

Monday Identifying Loneliness

God said in Genesis 2:18, “It is not good that the man should be alone;” God made people to be social beings and need social interaction. When that interaction is missing, we face the emotion called loneliness. Elijah is a good example of someone who dealt with it. Let’s study his life a little more this week and learn from his experiences.

1. Read I Kings 18:20-22 – You are probably familiar with the rest of the story. Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to see who really served the true God. Of course Elijah won the challenge when God came through in a miraculous way. According to verse 21, what motivated Elijah to give this challenge?
2. What did Elijah feel about his own personal walk with the Lord?
3. Read I Kings 19:1-18 – According to verse 19, in what way did Elijah show that he had too much dependence on people?
4. According to verse 10, how did Elijah show that he had too much focus on himself?
5. According to verse 4, how did Elijah show that he had too little satisfaction with God?
6. If you are feeling lonely, which of the above has caused you to feel lonely?
7. What do you need to do to get that area of your life back into a proper perspective?

A life that is not centered on God will always be a lonely life!

Tuesday Identifying Loneliness

Living a Godly life could cause you to be alone, but you don’t have to be lonely. When you live as God wants you to live, you may find that you walk that road with no human companion.

1. Read I Kings 18:20-22 – Did Elijah feel like he was walking alone?
2. Of what did God remind Elijah in I Kings 19:18?
3. Is it possible that Elijah did not know of the other 7,000 who didn’t bow to Baal?
4. Read Jeremiah 15:15-17 – Why was Jeremiah alone?
5. Read II Timothy 4:16-17 – Paul lived a life that pleased the Lord. What was he facing at the end of his life?
6. If you are living a life that pleases God, it is normal to feel that you are the only one. Elijah and Jeremiah felt that way. If you are living a life that pleases God and you are abandoned by your friends, you are still not alone. Read Mark 14:50. Does Jesus know what it is like to walk alone?
7. Can you take your cares to Him? Will He understand you?
8. Though Elijah didn’t handle his loneliness very well, Jesus never sinned, even when His own Father turned His back on Him. Is it possible then for you not to sin even though you walk alone?
9. Read Hebrews 4:15 – How does this verse encourage someone who lives for God and is walking alone?

Even though you may walk alone in your Christian life, you can still keep a proper perspective on your relationship with other people and God.

Wednesday Identifying Loneliness

When you have a cold, you have symptoms of the cold. You may get a runny nose or a little fever. They are symptoms of the problem. Loneliness has symptoms as well. Let's take a look at them again from the life of Elijah so we can identify them more easily in our lives.

1. Read I Kings 19:1-18 – One symptom is self-pity. How did he demonstrate self-pity in verses 10 and 14?
2. Another symptom is depression. How did he demonstrate depression in verse 5?
3. A third symptom is disinterest in activity. How did he demonstrate disinterest in activity in verses 9 and 13?
4. Another symptom is thoughts of suicide. How did Elijah demonstrate thoughts of suicide in verse 4?
5. All of these symptoms could be caused by any one the causes we studied on Monday or by a combination of them. Have you ever displayed any of the symptoms above? Of the three causes we studied Monday, which one or ones cause you to feel lonely?
6. What can you learn from Elijah's reactions to help you the next time you feel lonely?

The symptoms are never the cause or the root of the problem. They are simply an indication of a problem. If you are feeling lonely, it is probably because you are depending too much on other people, focusing too much on yourself, or not being satisfied with your relationship with God. You don't have to be lonely.

Thursday Responding to Loneliness

We have very little control over the circumstances of our lives. We do, however, have total control to how we respond to them. At some time in your life, you may have already faced loneliness, or you may at some time in the future. How you react to it is up to you. Let's learn more from Elijah's life to help us respond properly.

1. Read I Kings 19:1-18 – Elijah responded to his loneliness in basically two ways: he whined and complained, and he got mad at God. About what did he complain?
2. About what did Elijah get mad at God?
3. What did whining and complaining solve?
4. Was God responsible for Elijah's feelings of loneliness?
5. Really what Elijah was trying to do in these responses was shift responsibility from himself to someone else. Both Adam and Eve tried that in Genesis 3. Did God allow them to pass their responsibilities to someone else?
6. About what are you complaining?
7. For what are you mad at God?
8. If you are in one of these situations, you are trying to pass your responsibility to someone else. Do you think God will allow you to do that?

Remember, your reaction is up to you. You don't have to respond to life's circumstances negatively. Your reaction is your responsibility.

Friday Overcoming Loneliness

If the potential for loneliness exists for all of us, we need to know how to deal with it, and we need to do it in a Biblical way. We'll review them still learning from the life of Elijah.

1. Read I Kings 19:1-18 – In what two places was Elijah without any human companion?
2. The first step in solving any problem is admitting that there is indeed a problem. How many times did Elijah admit to God that he was all alone?
3. Read Mark 14:50 and Hebrews 4:15 – Why is it so important to admit your loneliness to God?
4. Does Jesus understand being left alone?

We do have a Savior Who knows what it is like to face any difficulty that we also face. Remember that Jesus, even though He was left alone, never sinned. He did not respond incorrectly to being alone. He knew it was simply part of His Father's plan for His life. Being alone might just be part of His plan for your life as well.

5. The next step is to confess your loneliness as idolatry. Review the three causes of loneliness and explain why loneliness can be called idolatry.
6. Are you feeling lonely? Where do you need to begin in overcoming it?

Overcoming our feelings of loneliness may take some time before they are completely gone, but you have to start somewhere. If you feel all alone, start by asking God's forgiveness.

Saturday Overcoming Loneliness

We will continue looking at ways to overcome loneliness. God wants us to be overcomers, and that includes loneliness. We will continue learning from Elijah's mistakes, so we don't make them ourselves.

1. Read I Kings 19:1-18 – Yesterday, we saw how God began to work Elijah through his loneliness. The next step is to put God back into His rightful place of prominence. If He's not, we won't be satisfied with our relationship with Him. According to verses 11-12, what did God do to help Elijah get his focus off others and himself and put it back on God?
2. Read Proverbs 18:24 – What does this verse tell you about what God wants for your relationship with Him? Is there anything in your life that is taking precedence over God?
3. After God is put back in first place, we need to be reminded that God's presence is always with us. Read I Kings 17:1 and 18:15 – Elijah told King Ahab and Obadiah that he stood before the Lord. Where could Elijah have gone where God wouldn't already be there?
4. Read John 8:29 – Who would always be with Jesus?
5. Read John 13:33 – What did Jesus tell His disciples?
6. Read John 14:16-18, 25-29 – When Jesus left, Who came?
7. The Father was always with Jesus. The Father did not want the Son to be left alone. Jesus gave the same promise to us. When He left, He sent the Holy Spirit to be with us. Are we really ever alone?

There is no need for loneliness because the Holy Spirit is always with us. We can overcome!

Sunday

Overcoming Loneliness

There are two final steps to overcoming feelings of loneliness in our lives. We'll take one final look at Elijah to see how God helped him to overcome loneliness.

1. The next step in overcoming loneliness is to claim His promises. There is one special promise that will help us in this particular situation. Read Hebrews 13:5 – What is that promise?
2. How could this promise help you to overcome loneliness?
3. What other promises can you think of will help you when you are feeling lonely?
4. Read I Kings 19:15-17 – The next step in overcoming loneliness is to do something for someone else. What did God tell Elijah to do?
5. One of the causes of loneliness we studied on Monday is focusing too much on others and yourself. Why do you think it is so important to do something for someone when you are feeling lonely?
6. What are some things you can do for someone else today?
7. Have you ever felt lonely? How have you reacted to it?

God tells us about people's faults in the Bible. The faults in Elijah's life can teach us a lot about being lonely. There may be times when you feel alone because you are following God's leading in your life. In those times it is important to react to your situation properly. Trust God's perfect plan for your life.