

The Problem of Loneliness

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‘The greatest disease in the West today is not TB or leprosy; it is being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for. We can cure physical diseases with medicine, but the only cure for loneliness, despair, and hopelessness is love. There are many in the world who are dying for a piece of bread but there are many more dying for a little love. The poverty in the West is a different kind of poverty -- it is not only a poverty of loneliness but also of spirituality. There's a hunger for love, as there is a hunger for God.’

Mother Teresa

- Loneliness is not the same as being alone
- Loneliness is increasingly common in younger people as well as the elderly and brings with it dramatic consequences for physical and mental health. 28% households in the UK are now one person only households
- The solution to the problem of loneliness is the presence of _____ friends (example of Jesus and Apostle Paul)

Proverbs 17:17 (NLT)

A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need.

Proverbs 12:26 (NLT)

The godly give good advice to their friends; the wicked lead them astray.

Proverbs 18:24 (NLT)

There are “friends” who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother.

Proverbs 22:11 (NLT)

Whoever loves a pure heart and gracious speech will have the king as a friend.

Proverbs 22:24 (NLT)

Don't befriend angry people or associate with hot-tempered people.

Proverbs 27: 6, 9-10 (NLT)

Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy. The heartfelt counsel of a friend is as sweet as perfume and incense. Never abandon a friend - either yours or your father's. When disaster strikes, you won't have to ask your brother for assistance. It's better to go to a neighbour than to a brother who lives far away.

- There is a difference between family (as in kindred) and a friend (implies intimacy and unity of purpose) the tower of Babel! can include family and neighbours
- The marks of _____ - common purpose, constancy, absence of gossip, carefulness, occasional confrontation. (Proverbs 24:28)

- We need _____ to choose, make and keep good friendships
- The radical nature of Christian friendship – none of us are in HCC by chance!

John 15:15-17 (NLT)

I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. This is my command: Love each other.

- Jesus is the _____ - His friends let Him down, deserted Him and betrayed Him and yet He died and went to hell in their place

Hebrews 13:5 (NLT)

Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said: "I will never fail you. I will never abandon you."

- What sort of friend are you in HCC?
'A friend is one who loves you as you are, who sees not only who you are but who you can become. One who is there to catch you when you fall, one with whom you can share your every day experiences. One who accepts your worst, but helps you to become your best. Someone who understands your past, believes in your future and accepts you today just the way you are. A friend is someone who comes in when the whole world has gone out'
- How can you and I become that sort of friend in HCC?

Galatians 6:9 (NLT)

So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.

1. Avoid self pity, 'woe is me', 'my situation is unique'
2. Become a '_____', not a 'taker'
3. Get involved in _____
4. Be wise in our friendships and aspirations
5. Being a good friend to our _____
6. Opportunities for reaching out to lonely colleagues and neighbours

Bibliography:
Timothy Keller – Friendship
Bible Gateway