

I. Introduction

Good morning! There are many problems in this world, but one problem that is common among people everywhere is loneliness. In times of peace and in times of war, among the rich and among the poor, among the healthy and among the sick, people struggle with loneliness.

Despite being famous and admired by millions, Albert Einstein felt the bite of loneliness and said, *“It is strange to be known so universally and yet to be so lonely.”* Joan Collins, the star of the TV series *Dynasty*, also knew about loneliness. She commented, *“Loneliness is the universal problem of rich people.”* Mother Teresa worked to help the poor her whole life, but she once observed, *“The most terrible poverty is loneliness.”*

It is natural to feel lonely when we are alone, but many of us feel lonely in large crowds, and maybe even when we are surrounded by friends and family. It really doesn't matter how many people are around or who is with us, because loneliness is a condition of the heart.

The lonely person often feels disconnected from others and may say, *“No one understands me.”* Have you ever felt that way? I know that there have been times when I was lonely and felt misunderstood. It is a feeling of hopelessness and sadness; loneliness can easily lead to exhaustion, depression and worse.

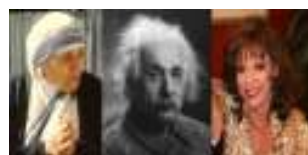
We are social creatures. We have a deep need for a sense of connection with others. We need to love and be loved. When we feel connected in loving relationships, we find peace, joy and satisfaction in life. But when we feel disconnected, misunderstood, or unloved, we become lonely and isolated in our hearts. These feelings are not an accident of nature. We were designed by God to be this way. We were designed to live in a loving relationship with the Creator God who made us, and if we do not have this relationship we will inevitably experience loneliness.

The opening pages of the Bible reveal these realities of human life very clearly. After God created the heavens and the earth He made mankind, starting with one man and one woman, named Adam and Eve. At first, Adam and Eve had an ideal relationship with God and they lived in wonderful happiness in the beautiful Garden of Eden. They enjoyed loving relationships with God and each other because they freely chose the way of love.

Love, of course, requires a decision. And we can only make real decisions if we have free will. God gave mankind free will so that we can experience true love and loving relationships with Him and with one another. Adam and Eve had complete freedom except for one thing; they were given one rule to obey to demonstrate their ongoing decision to maintain a right relationship with God.

Sadly, after some time had passed, Adam and Eve disobeyed the one rule that God had given them. This disobedience damaged their relationship with God and destroyed their happiness. **Genesis 3:8** tells us what happened right after they disobeyed the Lord. **“Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.”** Before Adam and Eve disobeyed, I am sure they would have gone to the Lord and walked together with Him in the garden. But now they are ashamed and they hide from the Lord.

Since the time of that first sin of disobedience, all of mankind has been separated from God because of sin. The Bible tells us that every man and every woman has done wrong in the sight of God and the Bible



calls this sin. **Psalm 14:1-3** declares, **“The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.”**

These are harsh words and many of us may not like to hear them. But if we think carefully and are honest with ourselves, we will see that the words are true. There are many people who do good things sometimes, but no one consistently does and says only good things. We are corrupted by pride, jealousy, anger, lust, rudeness, dishonesty and worse. These things are sin and our sins separate us from God. As a result, we feel lonely and isolated and struggle with many things. We were created to live in loving relationship with God, but instead we continually try to hide from God, because we are ashamed.

Mankind fell into sin, but the Lord did not abandon the people He created. After the Lord God found Adam and Eve in the Garden, one of the first things He did was make durable clothing for them to cover their bodies. When they were innocent of all sin, they did not feel any shame, and they walked in the beautiful garden without clothing.

But sin brings shame, and we want to hide our shame. Think about it. Even when the weather is very comfortable, we all put on clothes before we go outside. Why? Because we know we are not pure and innocent and we want to hide; we are ashamed.



The Lord clothed Adam and Eve with the skins of an animal that was slain for the purpose. That act began a system of using animal sacrifices as a covering for sin. The need to offer a sacrifice for sins reminded the people of the seriousness of their sin and acted as a restraint so that the people would consider their actions and perhaps sin a bit less. The record of these animal sacrifices can be found in the Old Testament. And when the record is examined, we discover something else; the animal sacrifices of ancient times are also prophetic models that show how God would eventually provide an effective and permanent sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Starting with that first sacrifice, the Lord provided many prophetic messages and models pointing to the Savior who would come and offer a great and effective sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

Eventually it was revealed that the Savior to come would be God Himself, come into this world in the person of Jesus Christ to die on the cross for our sins. Jesus came to give His life as a ransom for ours, in full payment for our sins, so that we might have forgiveness of sins and a restored relationship with God. And, after He died and was buried, Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, defeating death and proving that the promise of eternal life for all who believe is true. When we believe and trust in Jesus we are cleansed from sin and saved unto eternal life in heaven.



Romans 3:22-24, “This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

We began the message today by talking about the problem of loneliness. But now we see that loneliness is just a symptom of how our sins have separated us from God. And we also see that the solution to loneliness is a restored relationship with the Creator God who made us. Jesus invites us to come to Him and receive. In **Matthew 11:28**, Jesus says, **“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”**



II. Conclusion

How does a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ solve the problem of loneliness? First of all, it means that we will never be alone again because Jesus is always with us. Here is a wonderful promise that Jesus gives to all who believe in Him, **Matthew 28:20b**, “**And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.**” In this world, Jesus is with us always through His Holy Spirit living in the heart of every believer. And, when the time of this world is over, at the end of the age, all who have trusted in Jesus will be home in heaven with Him for all of eternity.



Jesus is always with us, and through faith we can enjoy a deep and loving relationship with Him. He is God and He knows us completely, so we never have to worry about being misunderstood. Whatever is going on in our life and heart, Jesus knows it completely. Sometimes what is in our heart is not good, but when we talk to Jesus about it and trust in His finished work on the cross, we receive forgiveness and healing. His love is perfect and His mercy and grace are sufficient, He will never abandon us or reject us. If we feel lonely, we can turn to Jesus in prayer and find comfort because He is with us.

Second, everyone who trusts in Jesus becomes a member of God’s family. **John 1:12-13**, “**Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.**” As God’s children, we belong to the great family of faith which spans all of history and which is present in every country in the world. Wherever we go, Christ is in our heart and brothers and sisters in the Christian faith are nearby. If we trust in Jesus and walk with God, then we never need to feel lonely.

Are you tired of being lonely? Then believe in Jesus and you will never be alone. Walk with Him in daily obedience to God’s plan for your life and you will be aware of His presence and you will never need to feel lonely again. And, in a loving relationship with Jesus Christ, we will be able to fulfill the purpose for which we were created. **Micah 6:8**, “**He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.**”



III. Let's pray.