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**Change**  
**Part 2 – You Don’t Have to be Lonely**  
Adam Donyes

You do not have to be lonely. As statistics and research suggest, this is the loneliest generation in the history of humanity. Several articles have come out in the last couple of months and at a lot of people, because of technology in today’s day and age, are just not known. People don’t know them. They know the facade they want to portray on LinkedIn and Facebook and Snapchat and Twitter and Instagram and everything else, but they aren’t really known.

So, I thought you know what? I don’t even know if my own six-year-old knows me very well. I was going to do an activity with him yesterday and throughout the weekend. We grabbed a 1,000 piece, 1980s puzzles, which was the generation I grew up in. The best decade ever in my opinion. He got to know a lot more about Dad just doing this puzzle. It was a blast. You can’t see it all clearly, but this is just a collage of 80s and it was awesome, and it was nostalgic.

He’s pointing to people and asking me, “Who’s this lady in her white pajamas?”

I was like “Well, that’s Madonna.”

“What does she do?”

“She sings.”

“She doesn’t sing anymore?”

“Well, kind of. Reincarnated through Miley Cyrus, but yeah, she’s still around.”

He would ask me other questions. He’d say, “No way, Dad! You guys had Teenage Ninja Mutant Turtles?”

The 80s had everything before you, punk. Transformers... That was us. You guys are just reinventing the wheel. We had it all before you did.

Then he asked, “Who’s this football player?”

I was like, “Oh, that’s Joe Montana. He experienced the sweet success of super bowls until he got traded to the Chiefs.”

All the Chiefs fans are like, “You better hurry this up so I can catch the noon kick off buddy.”

And then right next to Montana is this guy known as Donald Trump. He was like, “Wait a minute that’s our U.S. President.”

I go, “Yeah, he wasn’t back then.”

“What did he do before he was our U.S. president?”

I was like, “Well, Aiden, it just depends who you ask. If you ask some people, he was a really successful business man. If you ask other people, it was really stormy waters.” I committed to it. Ted says you just have to commit to political jokes and you’ll be good. I was 100% committed to it.

He was like, “Who’s this guy with the sunglasses and who’s this guy in the aircraft carrier?”

I said, “Oh, that’s Tom Cruise.”

“Wait, Tom Cruise is still around?”

“Yeah, that Scientology must really be working for him because he hasn’t aged a bit.” Right? We had a blast going through the 1980s puzzle and just getting him to know me.

Here’s the reality. As you guys walked in here this morning, some of you weren’t known. You’re not even known by your own spouses. You’re not even known by your own kids. You’re definitely not known by anyone else outside. I want to welcome our online viewer. I want you guys to be known by everybody in here too. Today, we’re going to be talking about not being lonely and what it means to be known. If this is the most isolated and depressed and lonely generation in the history of humanity, what does it look like to become known and not be those things.

Dr. Tim Elmore, who does a lot of research on generations and decades, etc., uses this thing called habitudes. He’ll use images to provide conversation and to provoke thought. So, he’d show an image like this (photo of a person standing at the end of a long dock over a lake) and he would let thought drive out of it. What do you see? What do you perceive? For some of you, seeing this is pure bliss. A mom of five kids under six is like, “Oh please, Lord, give me that. That would be amazing.” Solitude is healthy. As a matter of fact, solitude should be an important spiritual discipline we practice.

Some of you that saw this instantly said, “That’s me. I’m looking at myself. I’m lonely. I’m sad. I’m depressed. I’m anxious. I’m all those things.” It’s funny how a picture can drive two different things out of us. While solitude is important, isolation is not.

Dr. Henry Cloud says it this way, *“There is a difference between solitude and isolation. One is connected, and one isn’t. Solitude replenishes, isolation diminishes.”*

I'm an introvert/extrovert which means I can be extroverted for a little while, but then I definitely need to be introverted. For the longest time in my marriage, I couldn't understand why I didn't want to just completely jump in and engage with my wife when I got home from work, but I was engaging with people all day.

The reality is for the first nine and a half years of our marriage, I had zero commute. I had a skateboard ride to work when I was in Kansas City and then I had a four-wheeler ride across the street when I moved back to Branson. There was no commute. So, think about that. I'm pouring into people all day and then five minutes later, I'm walking into my home.

Now we moved in the last six months and it's crazy. She says, "You're so full of life." It's because I'm getting 20 – 25 minutes to decompress. I never had it and I never realized how important that solitude time is. The radio is not on. It's just me talking to God, praying, processing. That solitude time is to refuel my soul in Christ, not anyone else, and it's not isolation because I'm actually having a conversation with somebody and he's actually listening to me and he actually hears everything. As a matter of fact, he knows what to pray for you before you do. He intercedes on your behalf.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta says this: *"The most terrible is loneliness, and the feeling of being unloved."*

So, I'm here to tell you if you walked in here and you feel lonely, you feel like you've got a thousand friends on social media, but no one really knows you, I'm here to tell you it doesn't have to be that way. You don't have to be alone, you don't have to be isolated. As a matter of fact, it's isolation that destroys. It's isolation that lives in the dark. It's isolation that feeds addiction. It's isolation that breaks up relationships.

In Genesis 1, we see this macro view of creation. And then in Genesis 2, we see the micro view. In Genesis 1, we see that God separates the expanses – the light and the darkness – and he calls one day, and he calls one night. And then he creates the earth and then he creates the mountains and then he creates the lakes and the seas. And then he creates the animals. And then he creates man. It says after he did all these things on the first day, and on the second day, and the third day, and on the fourth day, and on the fifth day, and on the sixth day... It says God saw all that he did, and it was good. Everything he created was good, including man. But then the first time we see God say that it is not good is in Genesis 2. Look at this. So, he created all these things. He said the trees are good, the animals are good, man is good, but then he says hold on.

***18 The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."***

***19 Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them...*** Now, think about this for a second. He said, "It's not good for man to be alone, I'll make you a suitable helper. But before I do that, have fellowship with these animals," but it didn't work. There are two things to point out. If you're a cat lady, that's not fellowship. If you're a dog hoarder, that's not fellowship.

When my wife and I lived in Kansas City, four houses up from us was this lady, and every day – I'm not joking – we saw her walking a different dog. I was like, "Babe, where are these dogs; they're not

outside anywhere. She was keeping 30 dogs inside her house. She was a widow and she was really alone. I felt badly when the city came and took all of her dogs. “Baby, we have to invite her over to dinner. We’ve got to love on this dog hoarder.” Animals aren’t fellowship. Your cats aren’t fellowship.

The other thing to point out here is that God gave Adam work before the fall. This is pre-Genesis 3. The one chapter we want to take out of the Bible is Genesis 3. This was pre-three. He gives him work. He says here’s a tedious task; name all the animals. Well he was really creative at first, right? “Whoa hippopotamus, rhinoceros, giraffe.” And then you can tell his creativity kind of ran out a little bit. “That’s an ant. Well, that’s eating the ant so that’s an ant eater.” The creativity kind of ran out a little bit.

**...and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.** So, you can imagine this was before death. He’s riding around on horses and he’s loving the waterfall, but all of the sudden, God was like no hold on, **...But for Adam no suitable helper was found.** In other words, fellowship... Which I know there are horse people out here that love horses and think they are horse whispers and different things. I’m not talking about that. I’m talking about regardless how great you can talk to horses or, if you’re Cesar Millan, you can talk to dogs. I don’t care; that’s still not fellowship. God’s saying, “No, no, no, you need humanity. Humanity needs humanity.” We are to be in life fellowship with one another.

Then the fall happens, and watch what happens after this later in Genesis 3. **5 “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened...”** He’s talking about the forbidden fruit. Scripture never says apple; we don’t know it’s an apple. It’s just a forbidden fruit. It could have been a papaya or kiwi for all we know. I think it was a mango. **“...and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”**

**6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized...** There is something really cool about this word right here. In the Hebrew, it called *yada*, which means to be known. It’s the same word when God says, “You will know good from evil.” This Hebrew word *known* is the same word he uses for you and me to be known by him. First, we were *yada* – to be known by God – and then by others. **...they were naked...**

So, this *yada* has occurred, and they realized they were naked **...so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.** Something else interesting to point out here is because they tried to cover up their own shame with fig leaves, God gives us the foreshadowing of the ultimate sacrifice that is going to be in Christ because he now commits the first debt. He kills animals to give them more proper coverings than their fig leaves. So, he kills something to cover up their shame and their guilt, a foreshadowing to the ultimate sacrifice, his Son who he gave on our behalf to, once and for all, do away with any sacrifices that would be needed. It’s a powerful foreshadowing.

So, here’s the word *yada* that I was talking about in the Hebrew. It literally means *to be made known or become known, to be revealed*. So, all of you were created by this creator to be known. And when you’re not known, that’s when you become lonely, anxious, suicidal, depressed... all these different

things because you're going against the way you were created. *To make oneself known. To be perceived. To be instructed.*

Dick Foth said it this way... He spoke at our church about two years ago. It was a phenomenal message. If you didn't hear it, go back and listen to it. We still have it archived. He also wrote a book called *Known*, which is very powerful if you're feeling lonely. Out of that book he says this: "*When fractured relationships are the expected and alone becomes the order of the day, the distance and separation we feel is like leaving Eden all over again.*"

What he is saying is what I'm telling you. They felt shame and guilt and God covers it up. They get out of what God's best was for them and they have to live with that. When we live in isolation and shame, it's that same fractured experience that we don't have to live in and experience. There is a lot of freedom found in being known.

As a matter of fact, I picked my friend up from the airport about a month ago and he was telling me how he was in this community down in Dallas. They were discussing and having conversations, and whatever he said triggered something I had put way back in the back of my mind that happened 17 or 18 years ago. I just never thought about it and was just living in freedom. But it was one of those things I guess that could resurface. Nothing catastrophic, but it was definitely something, that one thing that I had never shared with my wife. I want her to completely know me, so I went home that night and just said, "Hey, I just want to prepare you. I have something to share with you that was a dumb mistake I made in college and I'm going to share it with you because I don't ever want any surprises in our marriage or life."

She was graceful and it was great. It was 17 or 18 years ago, but I felt so much better after I shared that with her. It was like, *I'm fully known. I'm fully known by my wife. I'm fully known by my boys.* And it's healthy to be fully known. When we walk around in the shadows and we're so afraid of being found out or being a fake or a farce, that is load bearing, that is heavy weight to carry, and we weren't meant to carry around life like that.

**We were all created to be known, and when we go against the way we were made to function, it develops disfunction.** Think about it. All of you in here this morning, every single person that is sitting in these rows has a purpose. God didn't create anybody in here and say, "You know what? That's a great person just to take up space and oxygen. We'll just plant them there. I just want them to take up some space and other people's O2..." No. He created everybody for a purpose and he wants you to know him intimately.

Wouldn't it make sense if you wanted to know what that purpose was you would spend time knowing the one who created you for that purpose? None of you in here are a mistake. And none of you in here are to live in isolation. God has a great purpose for you and he's not done with you. Do you know how I can say that with such passion? You're still sitting in here. When he's done with you, you'll be with him. Until then, he's got a great purpose for you in this life and it's not Netflix binging and watching social media all day. That's just not it.

It's important to know how this fleshes it's self out. So, here's us, hopefully. We're at the foot of the throne, the foot of the cross. God is exalted; we're looking upward to him, not down on him, if that's even possible. That first relationship, that first yada to be know is to be known by God. That's healthy. There's no other person or other thing that will fill that hole in your heart besides Christ and Christ alone. There's nothing.

You can try. You can try drugs, you can try alcohol, you can try porn, you can try sex, you can try success, you can try all these other things, but at the end of the day... You can try more followers, you can try more likes, but at the end of the day, you know that hole is still there. Why? Because you weren't created first to be known by those things. You were created first to be known by God. He created you. He has a purpose for you. He has plans for you. Psalms 37: 5 says Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. Delight yourself in him and he's got his purpose for you and his plans for you.

Any healthy relationship across humanity exists with the relationship with God first. Any other relationship that begins with others creates disfunction. Let me show you. The horizontal relationship that we have here is between you and others. That's the second one. That one comes over the top. It conveniently makes a cross because Christ is the one that redeems our relationships. Only with the vertical relationship first will the horizontal relationships every be healthy.

When you look for a person to play the role of Christ, you're projecting onto them to be a dysfunctional savior. If my wife ever looks to me to be Superman or Jesus, it's unhealthy in our marriage. One, I can't walk on water. Two, I will never be perfect. One of the healthiest things I could do for my boys, when I blow it, is get down on one knee, look Aiden and Anders in the eye, and say, "Daddy blew it. I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?" What I am doing in that moment, Woodland Hills, is I am telling them Daddy is not perfect. Daddy will never be perfect, and I don't want them to look to Daddy as Superman; I want them to look to the one and only one that will never let them down.

You see, a lot of us carry father wounds because we project on our earthly fathers to play roles that only our heavenly Father can and ever will and is intended to. So, your relationship with God is the most important relationship. When you project that onto your spouse, when you project that onto your kids, when you project that onto your addictions, it's not going to satisfy you. I'm telling you it goes against the DNA of how you were created.

My older brother, whom I love dearly... We Marco Polo together all the time. Marco Polo is an app where you can facetime without having to facetime. Anyways... I love him dearly, but he's a recovering addict. He's been sober, but he's done it all from heroin to coke to meth to alcohol. God spared him. Two or three times he should have been dead. In his recovery, I would go to NA and AA meetings with him. I went and sat in on them. They get in a circle, which I'm going to talk about here at the end. Circles are better than rows.

They would get in circles and they would say... My brother's name is Brian. "My name is Brian. I'm an addict" And then in unison, everyone in the circle would look at him and say, "Keep coming back; it works." Then the next person would say, "My name is Brandon; I'm an addict." The people in the circle

would say, "Keep coming back; it works." "My name is Lisa; I'm an addict." The people in the circle would say, "Keep coming back; it works."

Do you know what's working even though they might not be clinging to Jesus? They do cling to a higher power, but I know it's Jesus that works. What is working and what is biblical is the fellowship accountability in community. You weren't meant to walk through life alone. The reason those recovery programs are so successful, when people abide by the rules and the contracts, is the community of encouraging people. It's why they give them sponsors to help them keep walking through these addictions. As soon as they get alone and isolate themselves, they are right back in it.

Here's the other chart that kind of helps explain this as well. Any time there is a relationship... So, whether this is a boy and girl wanting to date each other, whether this is you and other people you are wanting to get accountability with... Whatever the case may be, there is instant distance. You might have met somebody in church today when you walked in. They just know your smiling face. They don't know the fight that you had with your spouse before you got to church. They just know the façade you put on when you walk in these doors. They don't know the real you. You're not yada by them. You are just a face and a smile, so there is distance.

But as you get in community groups or as you get into accountability or as you get out of rows and into circles, you get to know people better. But the important thing is that you pursue God together and not each other. By doing that, the distance between you and them... whether it's a boyfriend and girlfriend, a spouse, or whatever it may be. There might be a marriage in here that the distance feels really great because the female is trying to pursue him and he's trying to pursue her rather than them pursuing God together. That's when the distance shortens because when you don't, and you pursue each other first, this is what takes place. The distance between you and God actually gets greater here. So, instead of pursuing God together and shortening that distance, you pursue each other and the distance between you and your relationship with God actually gets greater. Why? You weren't meant to pursue relationships with others first. You were meant to be in relationship with God first and then, out of an overflow of a relationship with God, you are you able to have healthy relationships with other people. They go in unison with one another.

As a matter of fact, Jesus was asked, in Mark 12: 29-30, what the greatest commandment is. Jesus says, Love the Lord you God first, love your neighbor as yourself. God is first and then others come second. It's in pursuing Him first that you grow closer in any relationship: girlfriend/boyfriend, spouse, anything. But when you project on your spouse or you project on your girlfriend or you project on any friend to play a role that Christ was intended to play, you're going to be extremely upset and disappointed and lonely because no one else in your world should play that role except for Christ alone.

In Hebrews 13: 5, it's Jesus that will never leave you nor forsake you, not your best friend, not your girlfriend, not your spouse. It's Jesus that will never leave nor forsake you. It's unhealthy and unfair for you to project that onto somebody else that could ever live up to Jesus' expectation.

2 Corinthians 5 says this: ***21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us...*** This is Jesus, not your spouse, not your friends, not your kids. ***...so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.***

That's the healthiness. So, in understanding this as you enter into accountability groups or fellowship with one another, know this: it's okay to not be okay because that passage I just shared with you says Jesus was okay on your behalf. You don't have to have it all together. If you walked in here thinking, *Man, if he knew all my junk...* Yeah, you would still be welcome here. We all have junk. Next time anybody ever tries to act like they don't have junk in their live, take them over the Table Rock and say, "Alright, start walking. Let's see how this goes for you, buddy." It's not going to work out too well, because no one has it all together and if anyone did, there's no point of Jesus on the cross.

So, hear this freedom today. However you walked in here today, it's okay to not be okay because Christ was okay on your behalf. There is freedom in that.

It goes on to say in 1 John 1: ***6 If we claim to have fellowship...*** That word *fellowship* is koinonia. As a matter of fact, koinonia, true fellowship, is difficult. It's not easy, it's not all fun and games, it's not playing shuffleboard or cards or bridge or whatever. This is getting in fellowship and people telling you what you need to hear and not what you want to hear. ***...with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship (koinonia) with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.***

It is impossible for you to be walking in darkness if you are walking with people that are shining flashlights on you the whole time. So, you have people in your life that are just beacons of light and your walking alongside them in the light and they are holding the light on you. You can't walk in darkness. I have four people in my life that have access to every corner: Brian, Tom, Adam, and Stephanie. I meet with Tom and Adam every Friday morning at Chick-fil-A. I say, "Here's my junk" or "here's how I'm struggling, here's how you can pray." As a matter of fact, three weeks ago, I just said, "Here's a potential blind spot. I just need you to look at it and I'm going to text you every day," and it's been great just getting that out in the light. That's because when you let the light shine, things aren't going to be in darkness.

When I don't get isolated, when I don't retreat... Don't you realize that is how people in ministry in high positions like senior pastors, etc., fall. If they stop allowing lights to be shined on them, if they isolate themselves up top. That's one of the things I love so dearly about our head pastor, Ted Cunningham. That brother is not isolating himself. He's got people that are shining lights on him constantly and he holds himself accountable. That is a blessing for us if you see the news and you see anything that's going on with people that are high up in churches. That's not our pastor. We're blessed like crazy. By the way, October is coming up which is Pastor Appreciation Day. I think you guys should all do something special for him. I'm just saying. He didn't pay me to say that. It's important that we have this light, right?

Some of you drove to church with your spouse this morning and she did some sideseat driving, also known as backseat driving. At least somebody did. And, husbands, you weren't irritated at all. You didn't respond or snap back at all. And I've been irritated with my wife and her backseat driving, but if I'm going to be honest with you guys today, I could count a handful of times in my marriage where my wife has literally prevented me from getting in a wreck with her backseat driving. There have been times she saw something I didn't see in my blind spot of that vehicle that prevented us from getting in a



wreck. Now, the illustration here is we all need blind spot buddies. That's what Adam and Tom and Brian and my wife are. They see blind spots in my life that I can't see before something catastrophic occurs. When you don't invite people into those blind spots, you are inviting destruction. Also, when you invite people into those blind spots, you're inviting life, you're being more known, how you were created to be.

It goes on to say this. **8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.** That's a huge if. **9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.** Now, I'm not of the Catholic belief that you have to confess to a priest. We have a high priest known as Jesus that you have direct access to and he hears you. As a matter of fact, he knows your thoughts and he intercedes on your behalf. He knows your deepest struggles and he's there for you, so you can confess directly to him and when you do that, I wholeheartedly believe you're forgiven. When you confess with your heart and your mouth that you have sinned against him, you're forgiven.

However, even though I don't think you have to confess to other people to be forgiven, I do think it's extremely healthy. That's what the koinonia is talking about. If you have done anything wrong against a brother or whatever sin you might be living in, you confess. Because what you are doing is you're bringing it to the light and you're helping people recognize it, you're helping people see it, you're helping people to allow you to be known. Remember, it's okay to not be okay. Christ was okay on our behalf. So, it's okay to shine lights on that and let people know.

It's healthy to process your hurt. Remember hurt people usually hurt people and it's not okay to hurt people. Some of you in here are hurt. Some of you have been hurt by divorce. Some of you have been hurt by breakups. Some of you have been hurt by a dad. Some of you have been hurt by a mom. Some of you have been hurt by parents. Some of you been hurt by a co-worker. Some of you have been hurt by someone in your childhood who abused you. There is hurt. We're in a broken, fallen world. I don't belittle your hurt at all. But, remember, it's okay to hurt, but it's not okay to hurt other people. The only way you can get to a place of forgiveness is knowing Christ more. Ephesians 4 says, **31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.**

So, it's okay to hurt and I know there are people in here this morning that are hurting. I know there are people in here this morning that are lonely. I know there are people in here this morning that have bitterness. But, it not okay to hurt people. It's not okay to project your hurt onto other people.

That's why Woodland Hills has Divorce Care and Grief Share. It's so that you can get in circles instead of rows and process that hurt in a healthy way and get that out and talk about it.

In Hebrews 10, it says this: **24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together...** Now, the importance of meeting together isn't just so you can check off a box. The importance of meeting together is so that people will know you, so you won't be alone and you won't be isolated. **...as some are in the habit of doing...** People stopped meeting together. "I'm a Christian and I've got it figured out. I just need to go to church on Sunday; I

don't need to meet with anybody else." That's not what this passage is saying at all. **...but encouraging one another...** Encourage each other in the faith, spur one another on, tell them how they can grow, love them. Some of you are like, "Adam, I'm a stay at home mom with five kids that are not even in school yet. There is no way I have time for community." Invite another mom over with kids. It can be a zoo. They can play and you two can have fellowship. Your like, "Yeah, right. You're not a mom; you don't know what you're talking about." Pray for babysitters to help you guys out. I get it. There are seasons of life where community is more difficult, but we have to fight for it.

Two years ago, my wife lost some dear friends out of Branson and it was really difficult because she had that fellowship, that koinonia. I just started praying, "God would you provide her with some other women in her life." Guess what? He did. And she just came to life. Why? Because she's not to be known by just me and she's not to be known just by God, which is first, but she is also wired to be known by others. And when you are, you come to life. **...and all the more as you see the Day approaching.**

Let me close with this. **Community is life-giving, and circles are better than rows.** I'm great with you sitting in rows today. You're all in rows. But if you've been coming to Woodland Hills for a while, for four or five years, and you're still just sitting in rows and you're not getting into circles, you're missing out on having a full life.

John 10 says, **10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy...** He doesn't want you in community. He doesn't want you experiencing the koinonia. He wants you isolated. He feasts off of isolation. **...I (Jesus) have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.** You experience that in community. You experience that in circles.

So, next Sunday, we are launching Home Link at 11:30. Child care will be provided. Refreshments and snacks will be provided. It's right here at church at 11:30. If you've never been a part of a small group or you just walked in here for the first time and you're like "I need to be known. I'm lonely, isolated." Or you just want to be encouraged or whatever. You'll get to see what small groups are all about. If you're in a small group already and it's not people at Woodland Hills, that's okay. We're not a cult, you can hang out with people from other churches. That's completely okay. It doesn't just have to be a Woodland Hills small group. We just want you in community because we know it's healthy. We want you processing your desires, your temptations, whatever else it may be.

Maybe you feel like it's too much and you don't want to jump into a small group right away and let everybody see your junk. Maybe you need a baby step. If you're a woman, maybe that's women's Bible studies that we have for you on Wednesdays at 9:30, 1:30, and 6:30. It's the same Bible study all three times, so you can make it one time at 9:30 and the next time at 1:00... Great, come here on Wednesdays for women's Bible study.

Then, every first and third Saturday of the month, men, there is a men's Bible study or a men's get together at 7:30 am. So, if you just want to take baby steps into being better known my other people, there are some great baby steps right there for you to do.

We love that you come and hang out with us on Sunday mornings and we love all of you, but we also believe that you were all created for a purpose and you find more of that purpose in community.

There is a young man that works for me now at Link Year. He was deciding whether he was going into real estate or staying. I just told him, "You can do either or; I don't think it's a right or wrong decision, but I do know that you come to life when you are mentoring young men. I see that gift in you. It's evident." He stayed with me and he is more full of life than I've ever seen him.

I have another friend that is leaving to move to Fayetteville and when he came and told me this summer, I just looked at him and said, "Hey, I don't care about the profession you're going into, but I'm telling you that you have a crazy gift of communicating God's word and if you don't continue to communicate that down in Fayetteville, you're going to miss out on being filled with life because that's how God has wired you."

That's the other part that's really healthy with community. People get to look into your life and say, "This is a strength. You're really gifted in this area. You should consider walking in that because God has gifted you crazy in that area." That's the other part, rather than you looking at social media like "I'm comparing my behind the scenes to everyone else's highlight reel; I'm horrible." No. Get in community and let people speak life into you. Let people speak life, theopneustos, into you.

Father God, I want to pray for all those that may feel alone or lonely or depressed or anxious or isolated. God, I pray that you would surround them with community and surround them with koinonia. I pray that you would surround them with men and women that love them enough to tell them the truth and walk in life.

I pray for any addictions in this room. I pray that light would be shined on that. I pray for broken relationships in this room. I pray for reconciliation. I pray for forgiveness. I pray for grace. I pray for mercy. I pray for your blood to just bathe this room.

We love you and we are so thankful that you created us to be known by you and that you want to know us, that you want to have a personal, intimate relationship with us. You are amazing and it's in the mighty and matchless name of God we pray. And all the people said... Amen.