



Cape Coral Church of Christ

1010 S.W. 20th Avenue

Cape Coral, Florida 33991

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<http://www.thelordsway.com/capecoralfl>

Schedule of Services

Sunday: Bible Study: 9:30 A.M.

Worship: 10:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday: Bible Study: 6:00 P.M.

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Social Media and Loneliness

One of the ironies of our contemporary high-tech world is that the more connected people are by technology, the lonelier we are becoming. More than six in ten U.S. adults reported feeling loneliness, while half or more of adults said they felt isolated, left out, or lacking companionship often or some of the time. Throughout our society, we hear people exclaim, "I feel alone! No one understands me! No one really knows who I am!"

The unfortunate reality of our society is that although social media and instant communications promised to make people more connected, people are more isolated than ever before. Making technology our god is breaking down our society and fostering loneliness, disconnectedness, and despair.

On the other hand, putting God first in our lives will minimize those feelings and help us be whole. In Luke 12:4-7, Jesus shows that we spend too much time worrying about what people around us can do to us. Instead, we should be concerned about what God thinks of us.

Social media is an expression of what man thinks of us. Many social media interactions are governed by peer pressure, and what

folks will think if we say or do a certain thing. We should be worried, instead, about what God thinks of us.

Luke 12:6-7 shows that God truly knows us, unlike the world. Look how God knows every detail of His people:

- He names His sheep (John 10:3).
- He numbers our hairs (Luke 12:7).
- He counts our steps (Job 31:4).
- He bottles our tears (Psa. 56:8).
- He holds our hands (Isa. 41:13).
- He supplies our need (Phil. 4:19).

Let's set a goal to spend more time in the Spirit's book (the Bible) and less time on Facebook. Let's remember whose opinion really matters. The approval of man will not get us to heaven (Luke 6:26). Instead, work to be approved by God (2 Tim. 2:15).

Commitment

Not too many years ago, when people entered into marriage, they made a commitment which they intended to keep: "Through good times and bad, sickness and health, till death do we part." They were prepared for the ups and downs which are a part of every marriage. They knew they would have to make sacrifices for their mates and children. They didn't ask, "What's in it for me?" They asked, "How can I make life easier for my family?"

How times have changed. In many cases as soon as the excitement of the honeymoon is over, the marriage is over. Today, people want the benefits of marriage, but not the responsibilities. This is the reason so many choose to live together without taking the vows.

There is a new trend among the married. Many are now getting divorced, but continue to have a sexual relationship. This way they satisfy their physical desires without the responsibilities that come with making a home. How sad! How selfish! How immature! How sinful! How typical of our modern, over-indulged, pampered, what's-in-it-for-me generation.

Unfortunately, this attitude sometimes carries over into the church. Many want the benefits of Christianity, want to go to heaven, to enjoy God's blessings, to be able to call on Him in times of need: but don't want the responsibilities of being committed to Him. Many

of us don't want to give as we have been prospered, attend worship services, be honest in our business dealings, love our enemies, help our brethren, read our Bibles, or whatever else it takes for real discipleship.

The couple who divorces but continues a conjugal relationship does not (at least in their eyes) make the divorce final. They hold to that which makes them feel good: what they enjoy. They still have a relationship with their former spouses, but it is sickeningly selfish.

Is it not that way with haphazard, indifferent Christians? They divorce themselves from all spiritual responsibilities, but they don't want the divorce to be final. They want the benefits without the responsibilities. They are fooling themselves. It may be possible to derive certain benefits from a former spouse, but it doesn't work that way with a former Savior.

Encouragement

During one period of bitter fighting during World War II, General Dwight Eisenhower paid a visit to a divisional headquarters to talk to troops who had just came back from the front line for a brief rest. It had been raining and the mud was at shoe-top level. General Eisenhower stepped on to a makeshift platform and spoke a few words of encouragement to the troops.

As he stepped down, he slipped in the mud and landed on the seat of his pants. The GI's howled. As the division commander helped Eisenhower to his feet, he apologized for the behavior of his men.

"Forget it," Eisenhower grinned. "That fall probably helped their morale more than the speech."

The best people sometimes become discouraged. Elijah was one of God's great prophets. However, Elijah became discouraged and cried, "O Lord, take away my life" (1 Kings 19:4). Perhaps physical exhaustion coupled with the loss of faith in others, resulted in the prophets discouragement (cf. 1 Kings 19:14). David became discouraged and wrote, "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?" (Psalm 42:5, 11). The truth is, life cannot always be lived on the incline. There will be valleys and peaks, highs and lows, ups and downs.

We all need encouragement from time to time. The various epistles that were written to the early churches, often contained words of encouragement (Philippians 1:23; 3:20,21; Colossians 3:3; 1

Thessalonians 4:14-18; Titus 2:13-15). God's word gives hope to the hopeless, comfort to the bereaved, and encouragement to the discouraged. Our assemblies serve as a means of encouragement by mutual support, comfort, and exhortation (Hebrews 10:25). Let's not neglect these two means of encouragement in our lives.

In times of discouragement, we must never give up. We must continue to press forward in our lives (Matthew 24:13). There are three rules for success: go on, go on, go on. Trying times are no time to quit trying. Abraham Lincoln failed in business twice. He was defeated in eight elections before becoming president of the United States. He did not give up. Neither should any of us.

Someone has said that the love of God will not let us down, will not let us go, nor will it let us off. Now that's encouraging.

Reality Check

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

If we were to video tape ourselves for a day, would the viewing of that tape be consistent with how we perceived ourselves? Watching the tape allows us to see ourselves as others and God see us. In the final analysis, it matters not what we may think of ourselves or what others may think of us; what really matters is how we appear to God. The reality is that God sees us the way we actually are in thought and action. May we so live that a video of ourselves would portray a life pleasing to God.

"But to me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord" (1 Corinthians 4:3-4).

The man who refuses to give honest consideration to teaching on any subject, must (1) believe that he is incapable of learning, or (2) think that he knows all there is to know on the subject, or (3) know that he is wrong and does not intend to change. In our search for truth, may we be free from: (1) the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, that is, new to us; (2) the laziness that is content with half-truths; and (3) the arrogance that thinks that it knows all truth already. Read John 8:31-32.