

The Struggles that Surround us - 8

This is totally your study. Nobody will be instructing you and nobody will be grading you. It will just be you, your Bible, these lessons, your own paper, and of course, the Holy Spirit guiding and teaching you.

STRUGGLE	Loneliness
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The world is full of lonely people. When I participate in events in the prisons where I get to speak, often the subject of loneliness comes up. Actually, I seldom hear a man say, "I am lonely." What he does say is, "I am alone". Is there a difference?

1. ___ Yes ___ No Can a person "not be alone" & yet be lonely?
2. ___ Yes ___ No Can a person "be alone" & yet not be lonely?

I grew up in a family with a father, a mother, a brother, and a dog; I had a nice house, a bicycle, my baseball glove, friends, a church – yet I was alone.

3. Why were these Biblical people alone?

- a. Adam – Gen. 2:18 _____
- b. Jacob – Gen. 32:24 _____
- c. Moses – Ex. 24:2 _____
- d. Job – Job 13:13 _____
- e. Daniel - Dan. 10:8 _____
- f. Jesus – John 16:32 _____

This might sound odd but sometimes our circumstances require us to be alone. Notice that only Job seemed to be in a state of depression.

The other men listed above were carrying out or participating in the plan of God; this required them to be alone. It appears that "being alone" can be temporary or possibly long-term.

4. What kind of "alone-ness" did our men above have?

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| a. Adam | ___ Temporary | ___ Long-Term |
| b. Jacob | ___ Temporary | ___ Long-Term |
| c. Moses | ___ Temporary | ___ Long-Term |
| d. Job | ___ Temporary | ___ Long-Term |
| e. Daniel | ___ Temporary | ___ Long-Term |
| f. Jesus | ___ Temporary | ___ Long-Term |

God caused the "alone-ness" to be temporary. For Adam – God created woman; For Jacob – God met him face to face; For Moses – God gave him an assignment; For Job – God let him speak his mind out-loud; For Daniel – God has a message that Daniel needed to hear; For Jesus – Man forsook Him – God the Father did not.

5. What kind of "alone-ness" do we see with these guys?

a. Job – Job 7:16 _____

b. Jeremiah – Jer. 15:17 _____

They were depressed by bad news & bad circumstances. They appeared to be choosing to avoid people.

6. ___ True ___ False I could be avoiding people – thus, being/feeling alone.

7. ___ True ___ False My being alone is always everybody else's fault.

8. ___ True ___ False My being alone could be my protecting myself.

9. ___ True ___ False I live around people but I feel totally alone in life.

*Choosing "alone-ness" could be caused by **shame** about who you think you are, **fear** that people will not accept you, **guilt** for your past life and actions, **events** where you were hurt, abused, or severely violated.*

In my case, I was molested as a child by a neighbor & physically mistreated by my father. Both of those events still affect my life today. I have felt worthless and defenseless. Don't get me wrong, I love God & He has changed my life to be a man with purpose & hope. However, damage was done & that has caused me to choose "alone-ness" on occasion.

10. What do you think caused you to choose "alone-ness"?

"Being alone" may have developed due to bad & unhealthy things; that "alone-ness" can become a habit or an addiction; it can become a mental condition. In other words, that life style can stay around until it destroys us.

I could spend all my looking around saying:

a. All these people want to physically assault me.

b. All these people will never understand me.

c. All these people want to sexually harm me.

d. All these people hate & will never accept me.

e. All these people see no value or worth in me.

Not all the people around you feel that way (not even in prison). Many (& I mean many) are feeling the same as you. Ok, granted I am not there living with you. Would you, at least, consider that some people might be hurting too, but might be OK - someone to reach out to?

The word "alone" in the Hebrew (the Bible) means "to divide", "to separate & become a part ("apart) of something bigger." In the Old English, it means "all + one", "wholly one's self & nothing else,"

This is NOT natural or healthy. It is not the way God created us.

11. Write out Ecclesiastes 4:10-11. _____

12. Notice that after a time of alone-ness, Jesus had something to do. What were those activities?
- a. Matt. 14:23 _____
 - b. Luke 9:18 _____
 - c. John 8:29 _____

The "alone-ness" was temporary. If our "alone-ness" or "loneliness" is permanent, we need a friend; we need a purpose; we need a goal; we need to accept forgiveness from others; we need to forgive ourselves; we need to stop pushing people away & blaming God for our crummy life.

13. Check out Romans 8:31,34,37,39.
- a. Christ is _____ us.
 - b. Christ _____ for us.
 - c. Christ helps us _____.
 - d. Christ _____ on to us.
 - e. Christ _____ us.

Will you let Him fight for you in the loneliness, pray for you in the loneliness, help you win in the loneliness, hold you tight during the loneliness, and love you in the loneliness? You are worth it.

14. Here is a final reminder to encourage you. Match the verses.

- a. If you have scary things facing you _____ 1 Sam. 12:22
- b. If the worst thing has happened _____ 1 Peter 5:7
- c. If you are totally filled with guilt _____ Psalm 147:3
- d. If you are overcome with fear _____ Deut. 31:6
- e. If you have too many cares to handle _____ Isaiah 41:10
- f. If you have had a deep, deep loss _____ 1 Cor. 10:13
- g. If you given in to wrong things _____ Psalm 68:5-6
- h. If you feel just totally beat up _____ Psalm 27:10
- i. If your friend or family turns on you _____ Proverbs 18:24

Notice in the verses that God is close by – at arm's length, able to hear you, always ready & always there. You can't see Him but you can talk to Him.