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GENESIS 2:4-20

Series: Understanding Your Roots

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, I thank you for Joan first of all and I thank you that she was able to tune in today. Lord, I pray that you would relieve her headaches. You have the ability to heal her and I'm asking that you would demonstrate your power in her by getting rid of these headaches that she has right now. We also pray for the continued healing of Rich as he's walking and doing the therapy he needs. We pray for Tess as she's bedridden and just needs a lot of help given the challenges she's facing at home. We also want to ask your blessing on Lorraine who injured her elbow, went through another surgery this weekend. We ask for your healing work in her heart and life and her body. There are other needs that we're experiencing in our church, Father, so I ask for your blessing on those people. We ask for our nation and the challenges that we face in our nation. We've got an election coming up, we've got challenges with the Supreme Court, we've got issues with the COVID, and the racial issues. There's so many things going on right now in our nation. Lord, we need your grace. So we ask for you to work mightily in the lives of people who are in charge, for those things that are going on. We ask for wisdom on the part of leadership. We pray for our president, we pray for our governor, we pray for our mayor – those people in positions of leadership, Lord, that you would empower them and guide them and lead them as your elders in places. We ask for your guidance in the midst of that. We ask that you give us a sensitivity to our own weakness, a sensitivity to our need for you. Draw us closer to you, we ask. In Jesus' name, amen.

Well today we're going to talk about loneliness. The reason we're going to talk about that is because we all experience the challenges of loneliness in our lives. We need to have a plan for dealing with that. So part of what that means is we need to know how to handle our own selves when it comes to those feelings of loneliness. I want to talk about it, I want to define it, I want to talk about what it looks like. The reason I'm stopping in the passage right now, the passage isn't really about loneliness, but the passage is about being alone. Those are two different things. When God says to Adam, "It is not good for man to be alone," He's going to create a marriage partner for him. But if we move too quickly to the marriage side of this then we end up missing something very important here that has to do with loneliness. Even though the passage isn't about loneliness, why am I going to talk about it now? Because the world takes the ideas from this passage (even though they might not acknowledge them from the Bible), they take the ideas of being alone and getting a mate to try to fill the needs of loneliness and that's a mistake. So I want to deal with that problem as we go through God's word and as we talk about it together. So we're going to get to this idea of loneliness.

If you open your Bibles or you have your Genesis workbook you can open it to Genesis 2:4. Because as we look at this passage in Genesis 2:4 to the end of the chapter, we're going to take

this verse by verse and end up in this place where we need to talk about this issue of loneliness. So we're studying the book of Genesis and as we do we're going through it verse by verse. Let's pick up our story in Genesis 2:4.

Now the first thing I want to do, even before I get to the passage is I want you to know this. There's a major change between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2. In Genesis 1:1-2:3 we have the whole story of creation. The name that's used to describe the Creator is Elohim, the term God. It refers to God Almighty. But when we move into verse 4 everything changes. Instead of the thirty-two times the word Elohim is used in verses 1 of Genesis 1 to chapter 2:3, we have a dramatic shift and that word is not used by itself again in chapter 2 starting in verse 4. Eleven times we have a different name for God and that name is Yahweh. Yahweh-Elohim to be exact. But God changes His name because He's going to do something very important to help us understand it. So as I read our passage at first, I want you to see what that looks like and then we'll talk more about it. But really it's God's personal name and how it ties in.

Let's read it. I'll talk some more about that as we see this major shift now moving to chapter 2:4-7. Now chapter 2 is really going to go back and fit into the place of Genesis 1:26 when God said we're going to create man. So we're going to put this back in there and He's going to elaborate now a whole creation of people and what that looks like. So that's why we're in Genesis 2:4-7. Let's see what God has to say.

It says there – These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

The first thing I want you to notice in this passage is that God is described as the *LORD God*. Yahweh. That's His personal name because now He's going to get very personal. The creation of man is such a personal experience that we're going to go through it again in Genesis 2 this with interaction. I'm going to show you what that interaction looks like.

The name Yahweh is God's personal name. My first name is Scott. It's like when we talk to God it's His personal name. The word God Elohim is this God Almighty. Now you'll know whenever you see in the Old Testament that when the name for Lord is all capitalized that is where this word Yahweh is in the text. If it's a capital *L* and small *o-r-d* that's when the name Adonai is used which means Lord. The word *LORD* here does not mean lord. This is the word and the translators put this in so we can know this and you'll see this in the beginning of your Bible it's described here. It is how we'll know this is the name Yahweh.

Moses was told to go and rescue the Israelites from the Egyptians. Moses makes this statement to God, "God, when they ask me who is this God that you're referring to that says 'let my people go.'" Because the Egyptians had all of these gods. There were all kinds of gods all over the place. "What is the name of this god you're talking about?" And God answered Moses and said,

“Tell them my name is Yahweh. I am. That’s my personal name.” That’s God’s name that makes Him distinct from all others.

When people make the statement today that says oh there’s lots of different gods today. No. There’s one God. His name is Yahweh and we worship Him as the God of the Bible that we understand. He’s this personal God that wants to have a personal relationship with us. Today in our story we’re going to see how His name is used in the personal creation of men and women.

Notice that you can see there in verse 5 and 6 that the earth was created, but it hadn’t rained yet. When we get to Noah’s time we’re going to see it hadn’t rained yet. They had never seen rain. So that increases the trust factor as Noah’s building an ark and getting ready for that. Now it looks like the ground was all watered through this mist that was present going up on the land. This again confirms this idea that there was probably this water envelope, this greenhouse effect, that allowed people to live longer and for the whole land to develop the way God wanted it to develop.

So we see here that God now takes this land, takes this earth that He created, and now notice verse 7, you want to look more specifically there, it says – *The LORD God formed*. Let’s look at that word there – *formed*. *Formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became a living creature.*

The word *formed* is a very personal word. You would expect that because we’re getting to know God in this personal way in Genesis 2. In Genesis 1 He spoke the words and things were created. An amazing story of God’s almighty power. But in chapter 2 when it comes to man, God says He formed him. The word *formed* is the same word used in the Bible to describe a potter. Someone who takes the clay and with their own hands forms that clay into some kind of a molded or intricate bowl or some kind of a decoration. Because their hands are involved in the process. So the potter is forming that. In the same way, God is personally involved with the creation, with the forming of the man.

It says in verse 7 – *Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground*. The word *man* there, and you can write this in the side of your journal in Genesis book that you have, the word *man* is the word *adam* where we get the word Adam from. That’s what man means, Adam. It says *man of dust from the ground*. The word *ground* is the word *adamah*. In other words, the name Adam is the same as the word ‘man’ and it comes from the idea that he was made from the ground. He was made from dirt, he was made from dust. That’s what he was made from.

It reminds me of the story of the scientists who were saying, “Look, we have come so far in medical technology we don’t need God anymore. We can clone people. We can make all kinds of limbs now. We could do all kinds of things that we don’t even need God. We can just make a person.” So God suggests to the scientists, well why don’t we do this. Why don’t we have a man-making contest, just like back in the Garden of Eden. And the scientists said. “Oh that’s a great idea. I would love to do that. We can make man all by ourselves.” And the man reached down to pick up some dirt and God said, “Wait, wait, wait. You need to get your own dirt.” It’s just really interesting that God is not only the Creator of man, He created all of these things. He even created the dirt that is going to be turned into this man.

One of the things that we gain from this story is the humility that we all must have. We are all really made from dust, we're made from the ground here. We're made of the dust from the ground. That's humility that we must recognize. When you start thinking that you're someone great, you need to remember where your roots are and it starts very much back at the beginning with dirt. So our humility must be so in front of us continually. Our weakness, our frailty, our insignificance complimented with the fact that God breathed into us the breath of life, which makes us hugely valuable. That God provides us with this supremacy over all creation. That God has infused into us tremendous value, which gives us an internal pride, if I can use that term, that God has done something great, He values us. We must keep those same two ideas, the humility that God wants us to have and the great self-confidence because of the God confidence we can have in who He is.

It's because we come from the ground but also because of the last part of the verse where it says – *he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became nephesh-hayah*. You can write those words, *nephesh-hayah*, in your journal to describe the living creature. It means this living soul. He became a living soul. He wasn't given a soul. He became this living being. That's what this means here. When God created people, He created them with the ability to experience this breathing in that He wants to do with them. What God did is He breathed into them.

It reminds me of the story right after the resurrection. When Jesus was raised from the dead, He met the disciples in the upper room and the Bible says He breathed on them and they received the Holy Spirit. God created people with the ability for Him to breathe into us. I just think it's very appropriate for us to say every day, "Lord, breathe into me your breath of life today. I need you to breathe into me the significance, the value, the abundant life that you want me to experience." God created people so much differently than He created the animals and He wants us to experience that in our lives. So we acknowledge that. We appreciate what God wants to do in the midst of that because God is personal. He values us in a very special way and we acknowledge that. When we experience what God has done for us then we have this sense of value. I think that's the best way to describe it. This sense of value that God wants us to experience in our lives.

If we go to the next part of the passage we see some interesting things taking place here that validate the story. This is not just a fable to make up a story about how we were created. God wants us to know that this is tied into geography and history, so He says these things – *And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*

A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

It's as if here that God wants to put a stamp on this story that it has geographical roots, that it has historical significance. That this is an actual real story. It's not just a story made up or a fable or some kind of a story to explain creation. This is how it actually happens and God wants us to know that very truth.

Next we come to Genesis 2:15-17 where it says – *The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”*

I want to talk more about the role of this tree, why it was there and so on when we talk more about the temptation that exists in Genesis 3. But for now I want you to see that God created work. Because sometimes people ask this important question: Was work the result of creation or was it the result of the fall? Some people believe it's the result of the fall because it's work, it's hard. But I would suggest (and what it seems here in the passage) is that God created work as part of creation.

Work is valuable. It's an important thing that we're all involved in. Whether it's volunteer work that we do or it is work that we get paid for. Because something happens in work. It's the place where sanctification is worked out, where we're able to communicate the gospel and understand it in relative terms and ways. It's a great opportunity for us to grow in our own character. Work is this very important part of who we are. Some of you may say, “I don't find my work very satisfying,” and maybe for you the work that God is speaking of here is in the volunteer work that you do, in the hobbies that you have. There's this semblance of work that takes place where God works out things inside of us.

This is why it's so important for children and for young people to work. So children and young people, listen to me for a moment. It's important for you to have chores in your life. If you think your job in life is to just have fun, you're missing out on one of the significant benefits of life and that is to work. God wants us to be able to work because in work you learn things.

Let me give you some ideas of things you'll learn as you do chores around the house or you help out the neighbors or you do a service project somehow. You are working. You are going to learn diligence, which is the ability to work hard. You're going to learn thoroughness, which is attention to detail. You're going to learn perseverance, which is hanging in there even after you feel like quitting. You're going to feel like cooperation, which is this ability to work with other people.

There are so many things that you learn when you work that will help you for the rest of your life. Not just for now. It will help you ongoing to do what you need to do and be successful in anything that you do. You learn those things as you work at home. So I would encourage you to have a good attitude about work. All of that is learned and you're going to use those things as you continue on in your life. God can use those greatly as you're learning how to work more significantly in your family and in those places around. God can use those in some great ways. So don't shun the work. Embrace the work. It's something that God can use to do some real

teaching in your lives. As parents, that's why we give kids chores and have them work. It's not just to get things done around the house. It's to build the character that they need in order to be successful in their lives.

Well now let's go to our passage. This passage says – *Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."* So God is going to make this statement: It's not good to be alone and I'm going to make a helper. In other words, part of the solution for his aloneness is I'm going to make a companion for him who's going to be a part of him, he's going to work with him. But now God's going to put Adam back to work to do another job. As God often does, He uses work to reveal things – reveal our inadequacy, reveal things we don't have, reveal things that we need. So we have a desire then to go to God and say, "God, I can't do this by myself. I need your help." So if you're feeling at work overwhelmed, you need to go to the Lord. He's the one who wants to provide the strength for you.

Notice what happens with Adam as he now is being told. God is saying this is what we want to do. Now he says to Adam – *Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens 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. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field.* So Adam named the giraffe and he named the lion and he named the cow and he named the pig. He named all of these animals. He gave them their names. That's right in the middle of this paragraph because notice this next statement it says – *But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.*

The idea seems to be that God says, "Okay. I'm going to create this helper for Adam, but in order to help him experience the need, I'm going to bring all the animals to him." They probably came in couples. We have the dad giraffe and the mom giraffe. They come and he's going, "Okay, we give you the name giraffe" and they go off and he's naming all these animals. But he's saying, "Wait a minute. I'm by myself. I'm all alone. I need something else."

In this idea here there is this error that our world sees often that I'd like to talk about and show you. It comes from these words – *It is not good that man should be alone.* And then it says – *But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.* From this idea we have some errors that I want to speak to. Now this is really worldview things that I want to share with you as we understand Christianity as opposed to the world's thinking. It becomes more clear for us.

Because what the world says is this: If you feel lonely... Now this passage is about being alone. That's not the same as being lonely. You can feel alone when you're by yourself or you can feel alone when you're in a crowd. I'll talk more about what loneliness is in a moment. But let's talk about this. We all need to have a plan for this. The world says this though: If I feel lonely then I need to find a helper. I need to find someone I can hook up with. So what ends up happening is in the world people say I'm going to look for intimacy, particularly sexual intimacy. I'm going to find that so I cannot feel lonely. That is a mistake. It's a violation of what God says and it doesn't accomplish the goal that one would have. It's a temporary satisfaction. Even just looking to find all kinds of friends on Facebook as solution for loneliness is a mistake. The world has this thinking that loneliness is accomplished by finding someone.

I want to tell you loneliness is not satisfied by marriage. Now God has a plan for marriage and marriage is helpful in dealing with loneliness and being alone, but that's not the solution for loneliness. Marriage is not the solution. Sometimes people think it is. So people who are not saved are going, "Oh I've got to find someone. Then I've got to find someone else." So they continually go after an intimate relationship thinking that's going to solve their loneliness problem. Loneliness isn't a result of not being with people. Loneliness is a condition of the heart. We need to address that.

But this isn't just for people who are single. A person who is married can feel lonely. There's a lot of lonely people who are married. So sometimes they misunderstand this idea and they say, "Oh I'm feeling lonely in this marriage. Therefore I'm going to commit adultery or I'm going to get involved with someone else in order to overcome this problem." So they end up in a bad place as well.

There's a huge worldliness here that I think is a total mistake of this idea that God wants to share in this passage. I'm not even going to talk about marriage today. We're going to talk about marriage next week. Because if we go quickly to marriage we miss this whole idea of loneliness and what it is. What God I think wants to teach us I'm going to take you into some passages in God's word that talk about loneliness and how we can overcome it and what we need to do. Because every one of us needs to have a plan for addressing loneliness in our lives.

I want to just make a comment too that sometimes people believe that their solution to loneliness is to go on social media. That social media somehow solves their loneliness problems. I find that in our society more and more people are experiencing more and more loneliness even though they seem to be more connected in social media. The largest group of people that experience loneliness is said are those between 16-24. Given the surveys that are out and the tests that people take, the people between 16-24 are the most lonely or they express themselves as being more lonely than most any other people. Large groups of people feel lonely between the ages of 16-24, yet they are the ones who are often most connected in social media. But social media is kind of a distance way of trying to feel close. And when you measure your loneliness and trying to overcome that by likes that people give you or people that are contributing on your Facebook and liking the things you say or appreciating you on Facebook, then there's an artificial connectedness there, which doesn't take place of the loneliness that exists inside of our hearts.

See loneliness is a sadness. This is what loneliness is. It's a sadness that comes from the sense that nobody cares about me or that I'm misunderstood or nobody understands me. Loneliness leads to despair. It's very important to have a plan for dealing with this. Because anyone could feel lonely no matter what situation they're in, no matter how many people are around them. Often we don't know when someone is experiencing this loneliness. We need to be ready to not only deal with ourselves in this area of loneliness, but to help others as well.

Loneliness – what causes it? Well a lot of things. It's rather complicated. But some of the things that cause loneliness are feelings of rejection. When you're rejected you feel like, "Oh man, no one loves me." There's this feeling of failure when you actually do fail, you make a mistake, you do something wrong. And you go, "Oh man, I just feel lonely," in those moments. When you're trying to communicate something or be someone and people don't understand you, they

misunderstand. That's another contribution to this feeling of loneliness, this idea that people don't care about me.

What is the opposite, for a moment, of loneliness? What do you think that is? Is it connected? No. I would suggest the opposite of loneliness is feeling loved. That's why it's so important for us to communicate love and to be loved and to be in a loving relationship. A marriage relationship is a great way for that to take place. And God does create the marriage relationship as part of the solution to meet our love needs so that we don't feel lonely. But loneliness is rather complicated. It's a mindset that we have. It has to do with beliefs, the way we act, and so on.

I would suggest that there are some solutions to loneliness. I want to show you those. I want to take you to some scripture and I want you to see what God has to say about this subject as we talk about it.

In Psalm 68:5-6 it says this: *A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.* The first thing that God is saying here is that when you feel alone (and of course the fatherless, the person who's lost their father, that's a person who doesn't have that connectedness that you would think), God is saying I step in there. I'm right there. I'm the father to the fatherless, I'm the defender of widows. The widow is the person who's lost her mate. So God is right there to be the person that steps into our lives.

We have to first recognize that God is the solution to loneliness, not a person. When we recognize this, good things happen in our lives. That God wants us to have a plan for dealing with loneliness and that plan means we first go to God and we say, "God, I need you. I want you to fulfill these things in my life. I want you to fill in all the holes of loneliness. I know that you love me and I want to receive your love, and I want to appreciate that love in my heart." We start with that personal relationship with God and when we do He just embraces us and envelops us with so much love that our empty cup is then filled up and overflowing so that we can turn around and bless other people who are experiencing loneliness in their lives with the love that God has given to us. This is so strategic. We must understand that love is this solution that God has provided for us. Coming from God's love, that is the most important way that we can deal with the loneliness we experience.

But notice he says in Psalm 68:6 – *God sets the lonely in families.* Family becomes this place where we can give and receive love. That's God's ideal. That's His design where that takes place.

The verse continues. *He leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.* So God has this plan. He wants to satisfy our needs. He's got a way to do that and we need to trust Him to address the loneliness. Because loneliness is part of our self-concept, our worldview. It's part of who we are. And we need to understand that God fills that. No one person can do that in our lives. But the problem is we live in a broken world and in that broken world we have people who don't like us on Facebook. We have people who don't understand us. We have family members who don't love us or meet our love needs. So God has created another safety net. He calls it the family of God. That's why He refers to the church as a family.

So look at Ephesians 2:19 there. It says – *So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.* The church becomes this valuable place where we're able to find the love that we're looking for. The church is made up of broken people. So you're also going to find people who reject you there. You're going to find people who don't understand. But the church is this place where we are all being filled up with God's love. When we share that with each other, there's great opportunity for us to experience that closeness, that intimacy, the sharing of needs for people to understand us, to accept us the way we are. That is what God has for us. The church becomes that beautiful place where we can experience that in our lives.

If we're developing a plan for loneliness, we need to be able to look at a couple of things. We need to look at first of all this idea that we've got to believe certain things. Because loneliness has to do with what we believe about life, not just how we feel about things. We have to change our beliefs to recognize what God wants to do. So then our beliefs are central to dealing with loneliness. But then also what we do is important. So we need to spend more time praying and pouring our hearts out to the Lord. We need to spend more time reading the Bible and receiving the truths that He has for us in His love letter for us. We need to spend more time connecting with God's fellowship and interacting with them. When we have an opportunity to connect with other believers that the love flows from God into our hearts and we appreciate the connectedness that is there.

See when we have faulty beliefs about marriage then bad things happen. That's why I didn't want to zip through this. If we just go through this quickly and we say, "Man was not meant to live alone and so God created a marriage partner for him," then the error is that people can believe that the cure for my loneliness feelings is a mate. Single people can have a problem with this. Now singleness is a gift that God gives to people. Paul emulates singleness as a valuable thing. God works out sanctification in singleness. But there are some people who say, "I feel like Adam. There was no helper found for me." So sometimes there's a temptation among people who are single to say, "I'm going to reduce my convictions, my values, and compromise my convictions so that I can just find somebody. Because if I do then I will not be alone anymore." The problem is that when you do that you end up in a relationship where you are not satisfied and you still do feel alone because the person doesn't share the same values and convictions you do. It's dangerous.

We live in a broken world. And because it's broken there are times when our expectations are not going to be met. We're not going to find what we're looking for. But that doesn't just happen in singleness. It happens in married life. There are a lot of married people who feel lonely. The problem with this error that says "oh if I find a mate and then that's going to solve my loneliness problems" is that what that does is it creates a lot of expectations. Loneliness has a lot to do with expectations. So what I do then is I place those expectations on my mate and it damages my relationship because then I become demanding of my mate. "You are not loving me the way I should." So we may not make this statement, but this is what we say in our relationship with our mate. We start saying, "Oh she didn't put the gas in the car. She must not love me." Or "when he went to the store he didn't buy the kind of thing that I asked him to buy. He bought something else. He must not love me." So we end up making these statements based on our expectations about love needs that we have and we enter into something that's not appropriate.

Here's the solution. We must have our loneliness needs met in our relationship with God so that any other relationship we have will be productive. God wants us to enjoy that relationship with Him first. And when we do that then we can experience God in a greater way.

Let me share with you some more verses about what God says about this idea of loneliness. In Psalm 139:7-10 this psalmist is meditating on this idea that I'm never alone, so I don't have to feel lonely. *"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there. If I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast."*

And then of course Jesus is the one who said I'm going to be with you forever. You don't have to feel bad that I'm leaving the earth basically is what He's saying. I'm going to be with you forever and I'm going to be present. You don't have to feel alone and all of the feelings of feeling alone because I'm going to be with you. God wants us to experience that in addressing the loneliness that we have.

I want you to know that marriage is valuable, singleness is valuable. Wherever you are, God wants to help you grow in your sanctification. When we get married it's just another way for us to grow in sanctification. God wants to allow us to do that. Whether we're single or we're married we grow in that sanctification. It's hard to be single. It's hard to be married. But it's hard to be single and wish you were married, but it's also hard to be married and wish you were single. The issues have to do with our own heart and experiencing God in this special way in our own lives.

When it comes to being alone there are some people who are introverts, some people are extroverts. What that means is that introvert are energized by being alone; extroverts are energized by being with people. But in all cases we need to be able to address the loneliness in our hearts in order to be able to move forward. God wants to do some things.

But before I leave this subject of loneliness and next week we talk about marriage, I just want to talk about some of the benefits of loneliness and how if you're feeling lonely you can capture that and use it in some ways that will be very constructive for you. One is it will draw you closer to the Lord. It enlarges our heart's understanding of God's love. That God's love is so big that it fills up all the cracks and helps us feel not lonely but loved. And that's what we need in our lives. Loneliness reminds us of how other people feel. It gives us greater compassion, helps us to be others focused. Sometimes when we're lonely it's because our expectations are out of control, our values are not right, and it gives us an opportunity to reorient those. Loneliness often helps us become more grateful of things we have instead of wishing for things that we don't have.

When Jesus was on earth He often found Himself getting alone. The Bible tells us He went to a solitary place, a lonely place in translation. He went alone to pray and to talk to God. There was some benefit to that. Getting to a solitary place, kind of reconstructing things is good. But oftentimes we don't experience that because of all of the noise of social media. We're

continually on social media and electronics that hinders us from being able to enjoy the aloneness that allows us to experience God in a greater way.

I want to suggest to you today before we get into any talk about marriage that we're going to talk about next week that God has a plan to deal with our love needs that is much bigger than a marriage partner. We must first deal with those love needs to overcome our loneliness so we can be effective in relationships. Otherwise we end up creating chaos in those relationships, whether married or single, or we end up doing things that are inappropriate. God wants to meet those love needs in our heart. He wants to take away that loneliness and provide to us the gift of His love. He does that in such a special way.

I trust that today you will experience that love. That love is the motivation for many people to just come to Christ. That is the thing that says I am coming to Jesus because I need love. I'm not finding it in the ways that I'm looking.

When Jesus came to the Samaritan woman, "How many husbands do you have?" "I have five husbands and the one I'm living with now is not my husband." Jesus says, "I know." She had given up on marriage. She hadn't experienced what God had for her. She needed this living water, this something inside of her heart that would fill the loneliness gap that she experienced. We all need that.

I wanted to pause here and make that reminder so that we don't make the mistakes that others make by rushing into a relationship or putting unfair expectations in a relationship on someone who really isn't equipped to do. There's no one person that can fill our love needs except God Himself. We must find our love needs met in the Lord in order for us to move forward. So I want to encourage you to practice that. Look for ways to get to know God and allow Him to fill in those love needs and make your cup overflow so much so that you can meet the needs of other people who need them. They need the blessing that God has for you.

Let me pray for us together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, I pray for myself, for my wife. I pray for my brothers and sisters here listening. I pray for the children and young people listening. Teach us what it means to receive your love. Lord, I pray for any person today who's listening to this broadcast who might be feeling lonely, so lonely that they're feeling despairing. I pray that you would encourage their hearts, that would speak to them in a powerful way, demonstrating your love in their hearts. I pray that you'd prompt them to reach out to your church, to get connected to other believers who can extend that love even more. Lord, encourage each heart. Thank you for your solution for loneliness. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Thank you for joining with us today. If you have benefited from this message, I would appreciate it if you would either share it on Facebook, you can tell people that we're going to broadcast it other times in the week, or you can go to our website, our blog at takejesushome.com and you can see this message and have people go to it if you want to send people that way. Also if you've made a decision for Christ, I'd love to find out more about that. Would you email me at scott@takejesushome.com. I'd love to interact with you. Find out more about your spiritual

journey in ways that we as a church might support you in what God is doing in your heart. God bless you. Next week we'll be at the Barn. Feel free to join us there or back here virtually online. Have a great week in the Lord.