

THE FEAR OF LONELINESS

Dear Friends:

We live in a lonely world. More specifically, we live in a lonely country. America is the wealthiest country in the world, among the most advanced countries in the world, our citizens are near the top in life expectancy in the world, yet we have one of the loneliest populations in the world. Over 50% of Americans say they are either lonely or very lonely. In a country of over 300 million people and growing, how can we be so lonely? That's simple: the amount of people around us does not correlate to the peace or feeling of loneliness within us. COVID-19 is not to blame for all of the loneliness, but there has been a rise in "loneliness percentage" since the start of the pandemic.

How do we overcome the fear and feelings of loneliness? Hebrews 13:1-6 has a four-step remedy for loneliness. Remedy #1: Avoid Isolation. The first two verses of Hebrews 13 tells us to keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters and show hospitality to strangers. Do we get it? One cannot be isolated and show love and hospitality at the same time, the two are opposite of each other. When I see someone beginning to show signs of loneliness I encourage them strongly: engage socially. Remedy #2: Be Alert to the Needs of Others. Hebrews 13:3 tells us to remember those in prison and those who are mistreated. Hebrews was written after AD 60, a time when persecution of Christians became widespread in the Roman Empire. The message of verse 3 was, "Do not be so self-focused that you forget to pray for others and take care of their needs. Loneliness ignores the needs of others. Remedy #3: Avoid the 3 S's. What are the 3 S's? Sex, silver, and sloth. Verse 4 and 5 is a great reminder that sexual sins, love of money, and slothfulness easily trip us up. When we are lonely we become a bigger target of temptation from Satan. Remedy #4: Allow God's Presence To Comfort You. Verse 5 says, "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you." Let your mind process his presence. Do not listen to the devil, he will whisper, "God's not there, God doesn't care, you have sinned so much he has let go of you." These are all lies, Satan is the father of lies and God makes the promise: "I will never leave you or forsake you", that is exactly what he will do. Don't fear loneliness, have faith in the promise of his presence.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Mike

Prayer Requests: The family of Buddy Calliccoat at his death, Sandra Stribick (cancer), Aaron Slone (heart transplant)