

# lesson four

APRIL 20–26

## When **Alone**

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*“And the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him’ ”*  
*(Gen. 2:18, NKJV).*



Marriage was given to counter loneliness. It is a representation of the relationship God wants to be have with us.

## Introduction

# *Hope in the Midst of Loneliness*

Ps. 72:12;  
John 16:32

Imagine that your friend invited you to an afternoon gathering at your friend's house. You were made aware that you will know no one else but that one friend at this gathering. Despite that, you attend the event. When you arrive, you spot your friend mingling with other guests. Your friend then turns to you and promises to spend time with you in five minutes. Five minutes turn into ten. Ten minutes turn into an hour. After a couple of hours, the event ends.

### **Pursuing human connection is a risk—but one worth taking.**

Whether you are an introvert, extrovert, or somewhere in between, you will most likely feel some level of loneliness if placed in this scenario. Throughout the afternoon, you probably sat at a table alone, made some small talk with strangers, or left early due to the lack of interaction with others at an event where mingling and connecting is, innately, the main “attraction.” You may begin to question whether your friend cares about you or why the friend bothered to invite you. You likely would feel the sting of rejection and/or abandonment.

This scenario shows only one of the many ways a person may experience loneliness and the variety of emotions that go along with it. Other examples of when someone may experience loneliness include after a divorce or the loss of a loved one, during long periods of singleness, and after moving to a new location. But, there is good news! Regardless of the reason you may be experiencing loneliness, God promises He will help us through it. In Psalm 72:12, He promises to “deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help” (NIV). The truth is, we are never alone; Christ is always with us (Matt. 28:20) just as God the Father was always with His Son (John 16:32).

Along with the companionship we have with our Savior, God also values when we allow ourselves to connect with other human beings. He created us with a desire for human companionship (Gen. 2:20). Sometimes the loneliness we feel is due to the act of cutting ourselves off from the rest of the world. We may not want to interact with others because we have been hurt by those we attempted to connect with in the past. Pursuing human connection is a risk—but one worth taking. In this week's lesson, we will delve deeper into the topics of companionship and loneliness.

Isa. 56:3-7;  
Matt. 19:12

## Evidence

# *A Name Better Than of Sons and Daughters*

Some cultures place little value on having children. Perhaps it is because of commercialism's drive, materialistic values, or postmodern ideas on social structure. On the other hand, other cultures have a heightened value in having children. Self-esteem, self-worth, and self-identity are entirely contingent upon bearing offspring.

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### There are eunuchs among us today.

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When Isaiah 56:3 speaks about eunuchs saying, "Behold, I am a dry tree," it is evoking the grief, heartache, and pain associated with the inability to have children. Just as a dry tree cannot produce more trees, the eunuch cannot produce children. Personal questions on existence, purpose, identity, and destiny naturally arise. Jesus outlines three types of eunuchs: "There are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb; and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake" (Matt. 19:12). In other words, some are childless by nature, some by external causality, and some by personal choice.

Eunuchs are denied this particular and special relationship: biological children. Just as eunuchs are unable, many others are similarly unable to have particular relationships. Whether it be by nature, by external causality, or by personal choice, there are eunuchs among us today who are single, widowed (no spouse by external causality), orphaned, refugees (no state), or alone for other reasons.

God promises that if these eunuchs "keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant" (Isa. 56:4), they have a place in His house and "a name better than of sons and of daughters . . . , an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off" (Isa. 56:5). Furthermore, the passage describes other children from other lands, other folds, and other families coming to join the Lord in prayer and worship (Isa. 56:6, 7).

What Isaiah is describing here is that though the circumstances of nature, chance, or choice have resulted in persons being alone, God offers mourners a special opportunity to be part of the covenant promise, to spread the gospel, and to be part of God's family that transcends genetic lines. Rather than having only biological children and the "name of sons and of daughters," the Lord promises a better name, an abundance of spiritual children, disciples from all lands, a climactic spiritual experience in God's own house, and the end of loneliness and isolation as a dry tree.

## Logos Connection Through Him

Gen. 2:18;  
Eccles. 4:9–12;  
Matt. 6:33; 19:1–10;  
John 11:35; 16:32, 33;  
Gal. 1:10;  
Phil. 4:11–13;  
James 5:16

### **Companionship (Eccles. 4:9–12; John 16:32, 33; Phil. 4:11–13)**

True companionship entails fellowship and friendship. There are times in this Christian life that we may feel like there are not many like-minded people who truly understand. We might even feel like we are still not quite sure about fully committing to Christ, so we would rather keep our distance from other Christians so that we don't mess anybody else up. Yet others of us might have the mind-set that it is better to be alone and handle life on our own.

### **Men and women should seek a spouse who is seeking the kingdom of God first.**

However, when we are alone, it is easy to be discouraged and confused and to stay down when we fall. Ecclesiastes 4 tells us it is better for there to be two people rather than one. When the right two people are together, healthy encouragement, help, and prayer are available! Proverbs 27:17 states, "Iron sharpens iron" (NKJV). There will be times in life when nobody is able to be there. In His great love, Jesus sent us the gift of the Holy Spirit as our Comforter so that we will never be alone (John 16:32)!

### **The Unmarried Life (Matt. 6:33; Gal. 1:10; James 5:16)**

It can be hard and lonely when we are trying to follow God while looking for a spouse. It is very easy to search for the values the world offers in a partner instead of the biblical values the Word counsels us to seek. Men ought to look for a woman who displays the values described in Proverbs 31. Women should look for a man who knows true biblical love instead of sinful and selfish love; a man who does not look to please people rather than God, tells the truth, and will pray with his wife. Men and women should seek a spouse who is seeking the kingdom of God first.

### **When a Marriage Ends (Matt. 19:1–10)**

Divorce is a tough subject. It was never God's intention for the marriage relationship. Sin brought the first rift in the unity of marriage, and since then, humans have sometimes chosen the separation of what God made to become one flesh. Because it is a sensitive subject, there are many different opinions and scenarios of divorce. We can only go by what

the Bible says. The Bible says the only lawful reason for divorce is sexual immorality (Matt. 19:9, NIV). I know this might not make sense compared to what we believe in today and there are many scenarios where this logic is questioned, but we must trust God's wisdom that there is a reason why Jesus said this. We may not understand, but we must trust in His love and intentionality.

### ***Death and Loneliness (Gen. 2:18; 37:34; John 11:35)***

When Adam was created, God said it was not good for man to be alone. As a result, He put Adam to sleep and, from his rib, formed Eve (Gen. 2:18, 21). It is worth noting that while Adam was so close to the Godhead, God still said it was not good for man to be alone. Adam was feeling the emotions God put in him. As living beings made with emotions, we also feel the pains of death. Because of sin, death is a part of life. When Jesus was on earth, even He felt the death of His cousin John the Baptist and His friend Lazarus (John 11:35). Death hurts, but the good news is that we can look to the second coming of Jesus for a grand reunion! Paul reminds us of this hope in 1 Thessalonians 4, writing of when the dead in Christ will rise from their sleep and we all will be able to go back to heaven with Him!

### ***Spiritually Single (Gen. 2:18; Matt. 6:33)***

It is possible to successfully grow in our spiritual walk while single. The first priority should always be to get closer to God and seek Him first, to learn more about His character and His love for us. Yet, even though Adam was whole in His relationship with God, he still felt a need for human companionship. Genesis 2 shows us that God made Eve for Adam because He knew it was not good for man to be alone (verse 18). While marriage is the ultimate human relationship, it is not the only type of human companionship. As we seek a relationship with God, we may not immediately, or ever, have the marriage relationship (because of the sinful world we live in), but we can be sure that God knows our needs—just as He knew Adam's need.

## Testimony *Another Study of Marriage*

Gen. 2:18

“Instituted by God, marriage is a sacred ordinance and should never be entered upon in a spirit of selfishness. Those who contemplate this step should solemnly and prayerfully consider its importance and seek divine counsel that they may know whether they are pursuing a course in harmony with the will of God. The instruction given in God’s Word on this point should be carefully considered. Heaven looks with pleasure upon a marriage formed with an earnest desire to conform to the directions given in the Scripture.”<sup>1</sup> Companionship, even marriage, is very important, for it sometimes helps people overcome external and internal challenges that one person cannot overcome alone.

### Many single people rush into relationships they are unprepared for.

With the many benefits that marriage has that make people want to get married, it also has its challenges. These challenges are amplified when people rush to get married when not prepared for it at all. Many single people rush into relationships they are unprepared for. “A youth not out of his teens is a poor judge of the fitness of a person as young as himself to be his companion for life. After their judgment has become more matured, they view themselves bound for life to each other and perhaps not at all calculated to make each other happy.”<sup>2</sup> It’s better to remain single than to be poorly matched in marriage (1 Cor. 7:8, 9).

“The choice of a life companion should be such as best to secure physical, mental, and spiritual well-being for parents and for their children—such as will enable both parents and children to bless their fellow men and to honor their Creator.”<sup>3</sup> Most people think that marriage is all about honoring their wives and husbands but forget that it’s also about honoring God above all. It’s a mistake to think that marriage is all about the couple, not God (1 Cor. 7:32, 33). Marriage is not only about what the husband or wife want from each other but also what God wants from them.

#### **REACT**

1. How can I prepare myself to be with a wonderful person who will one day love me?
2. What makes a marriage wonderful according to biblical standards?

1. Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 70.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 79.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

Gen. 2:18;  
Eccles. 4:9–12

## How-to *Not Meant to Be Alone*

Have you ever felt lonely? Ever felt like no one is in your corner? Well, truth be told, a lot of people have felt like that. That is why God created companionship. He doesn't want us to feel alone and distant from other people. In the Garden of Eden, Adam started to feel lonely because he saw each of the animals had a companion. God made sure that he didn't feel alone for long, and He created Eve. Adam had found his companion. Usually, we meet our friends, and often our best friends, when we are young. Later in life, we find that one person who becomes our companion for life, and we get to live the rest of our days with that person. But what should we do at times when we feel lonely?

### **That is why God created companionship.**

*Rely on the ones you trust.* If you ever feel alone, try to find someone with whom you can talk about your issues. It could be your significant other (Gen. 2:18), the friends in your circle that you absolutely know that you can trust, or even your parents. Most important, remember that you can come to God as well. He understands what you are going through, and He'll help you through it. Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 says, "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

*Remember that the only thing stopping you is you.* Sometimes, you are just in a funk that you do not want to be near anybody or even go outside your room. Your friends will try their best to get you out of your funk, but there's only so much they can do. You have to will your way and focus on the positive, and remember God is always listening.

*Do not let your feelings overcome you.* At times, feeling alone feels so unbearable, but Deuteronomy 31:6 says, "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

### **REACT**

1. What should we do when we feel detached from everyone?
2. Why does God want us to have companionship?

## Opinion

# Alone, Yet Not Alone

Ps. 72:12;  
Isa. 57:1, 2

The Bible affirms that we are not meant to be alone (Gen. 2:18). But before we are ready to commit to a lifelong relationship in marriage, we should allow God to mold and make us the best version of ourselves. One of the best times to learn about ourselves is when we are by ourselves.

What is your family like? Funny? Serious? Smart? Musically inclined? In my family, we have some of everything. Sometimes we may not understand

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**At some point in our lives, we all will feel lonely, but do not allow that loneliness to lead to depression or other chronically negative emotions.**

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why God put us in the family we are in, but our unique family is there to build us. Have you ever felt as if God took away all the good people in your family? Don't worry. At some point in our lives, we all will feel lonely, but do not allow that loneliness to lead to depression or other chronically negative emotions. God gave us family to build one another up through love. More than your biological family, you have a family in Christ—brothers and sisters who understand that God is our Father.

God walked on this earth just like we do. He understands what it's like to feel lonely (Heb. 4:15). In Psalm 72:12, God says that "he will rescue the poor when they cry to him; he will help the oppressed, who have no one to defend them" (NLT). We can go to God in prayer and talk to Him. The Bible admonishes us to ask that we may receive. So talk to God. Tell Him all about your loneliness.

If you struggle with loneliness, know that God cares. His Word tells us that "good people pass away; the godly often die before their time. But no one seems to care or wonder why. No one seems to understand that God is protecting them from the evil to come. For those who follow godly paths will rest in peace when they die" (Isa. 57:1, 2, NLT).

God has never left us. The devil tries to get us to think God has forsaken us, but given the love that God has for us, it would hurt Him to leave us and watch us cry. Talk to God; and whenever you feel alone, remember that God understands and cares.

### **REACT**

Why do I feel alone? Has God forgotten me? Have I added to someone else's loneliness?

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*Alaysia Bookal, Dania Beach, Florida, USA*

John 16:32

## Exploration *Embrace the Loneliness*

### **CONCLUDE**

Loneliness is confirmation that we were created by a relational God. It is also evidence that sin has marred God's original plan for our lives. In that sense, we ought to embrace our loneliness as an experience that could deepen our relationship with God (cf. Rom. 5:3). Rather than pretending that we are not lonely, we need to acknowledge the feeling and allow God to minister to us through it. As we find our primary companionship in Christ, He will lead us to Christian fellowship that will ease the feelings of isolation we may face.

### **CONSIDER**

- Journaling about the times when you have felt lonely.
- Listening to the song "That's What the Lonely Is For" by David Wilcox and "Alone Yet Not Alone" by Joni Eareckson Tada.
- Reflecting on the times in the life of Christ when He was lonely. Consider especially His 40-day fast in the wilderness and His experience in Gethsemane.
- Writing a letter/email/message to someone you know to be lonely, such as a single person, a widow/widower, an orphan, or someone who has recently relocated.
- Spending a weekend alone with God. Ask Him to reveal areas of your life that He needs to shape.
- Composing a song that reflects the lessons you have learned during this week's study.

### **CONNECT**

Ellen G. White, *Counsels for the Church*, chap. 1, "A Vision of the Reward of the Faithful," pp. 33–36; *Daughters of God*, pp. 229–230; *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 22, "Imprisonment and Death of John," pp. 214–224.