



How Do I Cope With Overwhelming Loneliness?

John 16:32: (NASB) *Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.*



No one wants to be lonely. It is a sad and painful state of being that daily grows more and more common. There is a major difference between being alone and being lonely. To be alone is to be without anyone to engage with. This can be a productive place to be when in the right frame of mind. On the other hand, we can be lonely in a crowded room or when we are with family and friends. We can be lonely at work, at play and even at church. We can be lonely when with our spouse or when engaged in social media. Loneliness is not dictated by outward circumstances; rather, it is driven by our interpretations of our experiences and our perceptions of our environment. To be lonely is to feel unimportant. It is to be convinced we do not belong and that we in some ways are unacceptable and even unwanted. Loneliness can be overwhelming. Fortunately, there are ways to combat it!

Health risks with isolation and loneliness include:



DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, STRESS, ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR



HEART PROBLEMS



BRAIN CHANGES, ALZHEIMER'S, SUICIDAL THOUGHTS



POOR DECISION-MAKING



SUBSTANCE ABUSE

[verywellmind.com](https://www.verywellmind.com)



Some of us might suffer from deeper issues like anxiety and depression, for which the suggestions in this episode may not work. Please seek the right kind of medical help.

God did not create us to be lonely. On the contrary, He created us to be family and community-driven.

The creation of Adam and Eve shows us this basic principle:

Genesis 2:18,20-24: (NASB) ¹⁸Then the LORD God said, *It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.* ²⁰The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. ²¹So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. ²²The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. ²³The man said, *this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.* ²⁴For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.



This is a beautiful picture of husband and wife, but the principle of humanity needing humanity was irrevocably set in place. We were given each other as family and have always been directed to rely on that family for support, co-laboring, love and inspiration.

It is no accident that the Ten Commandments we have been studying in recent episodes are all about relationships. The first four Commandments are about our relationship with God and the final six are about our relationships with other people. This has been a front-and-center issue for thousands of years.

If you think about it, all that we are told to do and to be as Christians has to do with relationships. Lonely people often feel as if they are “less than” others and unable to participate in that fundamental basic principle of human connection.



We suggest five approaches to take when we are faced with our own loneliness. These approaches are meant to be used together when possible and are in an order of accessibility.

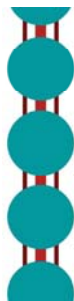
Living with OR LEAVING loneliness

APPROACH #1: PRAYER

We can choose to get lost within the confines of our lonely fear

OR

We can choose to hand that lonely fear over to our Father through Jesus



We prefer to show ourselves to others as being above the fray of the unrest in our lives, when in fact our loneliness can make us fearful and frayed around the edges of our hearts. When we feel the pressure of the fray, *let us get down on our knees to pray*. This prayer should not be the rehearsed kind that looks good and sounds sweet. It should be the kind that expresses in faith the whole hurt of our heart. This prayer should reflect our dedication to God's will and a seeking for His providence to show us what our next steps should be.



Let's try to look at this less as a fearful, unhappy time, and rather more analytically -it is a little warning light that some action needs to be taken. Loneliness could be our first sign that the quality of our relationships is not at the optimal amount for our contentment. It is like putting oil in my car. If I am three quarts low on oil, it is not running the way it was designed. Loneliness might be the indicator that we need to add more of something: Approach #1 - check our relationship with God. If our “loneliness light” is on, check in with the Father.



Jesus does understand our weaknesses and as a result, has opened up access to the throne of God's grace for our benefit:

Hebrews 4:14-16: (NASB) ¹⁴Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

While it is a powerful throne, here it is described as a *throne of grace*. None of us are worthy. We all miss the mark; we all sin. But we can *draw near with confidence* because we go with Jesus. The road to worthiness is reliance upon Christ and not ourselves.

It is not a throne of accomplishment or direction; it is a throne of grace because we all fall short and need God's grace. We can go before God because He wants us to tell Him what is in our heart and mind.



Philippians 4:4-8: (NASB) ⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! ⁵Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. ⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Let your gentle spirit be known - many lonely people can relate to having a gentle spirit. But they need to make an effort, get out there and show others this spirit.

Jesus is the picture of courage, fortitude and truth presented with gentleness. True gentleness can only come from great strength.

Be anxious for nothing - this sounds almost flippant, but we have to keep reading to see how this is actually possible - it is by having that close relationship with God where we truly believe our path is being overruled. We do not need to be anxious because God has it under control. Praying *with thanksgiving* is important.

Making our requests known to God can give us the following result:

⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

With this peace now accessible, it becomes easier to focus our hearts on higher things:

⁸Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

James 5:16: (WEY) Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be cured. The heartfelt supplication of a righteous (because of Jesus) man exerts a mighty influence. (God listens!)



**How hard do I work at prayer?
How seriously do I apply its advantages?
Remember, prayer does not have to be pretty
or formal or rehearsed to be effective!**

Let us never underestimate the power of prayer. It is always the best place to start when conquering anything!



With prayer in hand, what else can we do on our own to help us send our loneliness away?

The Bible is the word of God, written for our benefit. When battling loneliness, there is no better place for us to focus our minds than on the Holy Scriptures. These real-life accounts contain prophecy, inspiration, direction and know-how. All of this adds up to a recipe for success!

Living with OR LEAVING loneliness

APPROACH #2: STUDY & MEDITATION

We can choose to feel *desperation* as we comply with our loneliness

OR

We can choose to seek *inspiration* to dissolve and disengage from our loneliness



LONELINESS STARVES WHEN WE DON'T FEED IT

In an age where distractions are easy and plentiful, we seek to lose ourselves in those kinds of things to get away from the pain of our lonely existence. Video games, YouTube, TikTok and social media are all ways of hiding from our own pain.

Even music can become a crutch as we walk this desperate and lonely road. Music can inspire us but can also crush us. It can draw us closer to God or take us away. We need to be careful about what lyrics we listen to and the emotions they bring. Music that speaks to our loneliness enhances it instead of directing our attention away from it. Video games can be harmful in that they can take up our precious time and make us live in a fantasy world versus focusing on true adventure from the heroes of the Bible. Appealing things are not always good for us.

Instead of seeking to be distracted *let us seek to be absorbed*. Be absorbed into God's word, His promises, His plan and His providence. Feel the reality of those who were faithful and embrace the promises of faith the Scriptures offer. The difference? Distraction comes when our focus is on what is fake and shallow. Absorption comes from focusing on that which is real, nourishing and inspiring.



CQ has over 60 episodes focused on specific people of the Bible. Get inspired!

Sometimes we think, what is the point if I will never be good enough? Counteract this thinking with Psalms 119:105: *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*. Start by going to the Word of God. Pick a CQ episode on a topic that interests you or start by getting to know a person in the Bible. Many dealt with the same issues we do.

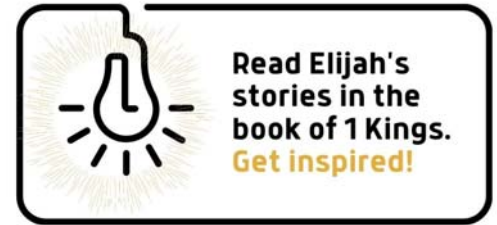


Choose how you feed yourself. We are suggesting study and meditation as the place to make those choices.

The Bible is full of examples. Even the prophet Elijah needed to see beyond his own lonely thoughts:

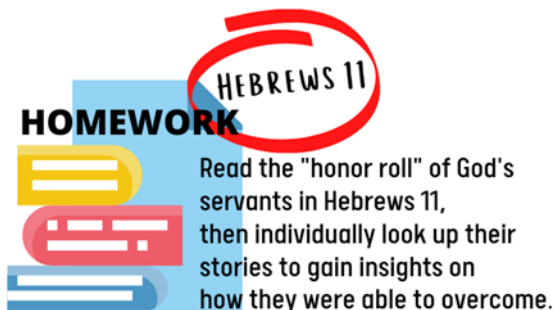
Romans 11:2-4: (NASB) ²God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? ³Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have torn down your altars, and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life. ⁴But what is the divine response to him? I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

Elijah thought he was alone. All he needed to do was see what God already had in place. He was depressed and lonely to the point of being suicidal. He was unable to see beyond his own circumstances. God revealed that there were actually 7,000 faithful people still left - *Elijah was not alone*. If we are not close to God, we might also have a hard time perceiving what support is around us. Elijah stayed connected to the Father's will and was able to overcome his extreme mental anxiety.



The Bible is full of inspiration - we only need to look for it:

Hebrews 12:1-3: (NASB) ¹Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³For consider him who has endured such hostility by sinners against himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.



There is ample inspiration in Scripture when we decide to find it. Pick a prophet or a servant of God. Pick a person of faith, learn about them and be inspired by them!



The Bible is FULL of God's promised care, overruling, providence and wisdom for us to find:

2 Peter 1:3-4: (NASB) ³seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. ⁴For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

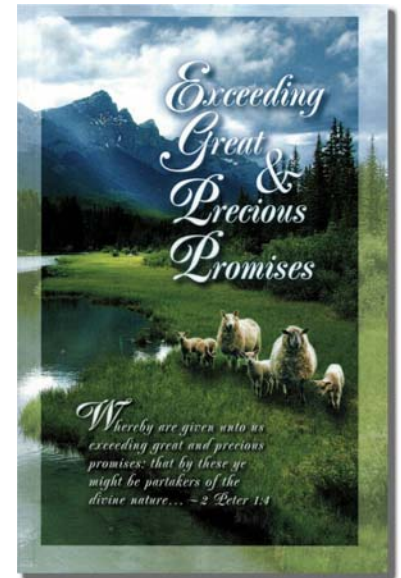


There are hundreds and hundreds of precious promises in the Bible that provide “how to” lessons on real joy, unbreakable peace, lasting fellowship, transformative patience, clear guidance and ever-dependending trust. The promises can help us to fight our natural inclinations towards loneliness and the temptations put in front of us by Satan to do us harm.

Download the free pdf booklet, *Exceeding Great and Precious Promises*.

<https://christianquestions.com/promises>

These promises can be claimed by faithful Christians who have devoted their lives to doing the will of God.



2 Corinthians 7:1: (The Living Bible) *Having such great promises as these, dear friends, let us turn away from everything wrong, whether of body or spirit, and purify ourselves, living in the wholesome fear of God, giving ourselves to Him alone.*

These promises are powerful! Find those that speak to our needs and claim them. Focus on the desire to be faithful in our Christian walk. We may feel broken and lonely, but is our desire to serve God through Christ? Is it our desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus? Even lonely, broken and miserable, we can hold onto these promises for help. Attack the loneliness in our lives by using the tools we are given.



OR



**How hard do I work at study and meditation?
How focused am I on really making
the Scriptures personal to my life?
Remember, we don't have to be Bible scholars
to deeply appreciate Scripture,
but we do have to put in the effort!**

Christian Questions has a lot to offer – podcasts, videos, CQ Kids videos, Show Notes, Study Questions – let us inspire you to look deeper into Scripture. Our goal is to spread the hope of the gospel wherever there are listening ears. To the lonely we say, go to work at reducing that loneliness in your life by focusing on something bigger and scriptural.

Think of the adventure we can have when we look into the Bible to find a hero to follow and cheer on!

**So far, we have two approaches that we can do privately.
What about approaches that affect others?**

Our first two approaches are personally accessible. We can engage in them without others really knowing our struggles. This is an important way to start dissolving our loneliness. We can summon the courage it takes to change what can only be seen by God and our Lord Jesus. While this can bring confidence, it is only the beginning of freedom from loneliness.



Living with OR LEAVING loneliness

APPROACH #3: HELP SOMEONE ELSE

We can choose to “friend” someone online, an act of simply connecting dots **OR** We can choose to go and actually befriend someone, an act of true engagement



To “friend” someone is to acknowledge their display of the pieces of their life they choose for others to see. Loneliness builds upon this keyhole view of others’ lives and the result is your “friending” has just made you lonelier. Instead, *let us seek to befriend someone.* Genuinely share some kind of real human interaction with them. This can come through finding a way to contribute to another’s life in a time of need, stress or lack. Find someone you can serve!



Social media contributes to loneliness because it usually is status-oriented and people exaggerate how well they are doing. People feel more isolated and lonelier when they do not measure up to this perceived high standard.

Here is where the rest of us come in. If we are naturally more outgoing or if loneliness is not our issue right now, we can look for those invisible people around us who could use some encouragement. Engage in the life of someone who needs engagement.

LONELY ZONE



If we are the one in the lonely zone, it is too easy to keep retreating from life. If someone offers us a kind hand, we need to take it even if it is scary or exhausting to step back into living and engaging with others.

Start by just being aware of what is around us. Apply kindness, hold the door for someone, make a nice comment, sow goodness. This can also be something a lonely person does to initiate conversations. When we are lonely it is hard to initiate anything! This is why we suggest the best way to go about engaging with others is to not necessarily step out to try to connect with someone, but by first serving someone. It gives the person we are serving something of value, and in return we get something of value back.

Jesus laid the groundwork for our giving. We can see it in his life:

Acts 20:35: (NASB) *In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

Sometimes when we are lonely we think, *if only somebody would...* But here Jesus is saying it is more blessed to be the giver than to be the receiver. Our suggestion is to find someone we can help. It does not have to be a big and dramatic service. It can be something small. Find a need and fill it. It does



not need to be a headline-worthy act; it can be just a small postscript. A small step will lead to others.

Build others up - stimulate them towards love and good works:

Hebrews 10:24: (NASB) *and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,*

This was the original theme Scripture introduced on our first talk radio broadcast of Christian Questions on June 12, 1998!



Build one another up. Notice it says to stimulate one another to love and good works. This means it is not a natural thing. It means we have to work on it. It is a growth-oriented process. Whether we are lonely or not, this should be a constant: continually seek to build one another up and *stimulate one another to love and good deeds*. Again, we are not saying we have to make a big connection; just step up and help someone.

Particularly focus on those with extreme needs:

James 1:27: (NASB) *Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.*

This verse defines *pure and undefiled religion* as requiring the visiting of those in a disadvantaged situation. We need to find a way to help them, to serve them. Again, it does not need to be a big gesture, but by providing even a small service, things change in both our minds and theirs. This is a wonderful experience - find someone to serve!



Whether we feel like helping them or not, this needs to be done. Maybe we cannot fill the whole gap needed by them, but we can do something. This will help us to cope with our own loneliness.

Living with **OR** LEAVING loneliness

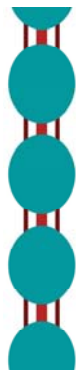
APPROACH #4: INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIP & CO-LABORING

We can choose to accept being a lonely individual who feels like they have no options

OR **We can choose to have individual fellowship with others whose lives are also focused on Christ**



Do I choose to feed my loneliness, or do I choose to take the energy I would normally feed into my loneliness and apply it elsewhere? I can choose to have individual fellowship with others whose lives are also focused on Christ.



We like to appear impervious to the pains of life when we would be better served by a willingness to *be vulnerable*. This is expressed in the difference between small talk and real communication. With small talk, we paint a fantasy picture of ourselves for others to carry, depicting a calm and “together” approach to our challenges, when inside we are drowning. With real communication, we present our flaws and *seek to be understood as well as to understand*. To ask, “Can I talk to you about something?” is a good way to open the door that skips the small talk and lets your friend know you need them to listen. It changes the mood of the conversation, giving it depth.

Ideally, with a gentle spirit, we want to seek a spiritually-minded friend who will understand our Christianity. There is great power in that gentle spirit when we are trying to cope with our own loneliness, or if we are trying to help someone else cope with theirs.



Start with prayer. Add study and meditation to fill ourselves with something stronger than our loneliness. Be willing to serve others. By doing those things, we will now be ready to actually engage in a back-and-forth relationship with another individual. Having that gentle spirit is critical to being able to do this.

Think about being lonely. In a sense, this lonely approach to life is putting *my* feelings, *my* perceptions and *my* interpretations about life ahead of all others. It is not that we are arrogant, but in this state, we are very self-absorbed with our state of mind and our emotions.

Is this a good way to be humble?

Romans 12:3-5: (NASB) ³*For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.* ⁴*For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function,* ⁵*so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.*

We have a sense of a community here. We are part of this body. We are *individually members one of another* - do I take this thought seriously? These verses show how my life is undeniably connected to the lives of each member of the body!

The relationship between those in the body of Christ in some ways is a closer relationship than one of a natural family because we have the same goals and vision of God’s plan. We get support and encouragement, we study and pray together and we share our experiences and lessons. This is why, as it is stated in **Hebrews 10:25**, it is important to not *forsake the assembling of ourselves together*. We need to get to the point of being able to connect with each other. It may not happen at first or all at once.



To do this, we need to use what we are given in our Christian lives, and appreciate what others are given:

Romans 12:6-13: (NASB) *⁶Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; ⁷if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. ⁹Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.*



Is being lonely a sin?

It is an emotion, much like we might feel angry. The sin with anger is to *stay* angry. Similarly, we do not want to dwell in loneliness. This could be Satan holding us back from growing in the Lord. Loneliness is a dark place to live because it becomes all about *us* instead of being all about Jesus and our brethren in Christ. We have to fight our natural inclinations or else Satan jumps in to take advantage of them. Our own ego, our sense of our own identity, might get in the way. This seems backwards. We might be feeling lonely and sad, perhaps even not worthy. This could become an egotistical place to be because it is all about *our* state of mind. It is insidious because it begins to grab more and more of our focus.



We are not saying the harsh message of, get over yourself! The message here is that we have this place where we sometimes get stuck, and we need a plan to move forward. If we have answered the call to be a follower of Jesus, we are obligated to do what Jesus wants us to do. There is no profit or growth in only focusing on ourselves.

However, sometimes when we are stuck, moving forward is beyond us. We still have to strive to do so, even if we can only take half a step, a whole step, maybe two steps backward, another half step forward... What matters is that we make the effort. What matters is that we decide our ego, our emotion, our mindset, is not a bigger force in our lives than our contribution to the body of Christ. Remember, find a friend or mentor you can talk to. It is so important to open the door to talk to someone.

Is my loneliness a healthy product to cling to, or is it a result of something that should be put away:

¹⁰Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; ¹¹not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; ¹²rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, ¹³contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

Matthew 25:40: (KJV) *...as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me (Jesus).*

These verses go back to serving others. We get that service in place, and now let us get actual fellowship and co-laboring in place where we can engage with someone. Working together on spiritual projects is another good way of connecting. We also need to open the door for true Christian communication. We have to be willing to reciprocate as well.



If someone asks us, *"Can I talk to you about something?"* the appropriate response is to look them in the eye, drop whatever we are doing as best as we can, and say, *"Sure, what is on your mind?"* Then we need to just be quiet and let them talk.



OR



How hard do I work at seeking out trustworthy friends in Christ to grow alongside of? Remember, mutual confidence gives both individuals a deeper and more resilient strength!

When we find a friend to talk to, we are actually contributing to that friend, even if we are laying our difficulties upon them. The mutual confidence is what builds each person's strength. This is where things can get exciting - *I can now positively influence others. I am useful in the hands of God!*

Now that we have broken the barrier of individual communication, what is our next leaving loneliness step?

Next, we need to expand our horizons. Through prayer, study and meditation, helping those in need and finding a good friend or two, we have set a clear direction. We have put our loneliness on notice. Next, we want to avail ourselves of the great privilege of discipleship - engaging in the activity of being a part of the body of Christ!

Allow yourself to be useful in the hand of God. If we have been called of God, we have essentially put ourselves in God's hands. God does not keep anything in His hands for which He does not have a use. We must allow ourselves to be used by the Father and by Jesus. We have to trust that we have value, or He would not have called us.

Living with



OR



LEAVING loneliness

APPROACH #5: FELLOWSHIP WITH THE BODY OF CHRIST

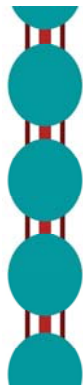
We can choose to live a lonely life of disconnection by observing our spiritual community while keeping our personal distance

OR

We can choose to learn to lean on our spiritual community by intentionally connecting with them

Being *intentional* is important because we are not likely to *accidentally* connect with people if we are in a lonely place in our minds!





In an age where our spiritual community can be a mere instant away, we often choose to observe them from our lonely perch. This is a way to pass time, to look somewhere else instead of looking inwardly. While moments do pass by and we may feel a slight sense of relief, inevitably this actually deepens our sense of loneliness. We are just hurting ourselves and are not *helping* anyone else, either.

We need to purposefully connect with our spiritual community. Instead of observing them, *let us invite them into the sanctity of our hearts and minds*. Let us appreciate their cause and conviction in Christ and lean on their faith to help us rekindle our own.



What if we are not presently meeting with other Christians or do not connect with the church we are in? Or, what if we go to church but come home still lonely? How do we find those who believe like we do?

We have to assess why we feel lonely with our church - are they saying things with which we do not agree? Have they pricked our conscience and now we feel uncomfortable? Are they preaching error? That is a totally different thing! We want to find a Christian community that is spiritually-minded and spiritually uplifting for us. This can be hard to find since there are many who attend a church but do not live like Christians when they are away from church. Finding the right church can be hard. If you are in this situation, let us see if we can do something to help you along the way to be engaged with those who have faith and are living their faith in the conviction of Christ. Unless we step out and ask, we will not find an answer.



TO: Inspiration@ChristianQuestions.com

Do I choose to feed the loneliness or do I feed what God has provided for me?

There is a remarkable connectedness in the way the Apostle Paul describes the body of Christ:

1 Corinthians 12:12-17: (NASB) ¹²*For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. ¹³For by one spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one spirit.*

We can see the remarkable connection - Jew or Greek, slave or free, it does not matter from where we come! If we are true Christians, called of Christ, we are undeniably connected.

God's spirit makes us all one body. However, being part of this one body means we have VERY different roles to play:

¹⁴*For the body is not one member, but many. ¹⁵If the foot says, because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear says, because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?*



The body parts have different functions. Everybody will not be the same. Their roles will be different. Does my loneliness allow me to embrace the roles of others? Do I embrace MY role?

This is where we can help someone who is lonely. We can “be the eye,” actively looking for someone who needs more of a connection. This is difficult when we are all caught up in our own stuff, but we are challenged to come out of our own comfort zone and help others in a God-honoring way.



On Episode 1160, our friend Fred talked about losing his wife unexpectedly. He was starting to emotionally retreat and finally had to admit to his church group that he needed

help. His friend Mark would force Fred to go for walks – this simple act is something he recalled years later as helping him immensely. Some things seem inconsequential but can make all the difference to someone who is struggling with isolation and not being seen.

With loneliness we want to hide in the “not being seen” place. It does not help us or anyone else, which means it is not fulfilling what we need to do to be part of the body. The body functions together. The arm needs all of its muscles to coordinate together or it does not function correctly or efficiently. And without the eye, how could the arm know where to reach?



We always need reminding that this body and its parts is custom-designed by God Himself:

1 Corinthians 12:18-25: (NASB) ¹⁸But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. ¹⁹If they were all one member, where would the body be? ²⁰But now there are many members, but one body. ²¹And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

God custom-made the place we occupy. If we are struggling with loneliness, it is very real, but we can choose to do things that will help us to counteract it and help it dissolve. We can replace the loneliness with something bigger. Understanding the connectedness of the body of Christ is critical to this. One member is not more important than another. *The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you* – of course they need each other! A propensity to feel unimportant might grab onto the idea of being a “lesser” body part that is not needed.

Yet, the Apostle Paul describes these very parts as MOST valuable:

²²On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; ²³and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, ²⁴whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, ²⁵so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.



The Apostle Paul is saying that each member of the body is just as important as he is – we can *all* contribute. Let's let that sink in – the Apostle Paul, who wrote half of the New Testament, who brought Christianity to all of these new places, who was shipwrecked, stoned, and left for dead and is thought to have been eventually beheaded for Christ, says we are just as important as he is.

It does not matter how small a role each of us plays because we are all begotten by the same spirit, and we exist within the same body.

The bottom line is, being part of this wonderful body means **fellowship in one another's trials and victories**:

1 Corinthians 12:26: (NASB) *And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.*

This verse sums up our beautiful picture of connectedness. *But I'm lonely, I feel disconnected, unacceptable, unimportant or insecure.*

If you are a Christian and believe in the call of Christ, grab hold of all of what we have talked about today:

- Look at **prayer** first – focus on letting God know your feelings.
- Consider **study and meditation** – focus on feeding yourself scriptural things from your studies that are necessary to build strength.
- Look at **serving** someone else who is in need, even if it is only in a small way – focusing on another's problems rather than your own helps heal loneliness.
- Look at establishing one-to-one **relationships** – focus on that connectedness where you can be a part of someone's life. "Hey, can I talk to you?" works both ways in a relationship and establishes give-and-take.
- Savor being part of the beauty of the **body of Christ** – of being even the tiniest little part that still plays a role.



OR



How hard do I work at engaging in the give and take of the body of Christ? Do I accept and embrace it?

Remember, the body is only successful in its mission if all the parts fulfill their individual responsibilities. How does the importance I have assigned to my loneliness stack up against the vitality of the body of Christ?

This is an important question. We give our loneliness a certain amount of value. We need to look in the mirror and ask if we have given our loneliness a value in our lives that is as big or bigger than our contribution to the vitality of the body of Christ.

Start with prayer and work your way up. Start with the things that are private (prayer, study and meditation on those studies) and work your way up to becoming a friend and co-laborer in the body of Christ. If you have depression or anxiety, make sure to get the proper medical help. It will help you to cope with and deal with loneliness.



When we, as Christians, put our loneliness in perspective, glory is given to our Father, and we are part of that. Loneliness is conquerable. Do not ever give into the idea that it is overwhelming. Instead, give into the idea that we can focus ourselves on those things that are higher and fill those lonely places in ourselves with spiritual blessings.

*So, how do I cope with overwhelming loneliness?
For Jonathan, Rick, Julie and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



Bonus Material and Study Questions

When I feel truly alone, with a sense of being lost, even empty inside, it is then I realize I have unknowingly moved away from God, SO I MOVE BACK. — David L Weatherford

Jesus experienced being alone as a man, yet he was never disconnected from his Father:

John 8:25-30: (NASB) ²⁵So they were saying to him, Who are you? Jesus said to them, what have I been saying to you from the beginning? ²⁶I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world. ²⁷They did not realize that he had been speaking to them about the Father. ²⁸So Jesus said, When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and I do nothing on my own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught me. ²⁹And He who sent me is with me; He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him. ³⁰As he spoke these things, many came to believe in him.

John 16:32-33: (NASB) ³²Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. ³³These things I have spoken to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.

Here is a GREAT example of a sister in the early church whose service to those less fortunate was deeply appreciated:

Acts 9:36-39: (NASB) ³⁶Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas); this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did. ³⁷And it happened at that time that she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room. ³⁸Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, imploring him, Do not delay in coming to us. ³⁹So Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them.



The Apostle Paul expresses a sense of feeling alone as his life was ending. Intermingled with his confidence in Christ is his sadness over those who fell away and those who left for other service:

2 Timothy 4:6-18: (NASB) *⁶For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. ⁹Make every effort to come to me soon; ¹⁰for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service. ¹²But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. ¹³When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments. ¹⁴Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. ¹⁵Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching. ¹⁶At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them. ¹⁷But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was rescued out of the lion's mouth. ¹⁸The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

This Psalm reflects some of the experiences of Jesus as well as depicting the harshness of loneliness in our afflictions:

Psalms 102:1-17: (NASB) *¹Hear my prayer, O LORD! And let my cry for help come to You. ²Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my distress; Incline Your ear to me; In the day when I call answer me quickly. ³For my days have been consumed in smoke, and my bones have been scorched like a hearth. ⁴My heart has been smitten like grass and has withered away, Indeed, I forget to eat my bread. ⁵Because of the loudness of my groaning my bones cling to my flesh. ⁶I resemble a pelican of the wilderness; I have become like an owl of the waste places. ⁷I lie awake, I have become like a lonely bird on a housetop. ⁸My enemies have reproached me all day long; those who deride me have used my name as a curse. ⁹For I have eaten ashes like bread and mingled my drink with weeping ¹⁰Because of Your indignation and Your wrath, For You have lifted me up and cast me away. ¹¹My days are like a lengthened shadow, And I wither away like grass. ¹²But You, O LORD, abide forever, And Your name to all generations. ¹³You will arise and have compassion on Zion; For it is time to be gracious to her, For the appointed time has come. ¹⁴Surely Your servants find pleasure in her stones and feel pity for her dust. ¹⁵So the nations will fear the name of the LORD And all the kings of the earth Your glory. ¹⁶For the LORD has built up Zion; He has appeared in His glory. ¹⁷He has regarded the prayer of the destitute and has not despised their prayer.*

(Source: The Pulpit Commentary: (Psalms 102:6,7) The loneliness of the afflicted. Removed from the interests and activities of life, the bedridden sufferer feels as if left alone; his very weakness and helplessness make him feel lonely; there must be long hours of the day when he is actually alone, and long, sleepless hours of the night when he seems all alone; and he must go altogether alone down into the "valley of the shadow." Here the psalmist uses as figures three birds which were regarded, in his day, as types of loneliness. The pelican is the bird of the swamp; the owl is the night bird of the desolate ruin; the sparrow is melancholy when it loses its mate. Tristram describes the pelican as sitting motionless for hours after it has gorged itself with food, its head sunk on its shoulders, and its bill resting on its breast. There is a bird in Western Asia, sometimes called a sparrow, which has a custom of sitting solitary upon the habitation of man. It never associates with any other, and only at one season with its own mate; and even then it is often seen quite alone upon the house top, where it warbles its sweet and plaintive strains, and continues its song, moving from roof to roof.



I. LONELINESS AS AN ELEMENT OF TROUBLE. There is a forced loneliness, and there is a sought loneliness. That sought loneliness may be right, worthy, useful; but it may also be wrong, trying to others, and making needlessly difficult the work of the nurse. Those who would cheer us by their presence are too often frowned away. Sick people fail sometimes in due self-restraint; they become self-centered, and inconsiderate of the feelings of others. The wish to be alone may be quite wrong.

II. LONELINESS AS A CALL TO CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY. Waiting times of pain seem very long; waiting times of mere necessary resting without pain may even seem longer. The visit of mere good cheer is Christian service. The sight of another face, the sound of another voice, the touch of another hand, are full of truest relief and comfort. Ease the lonely hours of every sick friend within your reach.

III. LONELINESS AS AN APPEAL FOR DIVINE MANIFESTATION. That is the point we have in the psalm. God is the Supreme Friend of the lonely heart. Compare "Alone, yet not alone, because the Father is with me." Jesus on the cross is the sublime model of loneliness; yet he could say, "My God, my God!"

Christian Questions Weekly
Newsletter

CQ Rewind Show Notes and
Study Questions

Text
CQREWIND
to **22828** to get started.



Study QUESTIONS

Ep. 1173: How Do I Cope With Overwhelming Loneliness?

<https://christianquestions.com/character/1173-lonely/>

See:  **CQ Rewind**
SHOW NOTES

1. Why are our relationships with others so important to our Christian lives? How does being lonely run counter to the last six Commandments? (See Genesis 2:18-24, Exodus 20:11-13)
2. How can prayer help us escape the confines of our lonely fear? What is required for a prayer to be effective? (See Philippians 4:4-8, Hebrews 4:14-16, James 5:16)
3. How can Bible study inspire us and dissolve our loneliness? How is it better to be absorbed rather than distracted? Which Bible character inspires you the most? (See Romans 11:2-4, Hebrews 11:1-40, 12:1-3)
4. What are some precious promises God has given to faithful Christians? How can they help when we feel lonely? (See 2 Corinthians 7:1, 2 Peter 1:3-4)
5. How can helping others actually help us cope with feelings of loneliness? What is the difference between "friending" someone and "befriending" someone? How does social media increase loneliness? How did Jesus use his life as an example for us? (See Acts 20:35, Hebrews 10:24, James 1:27)
6. Why is it important to have individual fellowship with another follower of Christ? How can it help both parties grow? Why is it important to meet regularly with others in the body of Christ? (See Matthew 25:40, Romans 12:3-13, Hebrews 10:25)
7. Do you fellowship with anyone in your congregation on an individual basis? How has it affected your Christianity?
8. What does it mean a part of the body of Christ? How can we lean on this community to strengthen ourselves and release our loneliness? What is our responsibility as a body member with a specific role? What if we are one of the most minor members - the least in importance? (See 1 Corinthians 12:12-26)
9. Do you ever experience loneliness in your life? What do/will you do when you feel this way? What do/will you do to comfort others around you when they are feeling lonely?