

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

John 17:20-26

Lesson #60

Loneliness and the Gospel

02/12/2017

The nature of Poverty



- Material deprivation
- Political exclusion
- Spiritual depression
- **Social isolation**

1

“All the lonely people,
where do they all come from?”

The Beatles

“Loneliness is the ultimate
poverty.”

Pauline Phillips (Abigail Van Buren)

“Loneliness and the feeling of
being unwanted is the most
terrible poverty.”

Mother Teresa

2

Genesis 1:26

“It is **not good that man should be alone**. I will make a helpmate suitable for him.”

- This is the first thing that God identifies as “*not good*”.
- In Eph.5:32 human marriage is a picture of the ultimate marriage of Christ and his bride, the church.



3

The Incarnation is a response
to human loneliness.

Matthew 1:23

“And they shall call His name Immanuel, which translated means, “God with us”.”

**Revelation 21:2 describes heaven as a holy city,
Christ’s bride, a community of perfect,
empathetic, fellowship.**

**If Heaven is a city of perfect, empathetic,
fellowship, what must hell be like?**

**As Jesus faces his descent into hell on the
cross, he quotes from Ps.22.**

Matthew 27:46

“My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?”

4

**In Jesus’ prayer for his disciples
(John 17) he addresses God’s “end
game”- the answer to loneliness.**

1.

That they may know us and share the glory of
being one with us (vs.1-12)

2.

and that they would not seek to have
profound needs met by this world (vs.13-19)

3.

but that they would bear witness in this world
to the Gospel through their unity with one
another in Christ (vs.20-26).

5

John 17

"20 I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; 21 that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me."

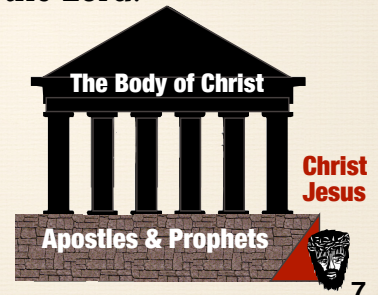
- The **Apostles teaching** is vital.
 - to the spread of the Gospel.
 - to the formation of faith.
 - to the unification of all believers.
 - to declare an end to loneliness.

6

Ephesians 2:20-21

"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord."

Apostolic teaching is the **unifying doctrine of the church.**



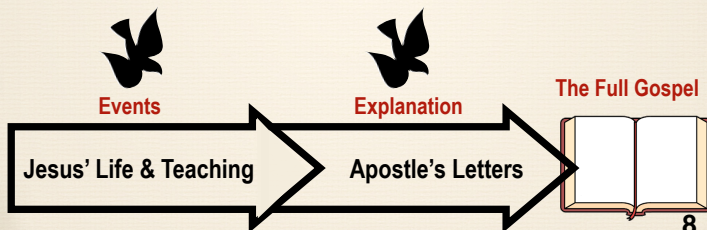
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John 16

"12 I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you."

Ephesians 3:3-5

"that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, . . . which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;"

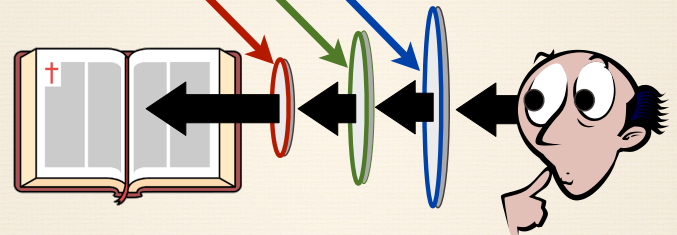


8

Old Testament

Gospels

Epistles



We interpret the Scriptures through lenses.

9

"22 And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; 23 I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me."

- The **Unity of believers** is vital.
 - to understanding Jesus' mission.
 - to sensing the power of faith.
 - to seeing the love of God.

10

"24 Father, I desire that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou didst love Me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father, although the world has not known Thee, yet I have known Thee; and these have known that Thou didst send Me; 26 and I have made Thy name known to them, and will make it known; that the love wherewith Thou didst love Me may be in them, and I in them."

- Intimate communion with God and His people **addresses our loneliness.**
- God's love will be seen in our **relationships (attitude, respect, & care) for one another.**

11

Implications

- Spiritual loneliness is a universal felt need.
- Satan tempts us to try to meet this need in the world.
- Disciples are to first have that need met in an intimate knowledge of God.
- Disciples are to then bear witness in the world to the Gospel by their union with one another.
- **This is why our relationship with one another in Christ is vital to our witness to the credibility of the Gospel message.**

12

Christianity that doesn't start with the individual, doesn't start.

Christianity that stops with the individual, stops.

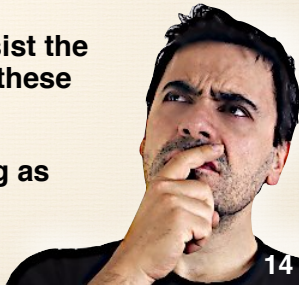
Christianity is not just about sound doctrine and ethics

it is also about the experience of a loving community that addresses our loneliness.

13

How do we get there?

- It starts with being reconciled with God through faith.
- It continues with having our own loneliness addressed as we grow to know God. Ps.23:4
- It means that we must resist the temptation to try to meet these needs through this world.
- It involves our functioning as the Body of Christ.



14

Killing the pain of loneliness through attachments to this life is tempting

but it can also kill our hunger for the greater pain killer.

15

Ephesians 4

“¹⁵ but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”

16



“A team plays for the name on the front of the jersey not for the name on the back!”

Dean Smith



17