

## Seeking God in Times of Loneliness

***Loneliness can be a spiritual invitation to find peace in the solitude of the heart.*** – Jackie Trottman

Life is full of incidents that not only separate us from friends and family, but society as a whole. We can be overwhelmed by feelings of loneliness whether we are physically isolated from others or are in a crowded room. Loneliness can even exist in relationships with two people living under the same roof. The COVID-19 pandemic has isolated us from each other in a way most of us have never experienced before creating loneliness we may not be used to feeling.

There are many examples of loneliness in the Bible.

In Genesis 6 we read of Hagar who fled from Sarai into the desert. In anguish and isolation, God sent an angel who reminded her that she was not alone, but that God was always with her.

David's longing for connection with God is evident in Psalm 25:16 "Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted."

The disciples felt alone as Jesus told them that he had to leave them. To assure them that they weren't alone, he said, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." John 14:18.

Even Jesus felt alone when he cried, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34)

When lonely feelings enter your heart, try to remember the great love that God has for you, and that he walks with you in all circumstances. Isaiah 41:10 "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Strengthening our connections to God and each other, can reduce the power of loneliness. Connect to God by spending time reading scripture or in prayer. Connect to others through online worship, or by attending church zoom meetings as you are able. Reach out to friends and family during this time of physical isolation using phone calls, text, or email.

### **A Prayer for Loneliness**

Dear loving and gracious God,

My heart aches and I feel so alone. Help me to seek you in my loneliness. Help me to find my comfort, not in things, but in the love Jesus secured for me at the cross. I know that you will never leave me or forsake me.

I pray for others who are lonely that you would show them their need for Jesus. Help them to know that he will never leave them, reject them, or turn away from them. I pray that you would use me to encourage the lonely with the love you've given me.

Help me also to do the things I don't feel like doing; using my gifts, encouraging others, serving and giving of myself. These are all hard to do when I feel this weight of loneliness. Help me be creative in finding ways to reach out to others while the pandemic restrictions are in place.

Help me to feel your joy in my heart even in my aloneness. May this season in life draw me ever closer to you.

In Jesus name I pray,

Amen.