

## **Problem of Loneliness**

### **Introduction.**

1. One of the most universal problems of all men, even Christians, is loneliness.
- 2 All of us probably have feelings of loneliness from time to time.
  - a. Sometimes loved ones or friends desert us.
  - b. Job uttered these words in the despair of his loneliness. (Job 19:14, 19).

Job 19:14 "My relatives have failed, And my intimate friends have forgotten me."

Job 19:19 "All my associates abhor me, And those I love have turned against me."

- c. Sometimes our feelings are wrong.
  - 1) We imagine others are ignoring us when personal problems beset us.
  - 2) These feelings are usually exaggerated by our personal problems.
- d. The psalmist felt lonely, "I lie awake, I have become like a lonely bird on a housetop." (Psa. 102:7).
- e. Jesus felt lonely on the cross.
  - 1) Most of His disciples had deserted Him. (Matt. 26:56; Jn. 19:25-27).

Matt. 26:56 "But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets." Then all the disciples left Him and fled.  
John 19:25-27 reveals that John left Jesus for a short time, but was "standing nearby" when Jesus was on the cross.

Jn. 19:25 Therefore the soldiers did these things. But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

Jn. 19:26 When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!"

Jn. 19:27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her into his own household.

- 2) God left Him alone to suffer for mankind. (Matt. 27:46).

### **Loneliness Defined**

1. Loneliness is a little hard to define.
  - a. Webster defines it "Without company..depressed at being alone..alone."
  - b. Webster dictionary is correct, but it in no way defines the wretched, miserable feeling of loneliness.

- c. Theresa of Calcutta stated “Loneliness and the feeling of being uncared for and unwanted are the greatest poverty.”
2. Loneliness and solitude are not the same, but are often confused.
    - a. Solitude refers to the choice or acceptance of being alone.
      - 1) This could be for reflection, meditation or to enjoy such activities of writing, listening to enjoyable music, research, drawing, reading, exercising, etc.
      - 2) Solitude enriches and energizes.
      - 3) It most often inspires people to get involved and enrich the lives of others.
    - b. Loneliness is quite different than solitude.
      - 1) It is dissatisfaction with being alone.
      - 2) Loneliness leads to depression and promotes feeling of anger, uselessness and despair.
      - 3) It often causes one to eat too much, sleep too much, become addicted to mood changing medications.
      - 4) **Loneliness comes from sitting instead of serving.**
      - 5) Loneliness is defeat, but solitude brings victory and fulfillment in life.
    - c. There are two types of loneliness.
      - 1) Social loneliness can come from being separated and isolated from friends and family.
      - 2) Emotional loneliness comes from having no one to talk to or to be around and enjoy his/her company.
  2. Loneliness is not always being alone.
    - a. Some people are alone in a room full of people.
    - b. Some people spend a lot of time by themselves, but feel good about themselves and others.
    - c. Spending time alone is good for most people.
  3. Loneliness is when we begin to feel depressed, unloved, perhaps ill feelings toward ourselves or others because we are alone.
  4. Loneliness can, if unchecked, cause physical and emotional illnesses in our lives.
    - a. It leads to unhappiness.
    - b. It may even lead to death.

### **Causes of Loneliness**

1. Death or divorce or abandonment frequently cause loneliness and feeling of rejection and being unloved.

2. Being mentally or physically sick can create loneliness.
3. Depression over life's problems may bring on feelings of being all alone and the feeling no one cares.
  - a. Health, wealth
  - b.. Relationships, etc.
4. Failure to be friendly or lack of social skill may bring on loneliness.
  - a. Must seek to be friendly and not give up if everyone does not respond.
  - b. Learn how to interact with others.
5. Excluded by those we care about.
  - a. This exclusion may be:
    - 1) unintentional
    - 2) because of indifference
    - 3) because of hostility
    - 4) because one differs in some way - looks, intelligence, talents, wealth, etc.
6. Keeping circle too small
  - a. Children
  - b. Few friends
  - c. Mate only
7. Being selfish (Phil. 2:3,4).

Phil. 2:3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;

Phil. 2:4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

- a. Limiting interest mostly to self.
- b. It is a mistake and even sin to be absorbed in self.

### **Overcoming Loneliness**

1. Godhead dwells in us.
  - a. God (1 Jn. 4:12; Heb. 13:5,6; Deut.31:6; 33:25; Josh. 1:5; Psa. 46:1; Isa. 41:10; Psa. 23).
  - b. Christ

1) Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:27

2) Matt. 28:20. Lit. "all the days".

3) John 14:23

Jn. 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him

4) Phil. 4:13

5) 1 Jn. 2:1-2

c. Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19,20).

1) Knowledge of His presence should comfort us. (Gal. 4:6; Eph.1:13,14).

2) Holy Spirit comforts us through the scriptures. (2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16,17; Psa.119:105).

2. Be friendly (Prov. 18:24; 17:17).

Prov. 18:24 A man of *too many* friends *comes* to ruin, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Prov. 17:17 A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.

a. Friendship, like marriage, is not always a 50/50 proposition.

b. One must, at times, give more than he receives.

c. There are times when friendship, like marriage, demands one make all the efforts.

3. Keep busy

a. Activity helps take our minds off of self.

b. Keeping busy can be of great benefit to others and self.

c. It is especially beneficial if one keeps busy doing meaningful things that bring satisfaction to himself and others.

4. Adjust to life's changes. (Phil. 4:11).

Phil. 4:11 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

5. Take advantage of Christian fellowship. (Acts 2:42-46; Heb. 10:24-25).

Acts 2:42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 2:43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

Acts 2:44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;

Acts 2:45 and they *began* selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

Acts 2:46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

Heb. 10:24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

Heb. 10::25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

6. Prayer is vital.

a. The psalmist cried out, "Turn to me and be gracious to me, For I am lonely and afflicted. (Psa. 25:16).

b. We should humbly request the presence of God, and draw near to God. (Jas. 4:7).

c. Prayer helps overcome loneliness, and gives God incomprehensible peace. (Phil. 4:6,7).

Phil. 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Phil. 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

### **Helping Others Overcome Loneliness**

1. Be friendly to lonely

2. Spend time with lonely

3. Encourage others (1 Thess. 5:11; Heb. 3:13).

4. Remember others with telephone visits, calls, cards, letters, flowers, etc.

5. Make others feel important and wanted.

### **Conclusion.**

1. Let us stay busy serving God and others.

2. This will help fight loneliness and enrich our lives.

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