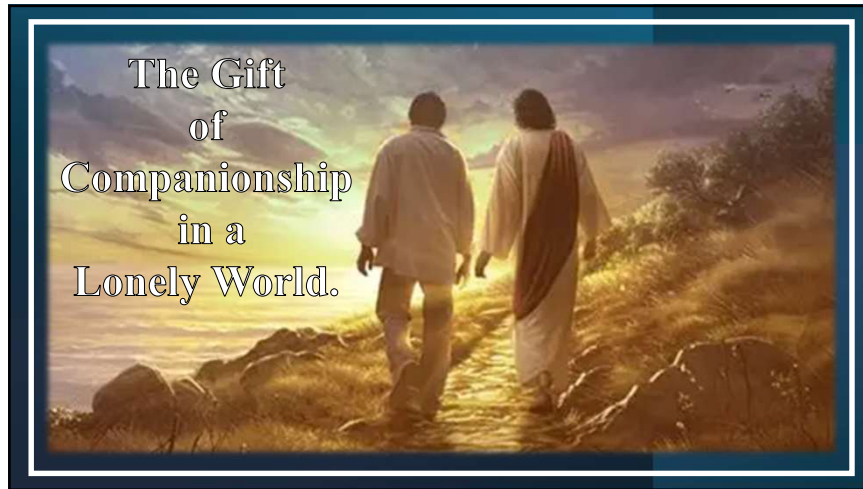




Ecclesiastes 4 KJV

1 So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. 2 Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive. 3 Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun. 4 Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour.

1

2

Ecclesiastes 4 KJV

This is also vanity and vexation of spirit. 5 The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh. 6 Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit. 7 Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun. 8 There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travail.

Ecclesiastes 4 KJV

9 Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. 10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. 11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? 12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken. 13 Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.

3

4

Ecclesiastes 4 KJV

14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor. 15 I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead. 16 There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

5

Theme

The burdens of loneliness and the gift of companionship.

6

The Gift
of
Companionship
in a
Lonely World.

Oppression Burdens the Vulnerable

7

Oppression Burdens the Vulnerable

- Loneliness often grows where injustice exists.
- Oppressed people often have no comforter (4:1) - The Spirit is our Comforter.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; (John 14:16 KJV)

8

Oppression Burdens the Vulnerable

- Oppression creates despair - God comforts the afflicted.

3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; 4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4 KJV)

9

Oppression Burdens the Vulnerable

- God cares deeply for the oppressed - Jesus came to set the oppressed free.

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, (Luke 4:18 KJV)

10

Oppression Burdens the Vulnerable

- Believers are called to defend the vulnerable - Care for widows & orphans.

27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. (James 1:27 KJV)

11

Oppression Burdens the Vulnerable

- Oppression reveals the need for community. - Weep with those who weep.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. (Romans 12:15 KJV)

12

Discussion Questions

- How does oppression intensify loneliness in the lives of vulnerable people?
- Where have you seen God provide comfort to someone who was suffering injustice?
- What role can believers play in bringing community & compassion to the oppressed?

13

The Gift
of
Companionship
in a
Lonely World.

Envy Destroys Relationships

14

Envy Destroys Relationships

- Comparison steals joy & isolates the heart.
 - Rivalry drives much human labor (4:4) - Do nothing from rivalry.
- 3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. (Philippians 2:3 KJV)**

15

Envy Destroys Relationships

- Envy isolates people - Do not provoke or envy one another.
- 26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. (Galatians 5:26 KJV)**
- Contentment protects relationships - Godliness with contentment is great gain.
- 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. (1 Timothy 6:6 KJV)**

16

Envy Destroys Relationships

- Envy blinds us to God's gifts - Every good gift is from above.

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. (James 1:17 KJV)

- Love replaces envy.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, (1 Corinthians 13:4 KJV)

17

Discussion Questions

- How does envy quietly erode trust & closeness in relationships?
- What practices help you cultivate contentment instead of comparison?
- How does recognizing God's gifts reshape the way you relate to others?

18

The Gift
of
Companionship
in a
Lonely World.

Companionship Strengthens Life

19

Companionship Strengthens Life

- We were created for community, not isolation.
- Two are better than one (4:9) - Jesus sent disciples out two by two.

7 And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; (Mark 6:7 KJV)

20

Companionship Strengthens Life

- Companions lift each other up.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2 KJV)

- Companionship provides protection - Love lays down its life for friends.

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:12–13 KJV)

21

Companionship Strengthens Life

- Community brings warmth & comfort - Love one another with brotherly affection.

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; (Romans 12:10 KJV)

- A cord of three strands is not easily broken - Jesus is present where believers gather.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:20 KJV)

22

Discussion Questions

- Why does shared life make burdens lighter & victories sweeter?
- Who has been a “lifter” in your life & how did their support strengthen you?
- What does it look like for Jesus to be the “third strand” in your relationships?

23

Practical Application

- Reach out to someone who may be lonely.
- Practice contentment by thanking God for what you have.
- Encourage a friend who is struggling.
- Replace comparison with gratitude.
- Ask God to deepen your relationships.

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