are lonely. You can show people who are bereaved of their loved one that you care. Not just for a little while, but keep on caring. Time spent on others is worth much more than \$25 spent on flowers. To spend some time is not just giving of your substance, it is giving of yourself. We need to have a fellowship and a closeness that this world knows nothing about. This will go a long way in building a strong church. Get your mind off of yourself and get it on others.

My friend, you get lonely. I get lonely. As a pastor, I get lonely. Yes, I can get advice and counsel from some of the men and I can talk to my wife, but they never know what is deep in the heart. The decisions I must make which have to do with me and my Lord, and how God would use what I do in order to benefit His work, can make me feel lonely.

Others only know a part of us. There is a part that nothing in this world can satisfy, including the people, because God has placed eternity in our hearts and only God, only Jesus Christ, only the good news of the gospel, only the word of God can satisfy that. The innermost part of our lives is where we can find a "peace that passes all understanding." Hebrews 13:5, *"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."* I have heard one lady say, "I'm alone most of the time, but I'm never lonely, because the Lord is always with me."

Let us look at the life of Joseph. Genesis 39:21, *"But the Lord was with Joseph."* We can look at the Moses in Exodus 33:14, *"my presence shall go with thee,"* and Moses said in verse 15, *"If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."* David said in the Psalm 23, *"He leadeth me."* Enoch walked with God. Jacob and Israel in Isaiah 43:2 said, *"I will be with you."* Did not Jesus say in Matthew 28:20, *"Lo, I am with you, always"?*

One day, the lost will find hell a very lonely place. When we stand before God to be judged, it will be just us and God. There will be no-

body to help. I've heard people say they wanted to go to hell to be with their friends. There will be no one who cares in hell. There will be nothing but suffering. The lost will be lonely because they will be all by themselves. There will be millions there, weeping and gnashing their teeth. It will be very lonely in such a big crowd.

In heaven, the Savior will be there, so there will be no loneliness. He is the one who cared for us before the world was, cared for us when He died and keeps on caring for us...He keeps on loving us. He loves us throughout all eternity. Not only that, but we will have all the multitudes of friends. Everyone in heaven will be our friend. We will all love one another. There will be no pain, no separation, no hatred, no loneliness. All will be perfect. Isn't that wonderful? Never to be lonely again. That is something to look forward to, isn't it?

Jesus Christ suffered the loneliness that no man could ever possibly suffer. He came into this world, born in a manger with a mother and a father; but, my friend, when He died on the cross of Calvary, all of His disciples fled and forsook Him. If that wasn't enough, when He was dying on the cross, He said in Matthew 27:6, "*My God, my God, why*

hast thou forsaken me?" He was all by himself. He bare the wrath of God all alone. The salvation that God provided for us is the result of Jesus Christ being forsaken and all alone. But He will never be alone again. He has entered into the presence of God and His is saving people. Revelation 22 says, "*The Lord will dwell with His people.*" Never to be lonely again!

If you have someone who loves you, cling to them. Thank God for your friends. Don't be bitter and have hatred in your heart. Be careful what you say. Handle them as a friend. It takes a long time to make a friend, but you can lose them in a moment's time. May God help us to try to be a friend to those who are lonely.

Look for those persons in our church who are lonely, who are all by themselves. Some people are quiet, some people outwardly just bubble over, but some people sit there and are very lonely. Make that extra effort. Sometimes one of our members will write me a letter and say that they appreciate me as their pastor. You could give me \$1000 and it would not mean as much as that.

In I Samuel 30, David got very lonely. He went one day to the city that had been given to him. It had

been burned with fire. His wives and children had all been taken. The men wanted to stone him. Verse 6 tells us, "*But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.*"

Are you lonely? Are you lost? Are you going into an eternal hell? There is a friend who will not only save you from the wrath to come but will be a friend to you for the rest of your life. He stays with you. He comforts you. You will never be lonely again.

You must repent and receive Jesus Christ. He will take His abode in your heart and in your soul. He will bare witness to the truth. He will create within you love, joy, peace, longsuffering. Trust Him.

The Lord's New Testament church is the place where a person who is saved can come and not be lonely. You will not be by yourself. You can share in the blessings and work of the Lord with others. Be with people who will be together throughout all eternity.

