

# DEEPER

## Daily Bible Study

Adult Sabbath School Lesson  
Podcast, Study Notes, and Teacher Helps

### When Alone

2019, Quarter 2, Lesson 4

#### Sabbath (April 20)

In the beginning, God created in His image, and part of that reflection includes the social dimension of human nature. After all, God said, “Let *us* make man in our image” (Genesis 1:26, emphasis added). Scripture is clear that even though “God is one Lord” (Deuteronomy 6:4), the Divine Godhead includes three distinct individuals—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). This relational aspect of God’s nature was to be reflected in the social connections within humanity, and creation week was not complete until God had created a companion—a woman—for Adam (Genesis 2:18). In this week’s lesson we will investigate what happens when we find ourselves without one or more of the social relationships that define so much of human existence. On Friday, we will briefly look at the separation and “aloneness” that Christ suffered during the final hours of His life, and what that experience means for us in the plan of salvation.

#### Sunday (April 21): Companionship

We were created as social beings, and the desire for companionship is one that most of us feel throughout our entire lives. The Bible reveals that in His wisdom, God intended for all human beings to share in healthy, uplifting relationships throughout life.

##### Discussion Questions:

- Read Genesis 2:18. For what reasons do you think God declared that it was “not good” that Adam should be alone? In what ways do these reasons apply to all people? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. According to this passage, what are the benefits of companionship? (More productive labor, aid when one is in need, safety and help in trouble.) What are the dangers of being alone? (Lack of assistance when in trouble, risk of being “overcome” by the world.) In what ways can we understand these issues in the physical, emotional, and spiritual realms? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Philippians 4:11-13. What was the secret to Paul’s ability to be content no matter what situation he found himself in? (According to verse 13, it was his connection with Christ.) What testimony can you share regarding God’s ability to sustain you or a loved one during a period of isolation or loneliness? (Answers will vary.)

#### Monday (April 22): The Unmarried Life

Although God’s original intent for humanity was clearly that a man and a woman be united together in marriage (Genesis 2:18, 22-24), for various reasons many people find themselves living as a single person. What advice and counsel does God give for those in this situation?

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### Discussion Questions:

- Read Jeremiah 16:1-3. For what reason was Jeremiah called to live a single life? (His entire life was to be a prophetic message to the people of his day.) Although Jeremiah's call to remain single was clearly unique, in what ways might God want each of us to share in his experience? (Our entire lives are to be offered as "living sacrifices" [Romans 12:1] to God so that He can use us to reach the people around us.)
- Read Ezekiel 24:15-18. What difficult experience happened to Ezekiel? (His wife died.) What challenging command did God give to Ezekiel in this experience? (He was not to mourn for her.)
- Read Ezekiel 24:19-24. What was the lesson that the people were to learn from Ezekiel's experience? (When God allowed the temple to be destroyed by the Babylonians, they were not to mourn the loss of the building, in which many of them had placed their pride and put their trust. Rather, they were to confess their sins and iniquities.) What lesson can we learn from this story in Ezekiel? (It is easy for many of us to place our affections and trust in earthly things, even good things such as a husband or a wife. God is calling all of us to place our "pride" in the God we serve and to trust completely in Him for what we need in life.)
- Read 1 Corinthians 7:27-31. What reasons does Paul give for his advice to remain single? (Time is short and "the fashion of this world passeth away.") Are these reasons still valid today? (Yes.)
- Read 1 Corinthians 7:32-34. What warning does Paul give to both men and women who are married? (Don't let the cares of this life distract you from the higher mission of serving God.) Does being married automatically mean that someone will be less effective as a worker for God? (I hope not!) Why then do you think Paul gave this advice? (Answers will vary.)
- Read 1 Corinthians 7:25,39-40. For what reasons might Paul have made it clear that his advice to live singly was his own counsel, rather than a direct command from God? (Perhaps he did not want his readers to come to the conclusion that it is wrong to marry.)

## **Tuesday (April 23): When a Marriage Ends**

Divorce is, of course, one of the most painful and isolating experiences a person can experience. Perhaps no other life situation can leave a person feeling more alone or rejected. The Bible reveals why divorce is such a traumatic experience—it is the ripping apart of two people that have, through marriage, become "one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). "Every marriage engagement should be carefully considered, for marriage is a step taken for life. Both the man and the woman should carefully consider whether they can cleave to each other through the vicissitudes of life as long as they both shall live" (AH 340). The Bible has much to say about divorce and its devastating impact on those that go through it.

### Discussion Questions:

- Read Malachi 2:14-16. For what reasons does God say He hates divorce in this passage? (The men of Malachi's day were divorcing their wives "treacherously" and were breaking their marriage covenant.)

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- Read Matthew 5:31,32; 19:8,9. For what reasons does God say He hates divorce in this passage? (Except for cases of fornication and infidelity, divorce frequently results in further sin as the former marriage partners commit adultery with other people.)

God has not left those in a struggling marriage without help and promises that, if prayerfully and faithfully followed, will result in restoration and harmony.

Satan is ever ready to take advantage when any matter of variance arises, and by moving upon the objectionable, hereditary traits of character in husband or wife, he will try to cause the alienation of those who have united their interests in a solemn covenant before God. In the marriage vows they have promised to be as one, the wife covenanting to love and obey her husband, the husband promising to love and cherish his wife. *If the law of God is obeyed, the demon of strife will be kept out of the family, and no separation of interests will take place, no alienation of affection will be permitted* (AH 106, emphasis added).

### Discussion Questions:

- Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. In what ways can practicing these principles of God's law of love bring healing to a struggling or broken marriage? (Answers will vary.) What testimony, from your own experience or that of someone you know, can you share about how following these principles brings restoration to the marriage relationship? (Answers will vary.)

## Wednesday (April 24): Death and Loneliness

Death was never in God's plan for this world, or for the entire universe. Death is so diametrically opposed to God's purpose for us, that Adam and Eve sobbed over the first wilted flowers that they experienced.

As they witnessed in drooping flower and falling leaf the first signs of decay, Adam and his companion mourned more deeply than men now mourn over their dead. The death of the frail, delicate flowers was indeed a cause of sorrow; but when the goodly trees cast off their leaves, the scene brought vividly to mind the stern fact that death is the portion of every living thing (PP 62).

While nothing can erase the pain caused by the death of a loved one, the Bible does contain many wonderful promises that can help the Christian through such times of loneliness. Let's look at a few of those promises now.

### Discussion Questions:

- Read Isaiah 57:1. What comfort can Christians take in the death of a faithful follower of Christ? (The deceased believer has been spared whatever future trials, temptations, and persecutions life may have brought. They are now resting in peace, sealed in the loving promise of Christ to resurrect them at the second coming.)
- Read Revelation 21:4. What promise does God give in this passage regarding the future of death? (God will eventually destroy death.) This verse really contains several promises. Which one means the most to you? (Answers will vary.)
- Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18. What part of this promise is the most comforting to you, and why? (Answers will vary.)

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As much as we understandably dread physical death, there is another kind of death that should be even more fearful to us, and that is the condition of being spiritually dead. Spiritual death brings the worst kind of separation—separation from God. As the prophet Isaiah wrote, “but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear” (Isaiah 59:2). Thankfully, we do not have to wait until the second coming to experience a “spiritual resurrection” from sin—we can have this experience today!

Satan cannot hold the dead in his grasp when the Son of God bids them live. He cannot hold in spiritual death one soul who in faith receives Christ’s word of power. God is saying to all who are dead in sin, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.” Ephesians 5:14. That word is eternal life. As the word of God which bade the first man live, still gives us life; as Christ’s word, “Young man, I say unto thee, Arise,” gave life to the youth of Nain, so that word, “Arise from the dead,” is life to the soul that receives it. God “hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.” Colossians 1:13. It is all offered us in His word. If we receive the word, we have the deliverance (DA 320).

### Discussion Questions:

- Read 1 Corinthians 10:13; Jude 24; and Romans 6:4,6,12. What hope and comfort do you find in these verses? (Christ has promised to give you His victory over your temptations and sins!)

## Thursday (April 25): Spiritually Single

Many people converted to Christ—or returning to Christ—after they have married a non-believer question what course they should take when their spouse refuses to join them in their Christian walk. Again, the Bible provides abundant counsel for this challenging, and often lonely, situation.

### Discussion Questions:

- Read 1 Corinthians 7:12,13,15. What advice does Paul give to men and women who are married to non-believers? (If the non-believer is willing to remain married, then the believer is obligated to remain in the marriage.)
- Read 1 Corinthians 7:14,16. In what way is the unbelieving husband or wife “sanctified” by the believing spouse? (The influence of the believing spouse may work for the conversion and salvation of the non-believer.)
- Read Isaiah 54:5. In what way or ways can God be a “husband” to those who have no believing marriage partner? (Answers will vary. Ultimately, the unification of the marriage relationship points to the spiritual unity that Christ wants with each member of His church [Ephesians 5:30-32].)
- Read Hosea 2:19,20. What does it mean to be betrothed unto Christ “in righteousness”? (The love of righteousness is a fundamental aspect of God’s character [see Hebrews 1:9], and He promises to replicate His character—including His righteousness, love, and faith—in all those who unite themselves to Him.)
- Read Psalm 72:12. What great promise does God give here to those who feel that they are standing alone for truth? (Jesus Christ will be a “help meet” [Genesis 2:18] for those that do not have a believing husband or wife to stand beside them.)

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### Friday (April 26): The Price of Redemption

Shortly before His death, Jesus predicted to His disciples that a time was at hand when He would be left alone. “Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me” (John 16:32). The book *The Desire of Ages* explains the dark tunnel of loneliness that Christ entered as the guilt of sin was placed upon Him:

Throughout His life on earth He had walked in the light of God’s presence. When in conflict with men who were inspired by the very spirit of Satan, He could say, “He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.” John 8:29. But now He seemed to be shut out from the light of God’s sustaining presence. Now He was numbered with the transgressors. The guilt of fallen humanity He must bear. Upon Him who knew no sin must be laid the iniquity of us all. So dreadful does sin appear to Him, so great is the weight of guilt which He must bear, that He is tempted to fear it will shut Him out forever from His Father’s love. Feeling how terrible is the wrath of God against transgression, He exclaims, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death (DA 685).

As Christ felt His unity with the Father broken up, He feared that in His human nature He would be unable to endure the coming conflict with the powers of darkness....With the issues of the conflict before Him, Christ’s soul was filled with dread of separation from God. Satan told Him that if He became the surety for a sinful world, the separation would be eternal. He would be identified with Satan’s kingdom, and would nevermore be one with God (DA 686).

Christ’s loneliness reached a climax when He cried out from the cross, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46). Throughout His life, Jesus had lived in the conscious awareness of His Father’s presence, and He explained more than once that He didn’t do anything or say anything except as He received it from the Father (see John 5:19,30). Three times during His public ministry—at His baptism (Matthew 3:17), at the transfiguration (Mark 9:7), and in the temple shortly before His death (John 12:28)—Christ heard the Father’s voice from heaven testifying to their relationship. “But now the voice from heaven was silent. No testimony in Christ’s favor was heard. Alone He suffered abuse and mockery from wicked men” (DA 746).

Christ’s experience was part of God’s divine plan of salvation, for the prophet Isaiah had written over 500 years earlier, “I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me” (Isaiah 63:3). As the book *The Desire of Ages* explains, “In that thick darkness God’s presence was hidden. He makes darkness His pavilion, and conceals His glory from human eyes. God and His holy angels were beside the cross. *The Father was with His Son*” (DA 753-754, emphasis added). Because Christ was willing to experience the separation that sin causes, we have the hope of salvation. His experience also gives us the reassurance that no matter how dark or lonely our life may feel, God promises to stand by our side if we place our faith and trust in Him.