

Overcoming Loneliness

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Introduction: We are in a time of the year where emotions often run high.

- A. In the holidays we often think back upon loved ones and past times in our lives.
 - 1. So many things cause us to reflect. This may bring many emotions.
 - 2. In cases of sadness or regret it is important that we be able to move on and serve God today! **(Phil 3:13-14)**
- B. Our emotions are given from God and are to be understood and controlled!
 - 1. The issue for each of us is to walk by faith and not by feelings. **(Prov 14:12)**
 - 2. At the same time we must not run away from how we are made! Men especially think that expression of emotions are a sign of weakness.
 - 3. Let us examine how men of faith both recognized and responded in emotional times.

I. What is loneliness?

- A. It is the “state of being alone” or the pain caused by the desire for companionship.
 - 1. Towards the end of Paul’s life he experienced the pain of standing alone. **(2 Tim 4:16)**
 - 2. There are events that can suddenly thrust us from a world surrounded by people to a hostile world where we are alone. **(Job 29:4-12; 30:10-11, 26-29)**
 - 3. There is a good probability that you will walk down this path in your life!
- B. One can be lonely in the midst of people!
 - 1. There is a longing for a certain kind of companionship. A companion to share your joys and to bear your hurts.
 - 2. It may be the longing for just one person to do this.
 - 3. This should be what people find here at this church! **(1 Cor 12:23-26)**
 - a. Even when one is rebuked by those who care there is a support for that one that allows healing. **(Heb 12:12)**
 - b. Many come to churches to hide and run away rather than be involved with others! Mega-churches with big shows are popular but do little for the spirit.
 - c. Some churches neglect some or may not be aware of others needs.
 - 3. The emotions from loneliness is not wrong, we must not however let ourselves live in them!
- C. You can be single and not be lonely. **(1 Cor 7:32-33)**

II. What are the fruits of loneliness?

- A. You do not feel complete and secure. **(Ecc 4:9-10)**
- B. You tend to look upon the past. **(Job 29:1-5)**
 - 1. Could Job return to the past?
 - 2. However Job’s past could be an encouragement to his here and now! **(Psa 22:1-5)**
- C. You tend to focus upon yourself.
 - 1. This in natural, as it is like being hungry. You cannot help but notice!

- 2. You are made to feel different and even unwanted. (**Job 30:9-10**)
- D. It can drain your energy.
 - 1. You can second-guess yourself and even second-guess God!
 - 2. When left alone our emotions can grow and eventually create their own reality. (**1 Kings 19:4,14**)
- E. Consider some Men of faith who were alone and in pain.
 - 1. Jesus – (**Psa 69:20, Jn 16:31-33**)
 - 2. Paul – (**2 Cor 7:4-7**)
 - 3. King David – (**Psa 142:4**)

III. Harmonizing our emotions and our faith

- A. We must choose to instill God's word as our reality. (**1 Jn 5:3-4**)
 - 1. How often do you find a passage to "hold on to" during emotional times? (**Psa 57:1**)
 - 2. In our Bible study in good times we should be preparing ourselves now for the emotional times. (**Psa 119:11**)
- B. Worship is the way we can bring the spiritual truth back into focus.
 - 1. How often in the psalms do you see trouble mentioned and then how comfort was found in worship? (**Psa 56:6-7, 9-11**)
 - 2. How did Jesus find comfort before the cross? (**Mt 26:38-41**)
 - 3. If we do not worship like this alone then we often will be overcome.

IV. Some wisdom to remember

- A. Always seek the truth. (**Phil 4:8-9**)
 - 1. Do not run from what has happened, it will only compound the hurt.
 - 2. Often we will need to stop and think "what is really true and what are my emotions leading me to believe?"
- B. Always be thankful! (**Phil 4:6-7**)
 - 1. We tend to be negative and as a result miss reality.
 - 2. God wants us to be thankful during suffering because He will use that too for our good. (**Phil 1:29-30; Rom 5:3-4**)
- C. Always look for God's provisions.
 - 1. How did Paul and David overcome their loneliness? (**2 Tim 4:16-18; Psa 142**)
 - 2. You should get busy in God's work by sharing burdens with faithful Christians and by collective worship. These are just a few of the many things that can lift us up.
 - 3. Consider how Paul overcame an emotional time. (**2 Cor 7:4-7**)
- D. Be humble and see the needs of others. (**Phil 2:3-4**)
 - 1. In good times we can benefit and prepare for the day that we suffer.
 - 2. There is a powerful strength that comes from sharing one another's burdens. (**Heb 10:33-34**)

Conclusion: Let us be faithful in both good and bad times!

- A. It is not so much as what happens to us but rather that we can overcome. (**Rev 2:7,11,17; 21:7**)
- B. Let us rejoice in the way God has made us and with wisdom serve Him.