

Home Alone:

Isolation at Christmas. There are way too many people that do not look forward to Christmas. Sadly, for those without family it can be one of the most depressing, lonely, isolated holidays of the year.

Kevin wanted to be alone until the invasion of the intruders came. The robbers staked out the house until he was alone. (SLIDE)

The devil is all about seeking you out and isolating you from the pack.

“The enemy seeks out who he may devour”

How many people don't look forward to Christmas? For some it is just another day.

For some, Christmas is not the time to be jolly. For some people, this Christmas will be filled with sad memories of someone close who is no longer here.

Facing your first Christmas without someone you love can be a very lonely and daunting time. There may be expectations for when you will put up the Christmas tree, send out greeting cards, go out Christmas shopping and join family and friends for Christmas dinner... especially because others want to see you coping and moving on.

But when you're grieving this can be really difficult. You may have no desire or energy to 'pretend' that you are looking forward to Christmas when in truth you wish things were the way they were last year - when you were still together with your loved one.

Kevin hears the carols and decides to go to church and finds

South Bend Shovel Slayer himself...Old Man Marley.

Mr. Marley tells Kevin he is not with his son. **4 SLIDES**

Mr. Marley's family is restored and so is his sore hand.

Kevin praying between 2 Cherubim.

Where else is that found? What is between the Cherubim in the Bible. The Mercy Seat!!

Matthew 1:18-19 The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

¹⁸ This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement^[a] quietly

So, you have a teenage girl telling her fiancé that she is pregnant and by the way it is not yours! The Holy Spirit has impregnated me with his son!!

This announcement was not a MARY Christmas for Joseph! HE didn't want to kick up a fuss and wanted to break off the engagement> I mean, who wouldn't?

Then he gets a visitation from an Angel himself. Bethlehem was a bit embarrassed when 3 kings showed up looking for King Jesus.

Kevin was despised by everyone and Kevin actually yells at his mom hoping never to see them again. He wanted his family to disappear.

Christopher Thomas Knight-North Pond Hermit:

He was captured in 2013 but went into seclusion in the 60's after burglarising 40 cars a year, in those years other than seeing a hiker and saying, HI "I never spoke a word"

He said, I became very introspective...without others I found no need to define myself...I became irrelevant."

He didn't find himself, he actually lost himself

Like Kevin in "Home Alone"; for awhile he had the run of the house! Watched what he wanted, ate what he wanted, played like he wanted, did everything a little boy could ever dream of. But the lack of family and community eventually caught up to him because none of us were created to be HOME ALONE.

Mother Teresa. "Loneliness is the leprosy of the modern world. I have come more and more to realize that it is being unwanted that is the worst disease that any human being can ever experience.

Kevin wasn't left alone by his choosing; it was a mistake, but that mistake became his misfortune. But it got him thinking....family isn't that bad after all. My bonehead brothers and sisters were not that much of a pain.

Dr. Dean Ornish -Ornish Lifestyle Medicine Group
Love and Intimacy-our ability to connect with ourselves and others, is at the root of what makes us sick and what makes us well....people who feel isolated and lonely have a 300-500 percent greater risk of premature death due to physical illness."

Brokenness at Christmas time affects you down to the cellular level and eats away at you until your life is one big cavity.

This is why we should be grateful for each other. A covenant community called to serve Christ and each other. We may be small in number, but we are massive in compassion for this congregation and this town.

Impact people are committed to living in authentic community.
You cannot fulfil the purpose of God outside of community.
You can know God without community and get to Heaven without community,
But you can't manifest God's fullness.

What is great about Impact is that you can be yourself without performing. I am and always will be a 62-year-old teen ager. I have seen the drawbacks of maturity and I don't want anything to do with it!! LOL

You are OK. You be you and stop trying to be someone else. Quit trying on other people's clothes!

This city is looking for authentic Christianity! SHOW ME THE BEEF!!! Where is the real stuff?

We are the body of Christ. Joined and bonded together with purpose. Each of us has a place, purpose and function in the growth of this church. The HEAD (Heads) can't do it all!!! **(and we won't)**. If the arms, fingers, legs, toes won't work then the body will collapse and cease to exist.

1. ISOLATION WAS NEVER GOD'S PLAN

Genesis 2:18 "And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone.."

We need each other. Ask Adam!

Proverbs 27:6 Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy.

Have you ever heard of the SALAD BAR SCRIPTURES? Turn to Hebrews 10:21-15 and notice all the LET US! LOL

²¹ And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house,
²² **let us** go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water.
²³ **Let us** hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. ²⁴ **Let us** think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. ²⁵ And **let us** not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

CONNECTING IS MANDATORY!!!

A. Together we approach

Vs 22 Let us go right into the presence of God

Rev. 5:9 " Your blood has ransomed for God from every tribe and language and people and nation

I am looking forward to the day when we become a multi-cultural , multi-generational church! You know every tribe, language and nation!

Bring on the Jamaicans, Filipinos, Russians, Ukrainians, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Mexicans, People from India, South Africans, and even the WAL MARTIANS!! ETC ETC.

B. Together We Stand! VS 23 ²³ **Let us** hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.

Holding on is a group activity. Hold on to each other as much as we hold on to the promises. It does not say, "Let *me* hold on" it says, "Let *us* hold on"

C. Together we work ²⁴ **Let us** think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. There are 59 one another commandments in the NT and 21 of them involve LOVE.

You can't do the one another's without one another!!! You can't be alone by yourself. **Force yourself to find a friend!!**

D. Together we Remain. "Let us not neglect our meeting together"
Social media is not real human interaction! It is an edited, manufactured, manipulated message that mutilates the truth.

Say what you want but there is nothing like being together!! Nothing better than Jean Ann Hugs! They are intoxicating.

2. ISOLATION IS ROOTED IN SELFISHNESS

Proverbs 18:1 "A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire. He rages against all wise judgement."

Isolation is a product of selfishness. You become your own personal island separated from accountability.

Kevin thought he was ready to be a man! The cologne proved him wrong.

3. ISOLATION FOSTERS DECEPTION

Genesis 3:8 NLT ⁸ When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the

man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden

In a season where Christians should start running *to* the church, they run away because they don't understand Agape Love. That is God's love that keeps giving even if you have been betrayed or bruised by believers.

Sin and the causes of it will always change the narrative. It will attempt to distort the Agape love of God for you!!

4. ISOLATION IS RESOLVED IN JESUS

1 Corinthians 15:22 "for as in Adam we all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."

True freedom in Christ has no agendas, no strings, no gotchas. What Kevin didn't know was that his mom was in the back of a truck with a polka band trying to get to him.

Romans 5:10 NLT

¹⁰ For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son.

Colossians 3:13 New Living Translation

¹³ Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others

Because we are committed to authentic community

Everyone is welcome. Your background doesn't matter.

Nobody is perfect: Bring your Bible and your problems

Anything is possible: Simon can become Peter

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If you put 1 pair of underwear in the washer it will get clean. If you put 10 it will get cleaner.