

## Loneliness: A Threat to Unity

2 Timothy 4:9-21

●**WELCOME God's People (15 minutes)**

●**WORSHIP God (10 minutes** – song, reading of Psalms or prayers of thanks/praise). You can use prayers of thanksgiving or adoration as your time of worship

●**Live by God's WORD (45 minutes)**

Even though Christians have received the Holy Spirit (the Comforter, who abides inside us), we are still human beings. Just like non-Christians, we have basic needs. We need be loved, to be needed, to feel safe, along with other important things. Many of our personal needs can only be supplied by having relationships with other people.

Many of us do not know, or we have forgotten, that God has not created humans to be loners. God made this very clear when He said, "it is not good for man to be alone" Genesis 2:18. God had created the things of the world, and they were absolutely perfect. However, there was a problem: the man was alone.

In today's lesson, we see the apostle Paul in the final part of his life. He is alone. He has been deserted by some several people, who had claimed to be friends with him in the gospel ministry. However, some became barriers to the gospel. They deserted Paul both physically and spiritually. They interfered the spreading of the gospel to the gentiles. However, Paul had some other partners in the ministry. He trusted them and reached out to them. We see in our Scripture reading for this lesson.

Paul had a reason to be lonely. He was treated roughly. He was in a small dark, damp prison cell, which was underground. He would soon be executed. However, he refused to allow loneliness to hinder his ministry. He reached out to his friends. He shared his needs and continued to direct their ministry through his writings. These letters are called "The prison epistles." Paul wrote over half of the New Testament. Had Paul just sat in prison, much of his writings would not have been preserved and given to us to study and follow. His writings give us the theology, the direction, and the motivation we need in our life with Jesus Christ and our unity with one another.

### **Suggested Questions for Discussion and Growth**

1. If you were in Paul's situation, would the spiritual health of God's people be a concern?
2. What has been a large barrier to unity with other Christians you have faced?
3. Share a successful method you use to prevent or to overcome loneliness
4. What did you hear in the sermon that helped you in your relationship with God and others?

●**Impact God's WORLD (20 min)**

1. There are lots of lonely people around us. Look for opportunities to make a connection.
2. Take time to pray those you know, who are unbelievers. How can you influence them?

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS – 3 minutes:**

1. Share: ●any planned group activity ●important church announcements ●next meeting time
2. You should have a copy of the church bulletin to help remind the group of important events.

**CLOSING** – Please turn in your attendance each week. It helps us evaluate our progress.