

Isolation V Involvement

December 28th 2003

Opening: Amish boy and father

Main text for today: **Hebrews 13: 5-6**

Proverbs 4:9 ...with all your getting get understanding

Introduction: Robinson Crusoe novel by Daniel Defoe ... main character was shipwrecked on a deserted island who nearly lost his mind from loneliness and isolation until he turned to read our text for today from Hebrews 13 read from Our Daily bread 12/17/03

A similar situation is presented in the Robert Zemeckis film, "Cast Away" starring Tom Hanks

The main character Chuck Noland a Fed Ex Systems analyst narrowly survives a plane crash to become the sole survivor on a remote uninhabited Pacific island.

Facing down loneliness and isolation he creates a friend from a volleyball that has his bloody palm print and straw hair. The volleyball becomes a companion named "Wilson" that helps him stave off depression and insanity. Even though **physical survival** is not a problem with food and fresh water available ... **emotional survival** is!

We later discover through conversation with Wilson that Chuck had a grizzly brush with contemplated almost carried out suicide.

I. Designed to Be Social

We are social people ... not made to be alone

See **Genesis 2: 18** a morsel of information for gaining understanding of the heart of God

Man was created for God

Yet examine the nature of God ... It is not good for man to be alone ... God did not create Adam to be his slave or to be occupied only with God ...

God loved Adam he gave him authority, purpose and identity

God seemed to enjoy the interaction with Adam ... but never sought domination over him instead provided him with a soul mate a companion to share a relationship of love with to compliment and complete him, Eve. **Freedom to chose God's way or our way**

God did not abandon Adam and Eve contingency plan already in place a sacrifice lamb

God understood, man can not be alone

One of the worst forms of institutionalized punishment is called solitary confinement

Designed to break the spirit and if necessary the mind

Read Hebrew 13: 1-5 NLT and Msg

II. We were designed for a purpose

Don't forget to: Show hospitality to strangers
 Remember those in prison
 Help those who have been abused

There are three basic groups of people

1. Those who condescendingly look down on others less fortunate with disdain and disgust
2. Those who notice the problems of others but remain unattached perhaps even feel sorry for the unfortunate but do little or nothing about helping to change their plight. They just cannot or will not get involved
3. The last group consists of people who are moved by the problems of others, they identify with them and then go the next step to do something about it!

These are the people who work with or started organizations such as:

The Red Cross

The Salvation Army

Toys for Tots

Samaritan's Purse

Hospital Mercy Ships

Boys and Girl Scouts of America

Public Defenders

Teen Challenge

World Missions Outreach

Mentoring programs, soup kitchens, prisons ministries

It's why pastors, rabbis and priests dedicate their lives to God in serving others

It is the very essence and core of Jesus teachings

Most of us fall into category two ... we care about others we may even donate a little money to the cause but we don't want to get involved.

Why not?

The risk of uncertainty, fear, we don't know what to expect or even if we have what it takes.

We fail to follow one of the reasons we put here ... and instead become **self absorbed**

Story of Sea Bisquet First time they ran him he was fast but couldn't run in a straight line ... the trainer who first saw his potential Tom Smith ... he was so messed up he has forgotten how to do what he was born for!

God wants us to move from position #2 to #3 from caring but no action to love in action

Yet it is not how hard we work but how much heart we involve in our work not our way but God's

We spoke earlier of the effects of isolation and loneliness due to physical separation
But is it possible to feel isolated and alone in the middle of a crowded room, as a guest at a party?

Yes!

We are speaking of a prison whose walls are psychological and emotional.

For those of you who have suffered anxiety or panic attacks you know what I am speaking of.

Almost every one to some varying degree has experienced feelings of loneliness, emptiness, apathy, anxiety and depression.
These conditions are often a result of our own doing.

Example ... we can lose our focus our direction and purpose... we work so hard to provide a home and future for our family that we can wear our selves out, exhausted, we neglect meaningful conversation with our children or spouse they feel neglected you feel unappreciated and angry.

Result frustration, misunderstanding, arguments, and unrealistic expectations ...
finally
self imposed isolation, loneliness and bags of problems to follow.

Proverbs 11:28 *A life devoted to things is a dead life, a stump; a God-shaped life is a flourishing tree.* (Msg)

The movie “Bruce Almighty” starring Jim Carry and Morgan Freeman
Jim Carry’s character is disappointed and angry at life he blames God

Morgan Freeman who plays the part of God, appears with a mop and bucket in hand saying “no matter how messed up things get they can always be cleaned up.”

Do you have questions, of course you do!

You’re wondering of what happened to the life you used to know, wondering what went wrong, wondering why God has abandoned you, even feeling afraid and angry at the same time.

God has not abandoned you even though you feel alone, anxious perhaps even desperate.
It comes down to understanding ...

Our Plans V God’s Plan Our Purpose V God’s Purpose

Read section from the Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren
Ephesians 1:11 (Msg)

God's way or Your way? It does come down to a choice
Be willing to give up your way **it isn't working anyway**

God wants you to experience the peace of going his way
To grasp the amazing truth that you are not alone ever that he has specific plans that will not only bring new meaning and purpose to your life but that you were meant to impact this generation of people in a way that you can not yet imagine.