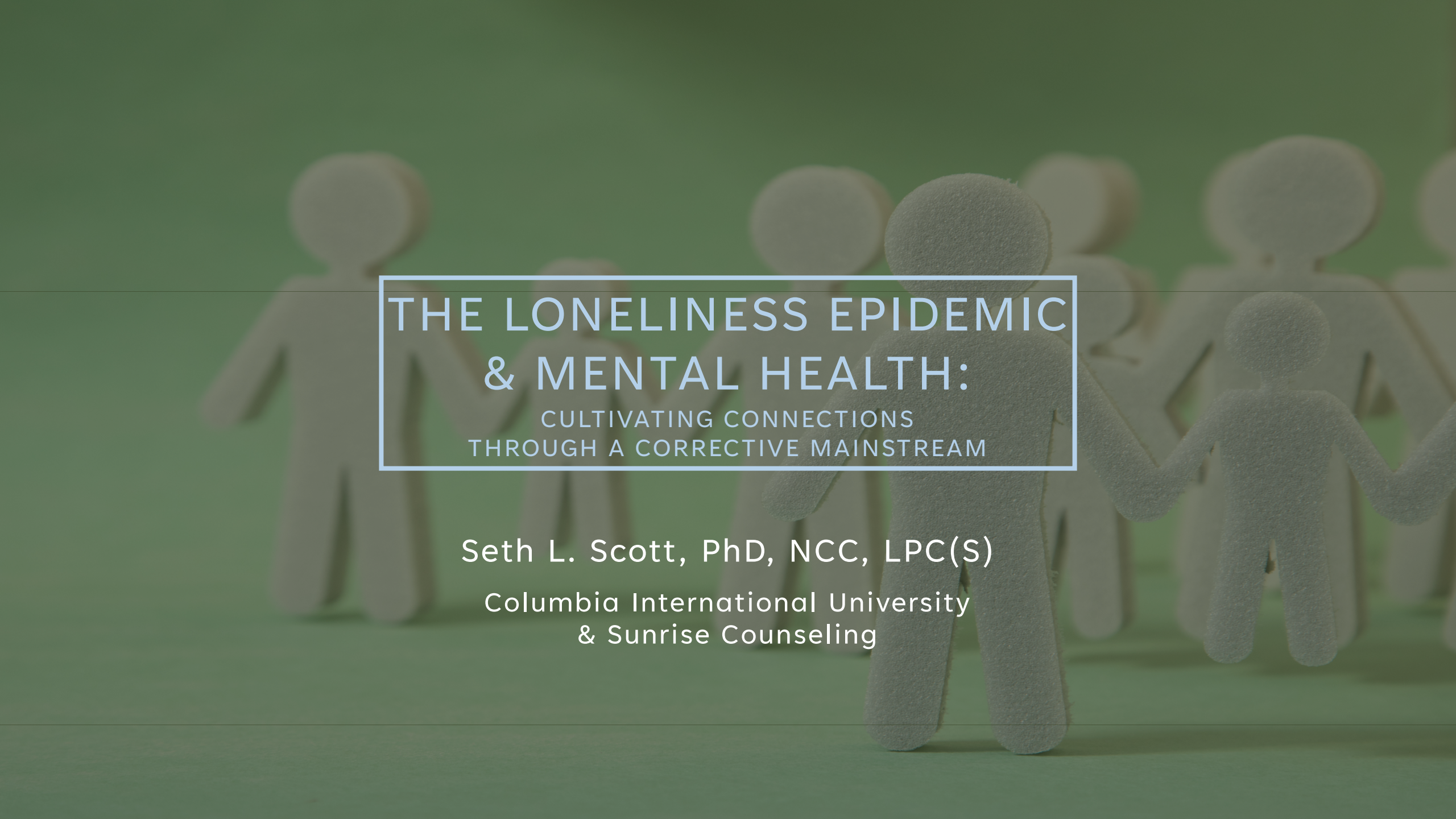




THE LONELINESS EPIDEMIC & MENTAL HEALTH:

CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS
THROUGH A CORRECTIVE MAINSTREAM

Seth L. Scott, PhD, NCC, LPC(S)

Columbia International University
& Sunrise Counseling

Seth L. Scott

ABOUT ME



Husband, Father, Brother, and Son



Christ-centered, hope-filled, and collaborative care emphasizing wellness, wholeness, and education through counseling and consultation

CIU | Columbia
International
University

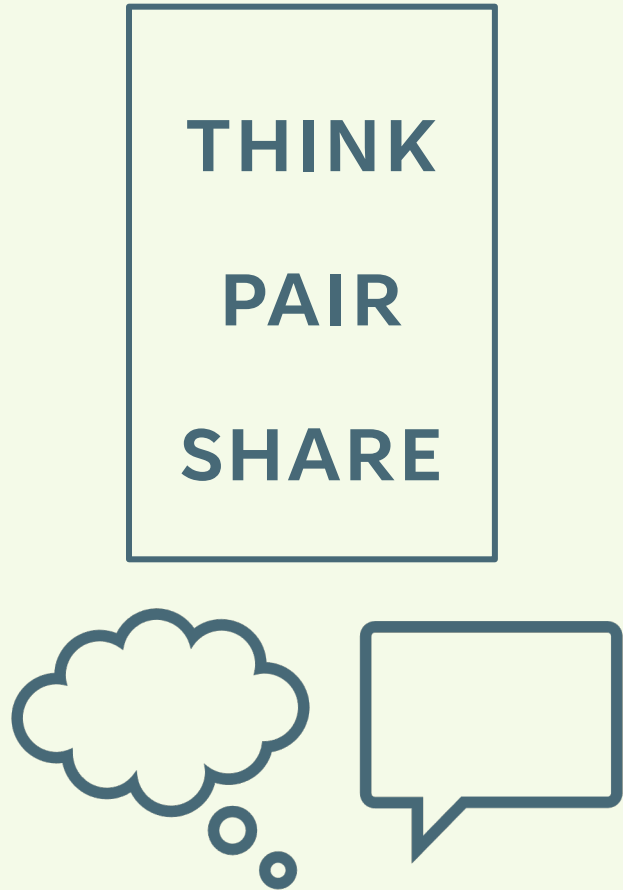
Graduate Counseling Programs

Counselor, Supervisor, and Consultant

Director of PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision

Associate Director of the Chinese MA in Counseling

Associate Professor of Counseling



WHAT IS LONELINESS?

“Loneliness isn't the physical absence of other people... it's the sense that you're not sharing anything that matters with anyone else”

(Hari, 2018, *Lost Connections*, p. 83).

“Perceived Social Isolation”

(Brown, 2017, *Braving the Wilderness*, p. 52).

WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP?

“Friendship is the affectionate bond forged between two people as they journey through life with openness and trust”

(Hunter, 2018, p. 80).

Six Essential Ingredients:

Affection, Constancy, Transparency, Candor or Honesty, Empathy, Trust

(Hunter, 2018, *Made for Friendship*, pp. 80-93)

CONTEXTS FOR LONGING AND EXPECTATION?



CHEERS

Cheers Pub



GILMORE GIRLS

Luke's Diner



FRIENDS

Central Perk
and the apartments



SEINFELD

Tom's Restaurant
& Jerry's Apartment



THE SHAPING & CONFORMING PROCESS

“One of the greatest human pains is the loneliness of being alone... Clark Moustakas (1974) poignantly stated, ‘It is the **terror of loneliness**, not loneliness itself but loneliness anxiety, the fear of being left alone, of being left out, that represents a dominant crisis in the struggle to become a person’ (p. 16)”

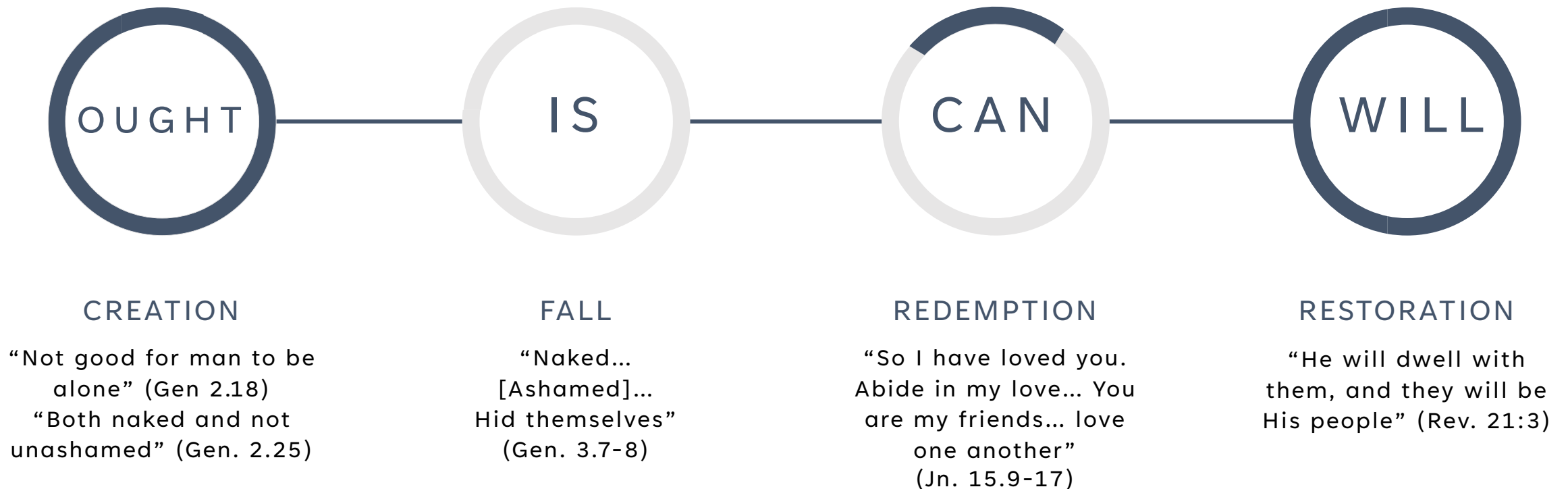
(cited in Gingrich & Gingrich, 2017, pp. 115-116).

COMPETING WORLDVIEWS

INDIVIDUAL
UNIQUE
INDEPENDENT
INDIVIDUATED

RELATIONAL
CREATED
DEPENDENT
BELONGS

DEFINING A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW



FRIENDSHIP = BELONGING



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Three Conditions for Forming Friendships:

- 1) Proximity
- 2) Repeated unplanned interactions
- 3) A setting that encourages people to let down their guard and confide in people

THE GLASS THAT SHATTERS OUR CONNECTIONS



Windshield

Loss of Civility in Our Interactions



Television

Voyeuristic in Our Relationships



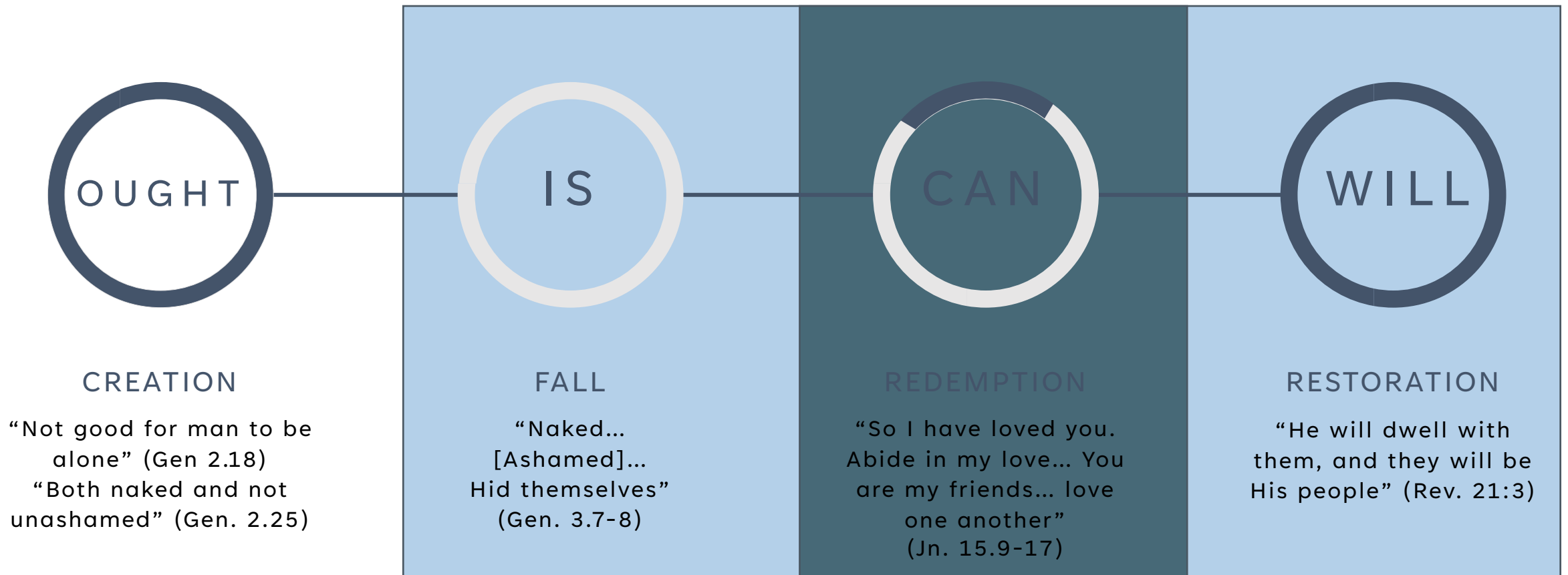
Smartphone

Separated and Oblivious in Our Lives

“We flourish when we are rooted in place; these devices pull us away from the significant places of our lives. We are meant to understand the story of our lives as connected to the larger story of God’s reconciling love for the world, and these devices pull us away from the primary narrative of our lives”

(Jacobsen, 2020, *Three Pieces of Glass*, p. 146).

DEVELOPING A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW





**BELONGING
BY ABIDING**