

Introduction to “The Isolation Trap”

This class explores how we can fulfill the commandment to “love God and love our neighbors” without the danger of isolating ourselves and falling into all types of Satan's traps.

We often say “I don't have any special talents to use so I just won't do anything.” Or we think our life circumstances keep us from serving in any capacity. It is time to think again.

Romans 12 defines thirty ministries we should engage in to love God and bless our neighbors. No special skills needed. If these traits become part of our daily life, they draw us out of isolation into a much richer and happier life. It is all about Mission and Freedom to Minister.”

Glenn Hall
December 29, 2024
Eastridge Church of Christ

The background is a solid blue color. In the upper left quadrant, there is a complex network of thin white lines forming various overlapping polygons and shapes. In the lower right quadrant, there are several parallel white lines slanted diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right.

FREEDOM TO MINISTER

ESCAPING THE ISOLATION TRAP

▶ The Great Commandment

A Vision for God's people...and command to action

Matt. 22:37-40 Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’^[a] ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’^[b] ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

▶ The Great Commission

A mission defined for action

Matt. 28:-2018 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

▶ Ministry

Actions God's People take to implement the Mission

- Satan sets the trap of isolation to provide an excuse for inaction or overt sin to distract us from doing God's will.

Eccl. 3: 1 There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:

• Causes of Social Isolation

- Smartphones (recommend personal research)
- Social Media Addictions
- Loss of a Loved One
- Physical Impairments
- Fear of rejection
- COVID social restrictions (especially youth)
- Perceived Social Status
- Distrust of religious people and spiritual events
- History of abuse and bullying
- Chemical and other Addictions

• Dangers of Social Isolation

- Loss of sense of purpose
- Discourage family love of Jesus' lifestyle
- Failure to lead family: Passive
- Abuse of family: physical and emotional
- Use of addictive drugs
- Food and Alcohol addiction
- Pornography use and addiction
- Unfaithful marriage relationships
- Children who actively look for secular role models

Proverbs 18:1 Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgment.

▶ Embrace Natural Ministry

- ▶ Spending time in daily prayer for others
- ▶ Caring for aging parents
- ▶ Raising children to love God
- ▶ Helping a neighbor
- ▶ Encourage others thru regular worship
- ▶ Display trust in God in difficult times
- ▶ Forgive others without expecting anything in return

Eph. 5:25-33 Men: Love your wife as Christ loves the church

Eph. 5:25-33 Women: Respect your husband

Eph 6:1-3 Children: Obey your parents in the Lord

► Romans 12

Escaping Satan's Isolation Trap

- Be transformed by the renewing of your mind
- Test and approve what's God's will is
- Think of yourself with sober judgement
- We have different gifts according to the grace given us
 - Prophecy
 - Serving
 - Teaching
 - Encouraging
 - Contributing
 - Leadership
 - Mercy
- Natural Ministry of the transformed mind
 - Sincere love
 - Hate Evil
 - Cling to Good
 - Devoted to one another
- Continued...

▶ Romans 12

Freedom to Minister

- Continued...
 - Honor one another above yourselves
 - Never be lacking in zeal
 - Be Joyful in Hope
 - Patient in Affliction
 - Faithful in Prayer
 - Share with God's people who are in need
 - Practice Hospitality
 - Bless those who persecute you
 - Rejoice with those who rejoice
 - Mourn with those who mourn
 - Live in harmony with one another
 - Do not be proud
 - Be willing to associate with people of low position
 - Do not be conceited
 - Do not repay anyone with evil for evil
- Continued...

▶ Romans 12

Our Action...God's Power

- Continued...
 - Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody
 - If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone
 - Do not take revenge. Leave room for God's wrath
 - It is mine to avenge: I will repay, says the Lord
 - **On the contrary**
 - If your enemy is hungry, feed him
 - If he is thirsty, give him something to drink
 - In doing this you will heap burning coals on his head
 - Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good
 - **Cognitive Dissonance**
 - When good is done when evil is expected, the enemy is confused
 - Why did my enemy do good things for me?
 - Because a healthy mind can't keep two opposing views as "true" at the same time.
 - Our love for God and our Neighbor becomes self-evident.