

Life Without *Koinonia*

1 John 4:7 – 12

I. Intro

- A. **Illustration:** Recent visit to doctor
- B. The things to do in order to be physically healthy – exercise, eating right, drink plenty of water, getting plenty of sleep
- C. Knowing what we should do doesn't make as big an impact on us as knowing the consequences if we don't
- D. Scientific facts show not getting enough sleep leads to premature aging, weight gain, depression, impaired judgment, even heart disease, etc. - knowing all that gets our attention a little more
- E. Talked about *why, what, where* regarding *koinonia* relationships – close, intimate, spiritually-focused, person-to-person relationships last few weeks; *Why* they are so important in our lives, *What* those relationships look like and what they don't look like, *Where* those relationships are best cultivated and nurtured
- F. Today, look at the consequences if we don't reach/experience that type of relational depth that God intended from the beginning of creation
- G. Three consequences (three I's): ineffectiveness in the world (authenticity), spiritual immaturity, isolation (last two dealing with the impact within the local church culture)
- H. **READ 1 John 4:7 – 12**
- I. **Question:** Does it really matter if we miss, or neglect, the experience of *koinonia* relationships?
- J. **Question:** Does it really matter if we don't reach the level of depth in relationships that God the Son had with God the Father?
- K. **Question:** Does it really matter if our goal as church is just simply unity – that we all just get along?
- L. **Question:** Does it really matter if we don't move beyond the “group” experience into deeper one-on-one relationships?
- M. Answer to all – yes, it does really matter; looking at the consequences show us why

II. Ineffectiveness

- A. Two weeks ago, read passage of Christ's prayer in garden of Gethsemane just before His arrest and crucifixion; John 17:21 (ESV)
²¹that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, **so that** [why this matters] the world may believe that you have sent me.

- B. We as individual followers/believers in Christ, we as corporate body of follower/believers in Christ have a responsibility to show the world the relational character of God**
- C. If Christ prayed for us to experience deeper, spiritually-focused relationships and we don't there is a cost – cost is ineffectiveness in being examples of God's relational character to the world**
- D. REFER v. 12 – if we love one another (one of the 50 “one anothers” I mentioned in NT), then God's love is completed in us; not moving beyond the “group” experience to deeper one-on-one relationships is demonstrating to the world an incomplete picture of who God is, who Jesus Christ is**
- E. Jesus said: John 13:34–35 (ESV)**
³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.
³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”
- i. Question: What kind of picture of a disciple of Christ are we showing the world through superficial and mediocre relationships?**
 - ii. If people see shallow relationships between those who profess to be Christians then that's how they'll view God's love – shallow, basically meaningless; problem is we speak one message and live another (Halloween – pretending to be something you're not)**
- F. Whenever we're beginning to develop a relationship with another person, the one thing we all look for is that person to be authentic, genuine; don't believe ever had a close, deep relationship with anyone who was “two-faced”**
- G. [SLIDE] As Christians, disciples of Christ, we're not promoting ourselves, not promoting a product – but a person, the person of Jesus Christ**
- H. In church culture we've mastered the art of congeniality, amicability, friendliness – *phileo* love, at least on the surface, but Christ wants more from His body**
- I. [SLIDE] To authentically, genuinely, really care about someone spiritually and being willing to enter into a relationship with them that promotes that spiritual growth/maturing for you and them – that will catch the world's attention; just gathering together and being nice to each other doesn't**
- J. Galatians 6:10 (ESV)**
¹⁰So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone [common sense], and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

- K. In this church culture we often get busy doing “nice” things, whether it’s for people in the church or people outside of the church, we miss/neglect the building of deeper spiritual relationships within the church**
- L. People outside the church are watching closely, and will scrutinize, how we are with each other within these four walls; if we do great things in our community (VBS, Trunk or Treat) and overlook the guy/gal sitting on the same row with us on Sunday morning, or don’t allow ourselves to enter into a deeper relationship/bond with another person in our small groups, then there’s a huge disconnect and we’re not being authentic or effective**
- M. Paul’s words from “Love Chapter” in 1 Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 13:2 (ESV)**
²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.
- N. Jesus prayed that we would be one (not just talking unity as a group) so that the world would know; if we don’t then they won’t – and we are then ineffective when it comes to making an impact on people’s lives for the kingdom of God**

III. Immaturity

- A. This consequence really experienced within the church culture**
- B. What the church should be doing to prepare God’s people: Ephesians 4:12–13 (ESV)**
¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,
¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,**
- C. When spiritual maturity is absent in the life of a believer they are falling way short in being a representation of who Jesus is**
- D. Description of what this spiritual immaturity cost the early Christian church in Corinth: 1 Corinthians 3:1–3 (ESV)**
¹But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.
²I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready,
³for you are still of the flesh. For while there is **jealousy and strife among you,** are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?
 - i. Question: How effective do you think this church was in their community with *jealousy and strife*, and this lack of spiritual maturity, existent among its members**
- E. [SLIDE] True measure of success within a church is not attendance, buildings, activities or programs, or even relational friendliness – it’s**

whether or not the church is producing/cultivating spiritual growth/maturity (authentic disciples) working diligently to reach the maximum *measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*

- F. Scriptural real case scenarios: Moses and Joshua (**Numbers 27:22**), Elijah and Elisha (**1 Kings 19:19 – 21**), David and Solomon (**1 Chronicles 28:9 – 21**), and Paul and Timothy (**2 Timothy 1:8 – 14**)
- G. The consequence of spiritual immaturity in the church has cost tremendously; facts
 - i. over 70% of Christian men view pornography
 - ii. over 80% of churchgoers have no regular time in God's Word
 - iii. over half of Christians never share their faith
 - iv. over 90% of Christians do not give back to God a 10% tithe

IV. Isolation

- A. One of the “why’s” of *koinonia* relationships we saw was that Christianity isn’t a solo act
- B. On the last day of creation God looked at all He’d created and proclaimed it was all *very good*; before that final proclamation one thing still needed to be fixed – alone-ness of Adam
- C. The church culture norm today operates with a group system (worship services, Bible study small groups, group ministries/programs), and there’s the tendency for many people to become isolated “islands” within an “ocean” of community; [SLIDE] many Christians live isolated lives even though they are involved in church group settings
- D. Galatians 6:1–2 (ESV)
 - ¹Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.
 - ²Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
- E. The solution to this isolation, [PRIOR SLIDE] one-on-one/*koinonia* relationships

V. Close

- A. **Question:** When Christ walked this earth, what kind of Savior would He have been if He was just about “niceties” and “pleasantries” and superficial relationships?
- B. God’s relational intent was shown to us when (**v. 9, 10**) He *sent His only Son into the world that we might live through Him ... and to be the propitiation (substitute sacrifice) for our sins*
- C. Romans 5:8 (ESV)
 - ⁸but God shows his love for us (**for you**) in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

D. (v. 11) *So ... Beloved, if God so loved us [that much], we also ought to love one another*