

Loneliness

I. Definitions

1. Loneliness - The quality or condition of being lonely. 1. Want of society or company; the condition of being alone or solitary; solitariness, loneness.
2. Lonely *adj.* - 1. a. Of persons, etc., their actions, condition, etc.: Having no companionship or society; unaccompanied, solitary, lone.

II. God knows that it's not good for man to be alone (**Gen 2:18**).

1. This is why God instituted marriage (**Gen 2:24**).
2. Two are better than one (**Ecc 4:9-12**).
3. "Bacon quotes from Aristotle, that 'whosoever delighteth in solitude is either a wild beast or a god' -- that is (as Abp. Whately explains it) -- 'to man -- such as man is -- friendship is indispensable to happiness; and that one, who has no need, and feels no need of it, must be either much above human nature, or much below it.'" (Charles Bridges, *A Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, p.89)
4. The hearty counsel of a friend rejoices the heart (**Pro 27:9-10**).
5. A man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend (**Pro 27:17**).

III. The Christian life can be lonely at times.

1. God's people have always been separated from the world (**Lev 20:24; 1Ki 8:53; 2Co 6:17**).
 - A. Separate *v.* - 1. a. To put apart, set asunder (two or more persons or things, or one from another); to disunite, disconnect, make a division between.
 - B. Separate *adj.* - 1. a. Parted, divided, or withdrawn from others; disjointed, disconnected, detached, set or kept apart. b. Of persons, a dwelling, etc.: Withdrawn from society or intercourse; shut off from access.
2. Those that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (**2Ti 3:12**).
3. People will separate from our company because we follow Christ (**Luk 6:22**).
4. We have to bear our burdens alone sometimes (**Gal 6:4-5**).

IV. Nonresident church membership can be lonely.

1. Many times, saints are called alone to follow Christ (**Isa 51:2; Gen 12:1**).
2. Sitting at home alone listening to a sermon is better than assembling with the wicked (**Jer 15:17**).
3. There is, of course, a remedy for the loneliness of non-resident church membership: move to a church (**Luk 18:29-30**).

V. Jesus spent a lot of time *alone* (**Mat 14:23; Mar 6:47; Luk 9:18; Joh 6:15; Joh 6:22**).

1. He was a man of sorrows (**Isa 53:3**).
2. Jesus was *separate* from sinners (**Heb 7:26**).
3. Jesus accomplished His work of redemption *by Himself* (**Heb 1:3**).
4. Jesus was left alone by his disciples (**Joh 16:32; Mat 26:56**).
5. Jesus was never truly alone because He was always in fellowship with the Father (**Joh 8:16; Joh 8:29**).
6. Christ's ministers follow in His footsteps.
 - A. They spend a lot of time alone.

- B. Like the OT priests, they serve God alone on behalf of the brethren (**1Ch 23:13; Heb 9:7**).
 - C. Like the priests, pastors are taken from among men (**Heb 5:1**).
 - D. Like the Levites, they are separated from their brethren (**Num 8:14**).
 - E. They are separated unto the gospel (**Act 13:2; Rom 1:1**).
 - F. They separate themselves to seek and intermeddle with all wisdom (**Pro 18:1**).
 - G. They are sometimes forsaken by all and left alone (**2Ti 4:10,16**).
 - i. Or at least they feel like it (**Rom 11:3-4**).
 - ii. God is always with them though and will never forsake them (**Exo 3:12; 2Ti 4:17**).
 - H. The pastor who is not a lonely man is fool.
7. Having experienced loneliness, Jesus is able to help those who suffer with it (**Heb 2:16-18; Heb 4:15-16**).

VI. Modern life is lonelier than ever.

1. The advent of phones, email, texting, video chat, and "social" media has made people more connected than ever, but studies have shown, and experience has proven, that we are more lonely than at any time in the past.
2. "What is loneliness, exactly? Most of us have felt it in some form or another. It's the feeling that arises when there is a gap between social interactions you want and reality. It's feeling separated, even alienated, and can last for a short stretch or a prolonged period of time. It's important to note that you can feel lonely "even when you are around other people," Cacioppo says." (*Why Do We Feel So Lonely?*, [USA Today](#), April 30, 2017)
3. "There are more ways than ever to connect with others — yet many of us know the hollow ache of loneliness. Loneliness isn't constrained by age, gender, marital status or job title. CEOs feel it. So do cubicle dwellers. As do new moms, granddads, recent college grads and elementary school students. Even royalty isn't immune. Duchess Kate of Cambridge said in April that she has felt lonely and isolated as a mother. And yes, some of those Facebook friends who continually post photos of bar outings and extended family gatherings may be quite lonely, too." (*Why Do We Feel So Lonely?*, [USA Today](#), April 30, 2017)
4. "Loneliness is an issue that spans all age groups in one way or another. In newly released data, the U.K.'s National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children says that in the past year, it counseled nearly 4,100 children and teens who grappled with loneliness. Some who needed help were as young as 6. "I've thought about ending my life because I think it's pointless me being here," said one anonymous 15-year-old in a transcript provided by the NSPCC. "I don't feel like anyone cares about me, and I'm lonely all the time." A 16-year-old said, "I don't feel like I fit in anywhere, and I have no friends. I hate being this unhappy, but I can't control it. I feel so alone. Whenever I think about the future, I get scared that I'll always be by myself because I'm not good-looking or funny enough.'" (*Why Do We Feel So Lonely?*, [USA Today](#), April 30, 2017)
5. "That scary future of loneliness is a reality for many older adults. Almost half of Americans age 62 and up experience some degree of loneliness, according to a new AARP Foundation survey. Two in 10 say their loneliness is frequent." (*Why Do We Feel So Lonely?*, [USA Today](#), April 30, 2017)
6. Modern work environments and technology fuels loneliness.
 - A. Many people work alone in a cubical or from home.

- B. Work never ends for some people because they take it home with them on their phone.
 - C. It is vain to spend your life alone working constantly (**Ecc 4:8**).
7. For the solitary man, sometimes the most crowded places are the loneliest places.
- A. I used to feel this way.
 - B. Walmart or the mall were some of the loneliest places for me.
8. It is claimed that loneliness is a greater health threat than being overweight.
- A. "Dr. Julianne Holt-Lunstad, a professor of psychology at Brigham Young University conducted two meta-analyses of previous studies to determine how social isolation, loneliness, and living alone plays a role in a person's risk of dying. In an analysis of 148 studies that included more than 300,000 people total, her research team found that "a greater social connection" cuts a person's risk of early death by 50 percent. "Being connected to others socially is widely considered a fundamental human need — crucial to both well-being and survival. Extreme examples show infants in custodial care who lack human contact fail to thrive and often die, and indeed, social isolation or solitary confinement has been used as a form of punishment," says Holt-Lunstad in an American Psychological Association press release. "Yet an increasing portion of the U.S. population now experiences isolation regularly." (Study: *Loneliness, Social Isolation Greater Health Problem In US Than Obesity*, StudyFinds.org, August 6, 2017)
 - B. "In her second analysis, she looked at the role that loneliness, social isolation, and living alone played in a person's lifespan. Using 70 studies that included more than 3.4 million participants (mostly from North America, but some studies did look at people in Europe, Asia, and Australia), the research team concluded that all three were as much of — and in some cases more — a threat to a person's health as obesity and other risk factors. All three conditions were found to be equally hazardous and significantly raised the risk of premature death. "There is robust evidence that social isolation and loneliness significantly increase risk for premature mortality, and the magnitude of the risk exceeds that of many leading health indicators," says Holt-Lunstad." (Study: *Loneliness, Social Isolation Greater Health Problem In US Than Obesity*, StudyFinds.org, August 6, 2017)
 - C. "According to AARP's Loneliness Study conducted in 2010, 35 percent of Americans age 45 and older are suffering from chronic loneliness — which equates to about 43 million people. Similarly, half the country's adult population is unmarried and more than a quarter live alone, according to U.S. census data." (Study: *Loneliness, Social Isolation Greater Health Problem In US Than Obesity*, StudyFinds.org, August 6, 2017)
9. Brethren, remember that single people and widows/widowers are often lonely and need companionship.
- A. I am thankful for brethren who were friendly towards me when I was single.
 - B. But if you are single, remember that you are equally responsible for making the effort to spend time with people.
 - C. Friendships require work to build and maintain, but they cannot be forced.

VII. Dealing with loneliness.

1. Remember that God is always with us; He will never leave us nor forsake us (**Heb 13:5; Isa 49:15-16; 2Ti 4:17; Gen 39:21; Isa 41:10; Isa 43:2; Gen 28:15**).
2. Learn to not derive your happiness solely from other people: a good man shall be satisfied of himself (**Pro 14:14; Pro 12:14; Psa 4:4**).
3. Commune with God in prayer when you are lonely (**Psa 25:1; Psa 143:5-8**).
4. Spend time with your brethren (**Act 2:46; Mal 3:16; Psa 119:63**).
5. Be friendly in order to have friends (**Pro 18:24**).
6. Spend time in face-to-face interaction (**2Jo 1:12; 3Jo 1:13-14**).
7. Put down your smartphone -- start spending time with real people.
8. Spend less time (or better yet, no time) on Facebook.
9. Pick up the phone and call someone.
10. Go outside for a walk.