



THE SUNDAY MESSAGE

THE OBSTACLE OF LONELINESS


sunday 4 july

Talking through the message during the week helps you turn what God is saying to you into action steps. These notes are for people wanting to overcome the obstacle of failure and regrets.


How would you describe loneliness?

The answer to this will depend upon your experience in life. Some people have made a decision not to have any friends and then lived this way for decades without feeling any loneliness. Then there are people who have wanted the companionship of other people and they have not been able to find it, so they are lonely. Others once had intimate friendships but the person moved on, passed away or some dispute arose and now loneliness has filled the gap. One description of loneliness is “the painful awareness of not being connected to others.” People with this pain understand and agree with the idea of having friends but for many reasons it just doesn’t seem to happen.

Why do people feel lonely?

 **Genesis 2:18** and **Genesis 1:26-27**

These well known verses tell us so much about relationship. We are made in the image of God and He said it is not good for Adam to be alone. We feel lonely because right from the start people were made for community. Studies of cultures show that family and small communities have been the building blocks of society and great nations. One of the cruel curses of modern society is the label *he or she is just a loner*, the word means someone who avoids the company of people. But most often it is used to describe the person’s situation which is not of their choosing.

 Look at **2 Peter 3:9** and **John 15:12-17**. God continues to declare that He wants fellowship and community with people. He doesn’t want slaves for companionship, or in today’s language fully programmable computerised fellowship. He wants free people who choose to like Him. This is a cornerstone of creation. And most people want the same thing.

What are the benefits and risks of having intimate friendship?

 **Luke 13:34** and **Revelation 21:3-4** and **John 15:13**

We only have to look at what it meant to God to reach out and be intimate with his people to see one of the risks is rejection and betrayal. This is a fact of life where free-will exists while we live in a world manipulated by an incredibly evil enemy who hates to see true friendship and Godly intimacy. And then there are the benefits seen when we can enjoy perfect love with God and people. Friendships, family and reaching out to be a friend has risks and hurt can result, but then again so can blessings worth dying for.

NEXT STEPS

Use the journal to write to God how you honestly feel about loneliness.

To overcome loneliness there are some steps and risks to take. Sometimes it will feel like trail and error but without trial there can be no success. Here are some steps to be explored more deeply:

1. Love yourself – the journey out of loneliness often starts here
2. Love and trust God – commit this need to His care and give Him freedom to act
3. Overcome the fear of rejection and the fear of failing – take a risk once, twice and even more
4. Become an encourager – smile; overcome any negativity
5. Be generous – but be wise
6. Find somewhere to help or fit in and give it time – relationships are seldom instant

In 1966 a rock band called the Beatles launched a song which seemed to speak to the hearts of many people. It was called Eleanor Rigby but is better known for the chorus:

*All the lonely people
Where do they all come from?
All the lonely people
Where do the all belong?*

This is just one of thousands of similar songs which speak to the need of so many people. The thing about this famous song, like so many others, is that it doesn’t offer any hope. It just paints a sad picture.

The writers never answered the question because they never saw the answer which we know. They can only look at the effects of a world being assaulted by satan because by 1966 they had forgotten their childhood roots and possibly never had seen a real witness of Jesus’ love.

Pray that the church will be the answer for those who are lonely and will be known for its great love towards one another (John 13:34-35)

Pray this if you are seeking a friend: Father I need friends and I believe you want me to have friends. I give you permission to fix the things in me and around me so that I can be someone’s gift and in giving that I will receive.