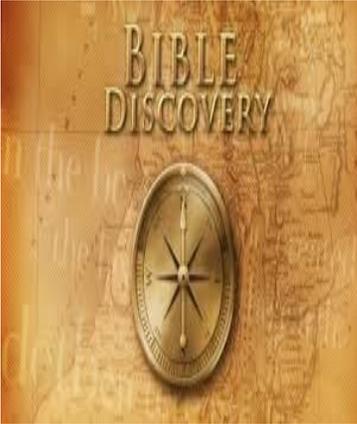


## *God's Love meets us in our Loneliness*



**How alone do you feel?** On a scale of one to ten how would you rate how you feel? I confess I'm missing Mom this Mother's day. Mom passed away last fall. It's the first Mother's Day I've not been able to visit with her. We sure had a lot of great talks and wonderful laughs over our years together. Mom was always there for me. It's amazing how on these special days when the whole world wants you to celebrate, there's a little loneliness creeps in. We recognize in the midst of our loneliness, even our despair and troubles, God gave us that outlet – God gave us mothers! Mothers fill rolls as teachers, disciplinarians, cleaning ladies, doctors, counselors, chauffeurs, and coaches yet they find time to garden and mow lawns. And most mothers understand baking cookies is more important than chores. Ever notice moms always seem to have time to hear us when we are

hurting – no matter how old we get? They'll turn aside from baking those cookies, wipe their hands on the hem of their apron, and sit quietly beside you at the kitchen table waiting patiently for you to unload. There are probably as many reasons for loneliness in our lives as there are people who're lonely. We feel isolated, lack social support, feel invisible, or believe no one understands what we're going through. Some reasons are our own doing; others are created by those who've passed through our lives. We long for someone to empathize with us. We miss friendships; the loneliness prevails.

### *Some reasons for feeling alone include:*

- **Being abused and rejected by others.** Bullying isn't just in our schools; it's not only confined to our youth. Being lied to, being made fun of, being abandoned or rejected, being told abusive things like, "*you're no good*", "*we don't want you around*", "*You'll never amount to anything*", or "*you're unlovable*" can and does happen anywhere at any time in our lives. As we age, we find people may be more sophisticated in their comments but it's the same thing. It quickly turns us into a recluse unable to socially interact; to take the risks required to build friendships.
- **Being unable to fit in.** Sometimes we feel as if we're "*a square peg in a round hole*." We're like a misfit who can't fit in with the crowd. Perhaps it's a cultural barrier, or a different language, maybe it's a physical handicap. It can happen because of age differences. Being recently widowed or divorced can leave you isolated and feeling "different" from the couples you associated with. Being a "5<sup>th</sup> wheel" in the crowd leaves us uncomfortable. We bow out of the social scene rather than feel uncomfortable.
- **Broken heart or missing someone.** Divorce, death, separation in family due to job transfers, young love that withers – the list seems endless for why we feel left alone and lonely because of relationships broken. Sometimes there's intense grief which moves us away from other relationships still in our lives. When that special someone's torn from us, we can isolate ourselves; feel unwanted by "anyone" so that those intense feelings of loneliness occur.

**Why do you feel so alone?** As well as feeling misunderstood, failing to fit in, or bullied, sometimes it's simply because we can't articulate what we think, how we feel, what we want adequately. I'm sure you've heard me say, "*I know you think you heard what you thought you heard me say, but I'm not certain that what you heard me say is what I meant!*" Can you relate? Some of us remain silent in our feelings. We leave others having to "*read*" us, guessing who we are, what we need. Yet our closest loved ones can't read us in our innermost, deepest core. There's left a part of us, the most significant part, the unique part — *alone*.

Each of us struggles with loneliness at some point. Where do we go when we don't have mom close by? Where do we turn when engulfed by aloneness, suffering, or uncertainty? I encourage you turn to your Heavenly Father. Open God's Word discovering comfort and assurance. Go ahead, pick it up; many today think the Bible a silly thing to read – its pages are outdated for our modern times but they're wrong for the Bible is as applicable today as it has been throughout the ages. So let its pages bring you *hope, strength, and courage*. As you read God's love letter, discover His encouragement: *"This is how God showed his love to us: He sent his one and only Son into the world so that we could have life through him. This is what real love is: It is not our love for God; it is God's love for us. He sent his Son to die in our place to take away our sins."* [1 John 4:9-10]. See, there's someone who's closer than a brother; one who's always with you. You're not alone! His name is Jesus – He's a friend even when all have deserted you, He's a comforter in your pain. The Psalmist understood. *"For God alone my soul waits in silence; from Him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall never be shaken"* [Vs.1-2]. It isn't said just once in Psalm 62; it's said again and again. The psalmist understands real compassion comes from God; God's love meets us in our loneliness. Though each of us meets God in our own way, regardless of whether we stand with hands raised or bend on a knee or clasp our hands tightly to our chest, it's not about how we prepare ourselves to meet, it's who we meet. Is it Jesus?

Our aloneness can come because others reject our success. They may feel jealous and try to destroy our happiness. The psalmist cries, *"Their only plan is to bring down a person of prominence"* [Vs. 4]. Jesus experienced this with the Sanhedrin. Sometimes it doesn't have to be a lot to hurt this way. Ever been cut off in line or on the highway? Still, people who've a single mindedness to a particular task, can often become isolated and, in being preoccupied seem aloof, considered unfriendly; warranted for hostility or simply being ignored. We easily forget they may be heavily burdened.

Of course jealousy and envy leads to much cruelty. The psalmist cries out, *"They take pleasure in falsehood; they bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse."* [Vs. 4] Why is it we line up with the world thinking the worst, knocking others down a peg or two, ensuring they're left alone and lonely? See how the Apostle Paul responded, *"So what should we say about this? If God is for us, no one can defeat us. He did not spare his own Son but gave Him for us all. So with Jesus, God will surely give us all things. Who can accuse the people God has chosen? No one, because God is the One who makes them right."* [Romans 8:31-33] It's not as if Paul never felt abandoned, mistreated or alone. He could prophetically quote the Psalmist saying, *"People think we are worth no more than sheep to be killed."* [Romans 8:36]

In today's psalm, the psalmist too cries out, *"For God alone my soul waits in silence"* [v. 5]. I think I can safely say that's the place to go, the best place. Our Heavenly Father lovingly meets us in our loneliness. We run to the Lord and He's always there; He doesn't turn us away. He cups us in the palm of His hand, He wraps His loving arms about us, He holds us up, and encourages us when we're down. Are we ready to listen for the Lord to come and dine with us, are we ready to hear God's plan for our lives moving forward, are we ready to put our aloneness behind us? The psalmist tells us: *"One thing God has spoken; two things I have heard; "Power belongs to you, God, and with you, Lord, is unfailing love."* [Vs. 11-12] It's good to listen for the Lord, to recognize His unfailing love and power are at our side, to be saturated by His amazing love. God's pledge and promise — signed, sealed and delivered in the blood of Jesus Christ. I feel better already – how about you? As we turn and hold to Him, we find our reward in Him. May it be that what we have done is said yes to His Son Jesus as our redeemer and Lord!



**Open God's Word  
discovering comfort  
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## *So where do we go from here?*

Do we accept with our hearts God's love meets us in our loneliness? It's been said in order to overcome loneliness, you need to share your emotions and life experiences with others. I suggest it begins with spending time with God. A very strong factor that helps overcome loneliness is taking our hurts and pain to God and being honest with Him of how we feel. He'll lead you in spending your time wisely. If you've closed yourself off from contact with others, let Him lead you in ways to be out among them. Be in public places, even a mall, or social events. If you take a daily walk, invite a friend to join you. You could choose getting involved in some kind of mission service involving team work. While rugged individualism may seem rewarding and even applauded, it isn't the pattern God chooses for His people. We're a body made of many parts each relying on the other. Time and time again, we try to live our Christian lives on our own, playing the role of a body part that simply doesn't need the rest of the body/ That's breeding grounds for loneliness. At the closing of 1 Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul indicates a clue to resisting the tendency to go it alone and face loneliness. *We're to remain on mission for God!* Individualism's a hazardous illusion from the enemy's arsenal leaving us isolated, alone and vulnerable. But when we're connected with others, pursuing God's mission, it results in us being a part of God's community, not only relationship with God but fellowship with His people. We all need to contribute to the entire body in carrying out God's call to preach the gospel reaching others for Christ.

It's important that such steadfast love, such power, such direction belongs to and is given to God. Whether you enjoy the "power of solitude" or are more of a "people person", you'll find loneliness vaporizes as you share with God. When we're lonely, sad, forlorn, when our soul waits for God in silence, perhaps even questioning God in our hearts, God brings us someone who's also waited for God in silence. God builds His body, the church, and as a result none of us is ever alone again. Because Christ paid it all at Calvary, because He was forsaken in Gethsemane for our sake, none of us is forsaken now. For this reason we join the psalmist: *"Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us."* [vs.8]

As we began, I asked you how alone you felt. Having considered the great relationship God has given to you in His Son Jesus Christ, has the rating gone up a bit? Anyone reach a 10? I hope so because its great to know you are loved and never alone. Jesus is with you – always!

*Blessings,*

*Pastor Dave*



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