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When Loneliness Draws Near

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It is fairly safe for me to say that everyone, if they have lived a certain number of years on this earth, has experienced loneliness at one time or another. It is also true that when it strikes a person for the first time, most of us are utterly unprepared for the power that it has. Indeed, loneliness is a surprisingly potent force and one of the main on-bringers of depression for many people whom I have talked to, as well as experienced in my own past.

In this article, we will be looking at why loneliness is so powerful, why we were never meant to be alone in the first place, and how we can overcome this dangerous adversary.

If you have ever experienced loneliness and wondered how to defeat it, or know someone who is struggling with loneliness, this was written for you.

Knowing our enemy

First let's take a look at loneliness... what is it exactly? Loneliness is defined as being alone; isolated from companions, friends and other beings. When one is alone, that person is (or at least feels) cut off and isolated from everyone around him or her. With no source of companionship and no emotional outlet (someone to talk to for example) the person basically collapses in on themselves because even if they are surrounded by friends and family they feel that no-one understands them or that they can't talk to anyone else; which in turn leads to more feelings of isolation, more withdrawal from others and ultimately more loneliness. It is a spiral of self-destruction.

The different forms of loneliness

To truly know, understand and ultimately deconstruct loneliness we must understand its types. The first type of loneliness is most commonly found in adolescents; and it usually manifests with a very common phrase and way of thinking which you may find familiar: "No one understands me!" or when asked to talk about their emotions the idea of not being able to talk to a specific person or group because they will not understand is also very common.

Now let me say this: If you are a youth who is reading this and finding that you are feeling the way described above, I must tell you two things which at first you might not believe but never-the-less they are true... The first is that you are not as alone as you may be feeling or thinking: whatever problem you may be facing, someone else has also experienced it at some point, be it money, relationships, living conditions, family

problems, peer pressure, temptations, addictions or life in general. And while those things are outside the scope of this particular article, the fact is that most of us have gone through those very same things, and so you are not alone in going through them. Most people will understand and be willing to help, you need only to share how you feel.

The second type of loneliness is also quite common, and that is the loneliness for a spouse [wife/husband/boyfriend/girlfriend].

This kind of loneliness can be especially destructive if not dealt with properly. The reason for this is because it could and has led people to believe they are unattractive, undesirable and worthless when in fact the opposite is usually true.

Additionally, this type of loneliness often convinces people (again falsely) that the only type of relationships they can form or keep are shallow and short, usually one-night-stands and sex-based partnerships that usually end in pregnancy, disease and in some cases death.

If you are reading this and experiencing loneliness for a mate, you might particularly find interest in a journal entry which I wrote entitled Seasons. It deals specifically with the loneliness of wanting a mate, and provides a new way of looking at the situation.

Overcoming loneliness

So now that we understand loneliness a bit better, it is time to look at how we can defeat it.

The first step in ridding ourselves of lonely feelings and thoughts is to realize that we are never truly alone.

Think about that realization for a moment, we are never truly alone.

Even when it seems as though we have no friends or family or anyone around us, even if that may be true on this earth for a while, the Lord is always present. And I'm sure some of you are asking right now: "James, why are you mentioning God right now when we are discussing loneliness?" ... well my answer is that God was the one who created mankind, and He was the one who originally diagnosed and solved the problem of loneliness in Genesis 2:18:

"Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.'"

Now the above scripture was specifically referring to Eve to become Adam's wife, but if God is willing to do that for a mate for Adam, how much more would he be willing to provide those of us who are lonely with friends and family.

Even if it seems as though you may have no-one right now, I would humbly ask if you have ever reached out to God in friendship. I'm not talking about imagination or fantasy, but a real spiritual being, the very same living God who both created the universe and you and I.

If you never have cultivated a relationship with the Lord, I would encourage you to read another spiritual health article titled Accepting Jesus, which will help to show you how you can get to know the Lord and to never be alone again.

Perhaps you are reading this, and you already know Jesus, but your relationship with family and friends are not what they could be. I would similarly encourage you to ask God to help you see your family and friends the way that He does. There is a reason why we have the family that we have, and if we shut ourselves down and cut ourselves off from our family, we may be passing up a truly once in a lifetime opportunity which we may regret later.

Conclusion

I encourage you today to not waste any more time with loneliness. Start seeing the friends and family that you have around you, and please do not ignore the one who is closer to you than anyone, God.

Rise to the Challenge!

James