

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (MATT. 9:26).

ISOLATION

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS:

“He was a loner.” These words seem to accompany so many unthinkable acts. Society wonders what was going on inside the head of the one whose actions boggle the mind. However, those who act in such horrific ways usually have no concern for what society might think of their actions. They want to excuse themselves from society's normal ways.

God made clear from the very beginning of creation that it was not good for man to be alone. Every way in which God has given shape to life on this earth echoes that sentiment. He gives wives to husbands and husbands to wives. He gives children to parents and parents to children. Everyone enters this world already connected to other people, and it is to remain that way our whole life long.

This is not to say that each of us does not at times need time alone to think and to pray, but we are not to remain alone. We are to live our lives connected to others both for our good and for their good. They serve us, and we serve them. We help one another. Some may be more introverted and others more extroverted, but all people are meant to be together with others.

We see this truth not only in the basic ways that God has shaped creation but also in the way that He has shaped His church. No one in relationship with God stands alone. Not only is God with us, but a whole community of saints is given to us as well. We become one with another through our connection to Jesus.

Those who try to isolate themselves from everyone else are not just choosing a lifestyle; they are rejecting the very shape of creation which God has given. Christians who wish to remain away from a congregation of God's people reject the shape He has given to his church.

All of us at times try to find a way to escape God's call to live in community. May we repent of such self-imposed isolation, receive God's forgiveness in Christ and take again our gracious place in the communities God has given us.

SCRIPTURES:

Genesis 2:18

“Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’”

Proverbs 18:1

“Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgment.”

Hebrews 10:24–25

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

CONVERSATION POINTS:

- Why is being alone dangerous?
- What groups of people has God given you to live within?
- What are some of the benefits of interacting with others?
- How can being around others help us make sure we do not do unthinkable things?
- Did Jesus live in an isolated way? Why or why not?