

# You Are Not ALONE

*“I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Jesus, Matthew 28:20*

*“I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.” Hebrews 13:5*

Loneliness.

Few, if any of us, enjoy being alone for very long. And certainly we do not like feeling lonely.

Loneliness is the number one stress-producing issue expressed by Americans that they struggle with, followed by boredom and depression. It is estimated that nearly 40% of our citizens over the age of 18 are living alone as either never married single adults, divorced adults, or as widows and widowers.

**It is clear our society is made up of a significant number of people who live alone...and struggle, to varying degrees, with loneliness.**

## Alone And Lonely

Being alone and lonely is not God’s plan for man.

In the creation narrative, God looked over what He created and declared that it was very good (Genesis 1:31). The only thing that was not good was Adam was alone. Genesis 2:18 states *“Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”* So Eve was created as Adam’s companion. Adam and Eve shared life in the Garden of Eden. They walked with each other and God everyday. They were never alone, and most likely, not lonely, until they sinned and were expelled from Paradise (Genesis 3:1-24).

Our Creator created us as social creatures. Life is about relationships...with God and people (see Matthew 22:37-39). Our Father in heaven desires for us to have healthy, meaningful, mutually-satisfying companionship. But life happens. And life can leave us alone...and lonely.

As a pastoral counselor who specializes in helping hurting people receive healing, restoration and renewal in Christ, the vast majority of the people I see are in some form of a relationship crisis. Either with God or people they care about. Strained, estranged, broken relationships can make life very difficult. All of us love to belong. We need to receive love, acceptance and approval strokes from others. To love and be loved requires relationships. Isolation, being alone, doesn’t promote companionship and sharing of life.

**Being alone does not mean we are weird, something is wrong with us, we have messed up, failed or are out of God's will.** It just means that we are at a place or in a season of being by ourselves. Whether relationship problems have been self-inflicted or other inflicted, the fact is we are alone and have to guard against the negative aspects of loneliness.

Loneliness can lead us to make mistakes in our relational life.

## **Lonely And Vulnerable**

Over and over again, in counseling appointments, I hear this phrase "I am so lonely." Lonely people can be very emotionally/relationally vulnerable.

It looks like this. Bars, saloons and restaurants advertise "Happy Hour". Lonely, unhappy people flock to "Happy Hour" hoping to find happiness. Think with me. How in the world can unhappy people who meet unhappy people in an unhappy place where people consume alcohol (which is a depressant!) ever be happy? Emotionally wounded, relationally vulnerable people, looking for companionship, get hooked up with people just like them. Is it any wonder when the Bud Lite makes them tipsy and they drop their moral guard and inhibitions, that many wake up the next morning, hung-over, with someone in their bed and wonder what did I do?

I am so lonely....that I might consider doing something I wouldn't do if I wasn't alone. Danger! Red flag! Stop light! Our enemy Satan is a liar, a thief and murderer. He is out to destroy relationships between and God and people. So, if we focus on how lonely we are, we can be easily tempted when Satan lures us into a trap where someone, who is also lonely, makes us feel not so alone.

**Compromise for the sake of companionship always leads to loss.**

**I have seen it time and time again. Lonely, professing Christians, who happen to be single, make major mistakes in forsaking their moral values and Christian principles for a few moments of enjoying fleshly companionship. Violating God's truth and best for them, those who sacrifice what they believe and hold dear, just to be with someone, end up with a guilty conscience before the Lord, increasing the feeling of being alone and lonely. You and I never win when we sin.**

There are worse things than being alone or feeling lonely for a while. Sinful, narcissistic, abusive, controlling, manipulative, co-dependent relationships never satisfy our need for healthy companionship.

**We must and can trust God for the lonely times.**

## **Alone And Valuable**

Being alone doesn't mean I am a reject. I am not damaged goods. Single isn't banishment to a lower level of life than if I was married. Single is single. Alone is alone. It is a status, not a sentence. And usually, it is for a season, not necessarily for a lifetime.

You and I are loved by God and immensely valuable and important to Him, regardless of our marital, societal, relationship status. Our heart is what matters to God (see I Samuel 16:7). When our heart is hurting because we are alone and feel lonely, God cares. He really does. Our pain doesn't push God away. It draws Him in.

Years ago, I sat all alone, on a bed in a psychiatric hospital, devastated by disappointment. Emotionally depleted, in the paralyzing, demoralizing grip of severe depression, I felt so lonely. I was isolated from family, friends and the life I had been accustomed to. I thought even God was a zillion miles away. But the Holy Spirit whispered to my heart the truth of God's presence. I will never forget, when the blackness overwhelmed me, how the light of God's Word brought hope to my heart: *"The Lord is near the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."* Psalm 34:18.

This verse says that the Lord is close, not far, from the brokenhearted. The more we hurt and feel alone, the closer God is. Though distraught, confused, disconnected, feeling hopeless and helpless, wondering what the future might hold for me, the Lord assured me that He was with me. In the hospital...depressed...all by myself.

### **I WAS NOT ALONE!**

James invites us to *"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you (James 4:8)*. That night was a life-saver for Steve Roll. Healing, restoration and renewal of my broken heart and crushed spirit would be a process that would span a couple of years. But I settled something significant that night. Though weak, weary, worried and fearful, I decided to believe that God was with me. He said He was. I was not alone and would never be. With His help, I rebuked fear, choosing instead to walk in faith that I was not alone.

**God was walking with me and would restore my life.**

## God's Promise To The Lonely

God is with you, no matter where you are, what you have done, or what is happening in your life. He is everywhere present. He has never and will never take a hike on you. God cannot lie, so when He promises to be with you and me always, He means it. And He proves it.

Study the Word of God, the Bible, from cover to cover. See for yourself how He was, and is, always with His people. Even when they messed up! Even when they pulled away from Him, He kept drawing them to Himself (see Jeremiah 31:1-3). Amazing love of a Father for His children. God is not an absent father. He is "Johnny on the spot". Always there to care and share His love with us when we feel alone and lonely.

**Let's get real.** You are struggling with a setback. Feel alone. I get it. But you are not really alone. God is with you, preparing you for a comeback in Christ! Someone you trusted betrayed you. Stabbed you in the back. Ripped your guts out. I have been there. Jesus had a Judas in His life too. He trusted his heartbreak to the Father. The Father was with Him. Jesus went to a Cross to die for Judas and a whole world of sinners like you and me.

You feel rejected, abandoned by someone you gave your love and life to. They have cut you off, excommunicated you from companionship. You feel you don't belong anymore. You're lonely. I have good news for you...you belong to God. Nothing changes that fact. He is with you to heal your heart and bind your wounds (see Psalm 147:1-6).

Your situation is not too big for God. Nothing is too difficult for Him. Nothing is impossible with the Lord. Everything is possible with Him. **Including overcoming loneliness.** You and I can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13) because Jesus is Immanuel, which means "*God with us*" (Matthew 1:23).

GOD IS YOUR HEALER AND HELPER. HE IS WITH YOU. YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

## When You Are Feeling Lonely

If you are feeling alone and lonely, remember the following.

- God loves YOU unconditionally.
- God is with YOU, for YOU and working on YOUR behalf.

- The Holy Spirit lives in YOU.
- Read the Bible. Saturate your heart and mind with God's promises of His presence in YOUR life.
- Worship and fellowship with God's people at your local church.
- YOU have family and friends who love and believe in you.
- Do not isolate YOURSELF from people who care about YOU.
- There are things in life worse than being alone for awhile.
- There is life after loneliness. Loneliness will not last forever. It is not the end of the road.
- Call upon the Lord to comfort your heart and assure YOU of His presence.

## **Personal Confession of God's Presence**

Heavenly Father, I come to you today to confess that You are with me. Though I feel alone and lonely, You have not forsaken me. I believe with all my heart that You are with me right now, meeting my every need through Jesus Christ.

By faith, I release my feelings of loneliness to You. I receive the assurance of Your presence, peace and power in my life. I am not alone. Thank you Jesus for being with me today.

*"Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me."* *Psalm 139:7-10*

*"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not look anxiously about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."* *Isaiah 41:10*

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