

## It Is Not Good

Socrates said, "There is no possession more valuable than a good and faithful friend."

Francis Bacon said, "Friendship doubles joys and halves griefs. . . ."

Mark Twain said, "To get the full value out of joy, you must have someone to divide it with. . . ."

God says, **9. Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. 10. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up.**

**11. Again, if two lie together, they are warm; but how can one be warm alone?**

**12. And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.** (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 [RSV])

We are going to start this morning with a message that is radical and counter-cultural. It is the exact opposite of what many practice in life. But it is the only treatment for loneliness. You will be able to overcome fatigue, fear, failure, and frustration. The solution to these problems is the concept of community. God never desired for man to be alone. This is pointed out poignantly in the *Book of Genesis*, but it also is brought out in many passages of Scripture, including several in the New Testament.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 12:4-5 [RSV], saying, **4. For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, 5. so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.** We need each other!

"But we love our independence," some might say. Our nation, as well as many others, was founded upon the Declaration of Independence. And so we really do love to be independent. That is why you hear people say, "I've got to be me." "I did it my way." "I don't need anybody to tell me what to do." And what is ironic about these statements is that while they are saying these things, they are in actuality following the crowd!

We have been taught that happiness is the result of independence, and that if I can only become financially independent, relationally independent and independent in every way, then I will be the happiest. But in spite of this, we still have more unhappy people, and suicide cases continue to go up. Why? Because the truth is, happiness does not come from being independent, isolated,

living your life with all the barriers up and all the masks and keeping people at an arm's distance. That is not the way to be happy. Happiness comes from interdependence and from community. Happiness comes from having a proper relationship with the Lord.

In the beginning God created everything: Light, galaxies, stars, sun, moon, planets, Earth, land, water, clouds, sky, trees, mountains, rivers, birds, fish, plants, animals . . . there was nothing, and then suddenly there was everything! What did God say after each creative act? He said, ***"It was very good."***

After God made the universe during the creation week which ultimately ended with the formation of man whereby God Himself breathed the breath of life into him, although everything was deemed perfect, all still was not good. As God lovingly looked upon that which was the pinnacle of His creation, He said tenderly, ***"It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him"*** (Genesis 2:18 [RSV]).

In Genesis 1, the climax and crown is the creation of people in God's image. Genesis 2 concentrates on people and gives us a more detailed picture. Genesis 1 is like looking at the whole of creation through a telescope. Genesis 2 looks at people through a microscope.

After stating, ***"It is not good that the man should be alone,"*** God then began a training session with Adam to let Adam learn that he needed a helper. God made us to have personal relationships, and he wanted Adam to learn this. This is clearly seen in the passage, ***"It is not good that the man should be alone."*** This is the first thing in creation to be called ***"not good"*** – everything else was perfect. When God sees something that is not good, He does not ignore it or turn away from it. Our God takes action. Genesis 2:19-20 [RSV] says, ***19. So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him.***

As God brought the animals He had created and presented them to Adam, Adam was learning. God was preparing Adam to have a gnawing hunger for an appropriate life partner. The very first lesson ever taught by God to humankind was that of ***"It is not good that the man should be alone."*** Adam looked at the animals he realized they could not talk and discuss things with him, and he could not confide in them. They could not meet his psychological, physical, spiritual or emotional needs. There is no kinship between men and animals. If Darwinism was true, Adam may have found company with apes – but he did not. Adam saw the animals being brought to him two by two, and he saw that ***"there was not found a helper fit for him"*** among all of God's creation. God already knew that

it was ***“not good that the man should be alone,”*** and now his beloved Adam knew it as well, too. Adam keenly felt his aloneness, his lack of personal companionship with a suitable helper, and his heart was filled with great longing and desire for someone to share his life with him. The lesson had been learned. And now that Adam had arrived at the point whereby he knew that all is ***“not good”*** in this beautiful and perfect world God has given him, the Lord takes action.

***21. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; 22. and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.*** (Genesis 2:21-22 [RSV])

God created Adam with an innate need for personal friendship and a close relationship, and this has passed down to all of his descendants. Adam needed someone to be a complement to him. He needed a friend, a helper, just as there is companionship found in the Godhead with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Once again, this shows us another aspect as to how we are made in the image of God.

There is a breakdown in marriage that exists in modern society today. What is ironic is that in our days of instant communications, email, Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter, there is also a breakdown of close ties leading to isolation and loneliness caused by our modern life. It has become a “me world,” which has all but abandoned family ties. Community is seen as being of no consequence.

Isolation can be very harmful, even dangerous. Isolation is caused by many things, such as a lack of social skills, rejection, etc. Isolation leads to an unbalanced personality, and has led to the development of people such as the Unabomber, Ted Kaczynski.

Some people are workaholics and have only fleeting friendships. Interpersonal relationships are normal and healthy. Some need to work at being friendly and belonging, especially in the body of Christ. We need to work at this and make an effort to talk to people. That is why it is so encouraging that the elders and leadership here at Lake Land have encouraged the men and the youth of our congregation to engage in song leading, helping out serving at the Lord’s Supper, and conducting devotionals. All these things will help us to become better personal evangelists and bring more lost souls to the Lord.

It is rare that one finds spiritual wisdom and godly truths in a rock song, but such is the case with a little ditty from 1965 called *Game of Love* by Wayne Fontana and the Mindbenders. In this tune are found these words:

*The purpose of a man is to love a woman,  
And the purpose of a woman is to love a man.*

*It started long ago back in the Garden of Eden  
When Adam said to Eve, "Baby, you're for me!"*

As this song so rightfully declares, God made us to be men and women. He made men to desire women, and He made women to desire men. Adam soon discovered that animals were not a substitute for a wife. God also did not provide another man to be Adam's helpmeet. What God has reserved in union of marriage between a man and a woman is not to be abused by men with men, men with animals, or women with women. Woman was made for man. Men are to desire women, and vice versa. As the words to the song rightfully say, "*The purpose of a man is to love a woman, and the purpose of a woman is to love a man.*" Even more than this, the purpose of both men and women is to "***Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man,***" (Ecclesiastes 12:13 [RSV]).

The answer to man's loneliness was provided by God, and it was one woman. Adam had no one to love, to talk to, or embrace, none to help, or give himself to, no one to comfort and no one to produce others like himself. But God provided. If we are in a married relationship we should be thankful for His provision.

As Adam named the animals, God was teaching Adam leadership and preparing Adam for a great gift of companionship for him, which was woman, Eve. Adam soon discovered that he needed a wife to complement or complete him. As Adam saw the animals coming up to him two by two, he saw he had no similar counterpart. Adam acutely felt his loneliness, his aloneness, and God was ready to do what was necessary to alleviate that loneliness. He made Adam a helper.

**"Helper"** means to supply that which an individual cannot provide for himself, aiding someone in need, not being a junior assistant. In the *Book of Psalms* the Lord is described as our helper, the same word as is used in Genesis with Eve. The woman came to Adam in his need. It is an honor to be someone's help. God wanted Eve to help Adam in his journey of life.

**"Fit"** or **"suitable"** means to complement and correspond. She is to be equal to and be adequate for the man. God created a partner corresponding to Adam. The difference is not one of worth, ability or intelligence but of role. A complementary role in life is like that which is found in a jigsaw: the pieces lock together to form a harmonious whole.

What is most like half a moon? Not half an orange or half a carrot but half a moon. What matches a man? That is a woman. She matches him in dignity and worth. Companionship is the basic need which woman will fulfill in the life of a man. She is also a suitable mate – procreation is an important part, but she was primarily made to be a suitable companion. The Roman Catholic view of

marriage is that it is primarily for procreation. This passage from the *Book of Genesis* denies this. The primary purpose of marriage is that of companionship.

Chapter 2 of Genesis is also an accurate account of how the woman was made – it expands on chapter one. Although the Bible is not a science book, its science, nonetheless, is always accurate and true. Man **had** to come first – he has both the X chromosome and the Y chromosome in his genes and DNA. The Y chromosome, the male chromosome, is the dominant gene. Only a male could reproduce male and female. If God had created woman first, then only another woman could have been made. God took Eve from Adam's side, and she was a beautiful woman in all her glory. God was the Father of the bride, and there was no courtship or dating. It was an arranged marriage, and love at first sight.

We see the Lord God in Genesis 2 as the first matchmaker in history. God was also the first anesthesiologist. He put Adam in a deep sleep before performing this rib surgery. When Adam awoke, God presented him with a great gift. Adam could see he was like her, but she also differed from him. He had an immediate reaction. It is not unreasonable to conclude that Adam offered the first love poem in history at the initial moment he laid his eyes upon her. ***“This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man”*** (Genesis 2:23 [RSV]). In Hebrew *‘ish’* means man and *‘ishshah’* means woman, but *‘ishshah’* also means soft and cuddly. It was love at first sight. You might think you could make a more beautiful poem, but this is amazing for the spur of the moment. It is interesting to note that from the first, even before Valentine's Day was invented, love expresses itself in poetry. Adam accepted God's gift.

In a companion passage to the Genesis verses read previously, the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:3-12 [RSV], saying,

***3. But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. 4. Any man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, 5. but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled dishonors her head – it is the same as if her head were shaven. 6. For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her wear a veil. 7. For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. 8. (For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. 9. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.) 10. That is why a woman ought to have a veil on her head, because of the angels. 11. (Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; 12. for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God.)***

Marriage is God's chief answer to human loneliness, but it is not the only answer.

He also created families to stem off loneliness, and godly families begin with godly marriages. We can put off marriage until much later in life and miss out on marriage if we are not careful. Men and women can be so picky or fussy that they do not choose a partner. Everyone spends some years being single, and some are called to remain single. When we are single it can be caused by the death of a loved one. We all need companionship. The body of Christ is a family that in many ways transcends our earthly family. To be single is not to deny your natural feminine or masculine qualities. We should be thankful for our friendships and family. We, like God, should care for those who are single or lonely through no fault of their own.

It is not good for man to be alone. So God found the perfect helper. He made the perfect helper. He made her in His image and in His likeness He created them both to be together. To walk in His ways and to enjoy the shade of His trees, He placed them in His garden, they who were the crown of His creation. In true fear, love, and trust they lived in Eden, blessed by God. They were not alone, they had each other, and they had direct communion with the Lord. It was not good for man to be alone. So the two of them He made one flesh as husband and wife, and God dwelt with them.

Yes, God dwelt with them . . . until darkness descended upon Eden and the man and woman hid themselves. With fig leaves and trees and brush they built for themselves a hiding place. If only they could be alone, then the Lord would not see their nakedness, their shame, their sin. And with that bite of fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, every man works to hide himself, for only if he dwells in Adam's darkness will his sin be kept secret from God . . . only in the darkness, or so he thinks . . . there, alone, he is safe . . . or so he believes. Running from God, running into the darkness, running into the belly of the beast, as did Jonah, man once again finds himself alone in his sin, in his own destruction . . . on death's door, and bound for Hell.

It is not good for man to be alone. The darkness was broken and the silence was destroyed. In the cool of the day God walked up to their hiding place. He would not let them be alone. He would not let them drown in their sin.

Once again, God intervenes when He sees that things are not right. Even while they were being banished from the Garden of Eden and the tree of life, God holds out hope for lost mankind. Left to his own devices, man would quickly destroy himself. But for the grace of God, long ago man would have been removed from the face of the Earth because of his sin. Yet mankind has been preserved, awaiting the salvation promised on that day long ago in the Garden of Eden, when God Himself uttered the very first prophecy, the very first Messianic prophecy, when He said to the serpent in Genesis 3:15 [RSV], ***"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."***