

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Amen! Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

“Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him’” (Genesis 2:18).

There are a lot of people these days who are lonely. Do you sometimes feel alone, isolated and disconnected from others?

In an era where humanity is “more connected” than ever with phones, mail and the internet, more and more people say that they are isolated, invisible and insignificant. Many people say, “I have to shoulder all of life’s burdens by myself,” and “If I disappear tomorrow, will anyone even notice?”

Loneliness is a problem. In fact, about one-in-two adults in America experience loneliness.¹ So, the odds are high that you are experiencing loneliness.

Again, ***“the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him’”*** (Genesis 2:18).

All throughout the six days of creation, God calls everything good. God created light; God created the sky; God created land and plants and gathered waters into seas; God created the sun, moon, and stars to fill the heavens; God created birds to fill the skies and sea creatures to fill the seas; God created land animals and people to fill the land. Good, good, good, good, good, very good.

When all seems perfect, God says what you would think is the unexpected: It is not good. ***“It is not good that the man should be alone.”***

But for Adam, he had no idea that he needed companionship. Adam had no idea that he was incomplete. So, according to God’s definite plan, God built woman from man.

¹ <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>

Now, the creation of woman in Genesis 2 was not an afterthought on the part of God. Genesis 1 has already witnessed that humanity is male and female, both and together bearing the very image of God. Genesis 2 is just giving us the details of what happened on that sixth day of creation.

Now, it was never God's intent to have Adam live alone. Recall, it was not Adam, but God who said: ***"It is not good that the man should be alone."*** So, before Adam even realizes that he has no companion, God is having Adam discover the need for a mate.

But before God builds a helper for Adam, God gave Adam a task: to name all livestock, to name all the birds of the heavens, and to name every beast of the field. By his voice, Adam was able to compel the lions, tigers, bears, apes, hawks, eagles and every other animal to come to him to be named. As Adam chose the names of each animal, he came to realize that each other creature had a mate. Every other creature had a companion.

Now, don't feel sorry for Adam. For at this time, he was innocent and righteous. So, he perfectly feared, loved, and trusted God for all his needs.

"But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2:20b).

You see, God wanted Adam to discover for himself that no other creature was like him. The Lord was using the process of naming the other creatures as a teaching device to bring Adam's loneliness home to him. Every other living creature had a helper fit for them, but Adam had none.

And God is not content to leave Adam, and you and me, in loneliness.

Now, as Adam longed for a mate, ***"God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man He made into a woman and brought her to the man"*** (Genesis 2:21-22).

From Adam's own side, his own rib, his own being, his own flesh, God builds the stuff of which He builds the woman. Shared flesh and shared origin. God's design of male and female.

Then Adam said:

***“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man”*** (Genesis 2:23).

With joy and satisfaction, and with praise to God, Adam found Eve to be just the companion he needed to complete his happiness. God fulfilled Adam’s need for a companion. God provided Eve to be his helper and in doing so, God provided marriage for Adam’s loneliness.

Mankind needs belonging. We need someone to share our thoughts and desires. We need mutual help for our mutual work.

Now, not everyone will be married, but everyone does need a helper, a friend. We all need a shoulder to cry on. We all need someone we can trust to have your back when times get tough.

Today, God gives us His divine purpose. And His purpose is for us to be of help to one another. We are to help and support our neighbor in every physical need.

Today, the Church celebrates Lutheran Women in Mission, the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML). We, as individual members of the Church are not meant to be alone. ***“For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not the hand, I do not belong to the body,’ that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as He chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body”*** (1 Corinthians 12:14-20).

So, just as Adam needed a helper, and we need helpers in mission, the Lord provides. The motto of the LWML is “Serve the Lord with gladness!” as it supports the Church’s mission domestically and internationally.

It takes all of us to support the Church’s mission to tell everyone that in the coming kingdom of Christ there will be no more loneliness.

Today, because of the Fall into sin, there is so much loneliness. Sin strains our marriages where even marriages can be lonely. And even while in a sea of people, it can be very lonely.

It is certainly not good for man to be alone. But just as God created Eve from Adam to provide an end to Adam's loneliness, God, too, sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ. Crowds followed Jesus, but then they all departed. From the crowds to loneliness. Jesus was alone in Gethsemane. He was alone in Caiaphas' house. He was alone before Herod. He was alone before Pontius Pilate. He was alone before the Roman soldiers. He was alone before the crowds that shook their heads and mocked Him, saying: "***He saved others; let Him save Himself, if He is the Christ of God, His Chosen One!***" (Luke 23:35). While hanging upon a cross, He cried out, "***My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?***" (Matthew 27:46 & Mark 15:34). Even God the Father abandoned Him. Jesus was the loneliest Man in the world.

You see, your Savior knows what it is like to be lonely. Jesus knows your loneliness. But now He is risen from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of God the Father "***in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And He put all things under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all***" (Ephesians 1:20-23).

Today, Jesus promises that He is with you always. He will not leave you as an orphan. Even in the shadow of death, He is with you, for His rod and His staff comfort you.

The coming kingdom of Christ will have no loneliness. Your loneliness will be swallowed up by togetherness as we will be in God's presence forever. We will be reunited with those whom death has torn away.

In the meantime, God brings us together at this altar as He forgives our sins against Him and our neighbor, so that we can better fulfill our divine purpose in service to our neighbor. Amen.

*The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.*

+ SOLI DEO GLORIA +