

Taming your GIANTS

#1 - Loneliness

Welcome to LIFE in 2020. 2020 will be remembered along with:

- Dec 7, 1941 – Bombing of Pearl Harbor
- Nov 23, 1963 – President Kennedy assassinated ...
- September 11, 2001 – “9/11”
- And now 2020 – Covid-19
 - Disneyland closed
 - Olympics postponed
 - SD County Fair cancelled
 - NO Live Easter Service gatherings
 - Hoarding of TP

Isolation – “Keeping us safe” But... unintended consequence: **Severe loneliness.**

- **“Let us make man in OUR image”** Gen 1:26 God: Father, Son, Spirit ... were together.
- **“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’”** Genesis 2:18

We were not made to be hermits. **We are social creatures.** Loneliness causes: depression, paranoia, schizophrenia, suicide, mass murder and many diseases. And yet most people struggle with loneliness in silence.

Even before COVID-19 pandemic and forced isolation:

- Loneliness strikes as many as 1 in 3 Americans.
- Loneliest American adults: divorced, widowed or separated adults, and those who live alone or solely with children.
- Loneliness is a longing for completeness.
- Loneliness is a nearly invisible affliction.

What can you do to TAME this Loneliness GIANT?

STEP 1 – Be REAL. Be Honest w/yourself.

- Pray honestly to God and tell Him how you feel.
“I look for someone to come and help me, but no one gives me a passing thought! No one will help me; one cares a bit what happens to me.” Psalm 142:4
“My eyes are ever toward the Lord, for he will pluck my feet out of the net. Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.” Psalm 25:15-16
- Don’t just try to “suck it up” -- Deny what you’re feeling.
- Don’t let the Enemy make you feel like a failure, a bad Christian, a weak person.
- Jesus IS with you ... but we still need other people.

STEP 2 – UNDERSTAND. Loneliness is common.

- Look to God to provide.
 - Relationship with Almighty God.
 - No amount of friends can fill a heart like God can.
 - Jesus suffered as we do. (Easter Sunday) He understands.

“This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin.” Hebrews 4:15

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Matthew 27:46

- Jesus: rejected, died, buried alone – and rose again - so that we might never be alone.

Step 3 – ELIMINATE non-effective “solutions”

- Busyness – Don’t just try to “stay busy”
- Shopping – Like an anesthetic – exciting, numbs for a while, then wears off.
- Sleep – excessive. Used to avoid LIFE.

Step 4 – BENEFICIAL IDEAS

- Pray more ... for others
- Read the Bible more
- Praise God. Count your blessings! Food? Roof? Phone?
- Memorize a new Scripture. Gen 1:1
 - ***“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”*** Joshua 1:8
 - Re-watch a Fireside Chat or reread a devo that was meaningful to you. Suggest a helpful one to a friend.

Step 5 – REACH OUT to someone and be honest.

- Ask God, “Who should I call?” Then ... be still ... and listen. (Ps 46:10)
- Ask them to pray for you ...with you ...for you.

Step 6 – OPEN YOUR EYES to the needs of others.

- God wants to PROTECT you through this crisis;
- But also - God wants to USE you through this crisis.
“In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you” Matt 7:12

Step 7 – Think of yourself as a MINISTER.

- Be a “Giant Tamer” -- of LONELINESS for someone else.
“As good stewards of the manifold grace of God, each of you should use whatever gift he has received to serve one another.” 1 Peter 4:10
- We were created for one-another. Body life (1 Cor 12; Eph 4; 1 Pet 4; Rom 12)
 - Call those church folks you know.
 - Be brave – call someone you don’t know (yet). Introduce yourself. 😊
 - ***“A stranger is just a friend you haven’t met yet.”***
“He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.” Ephesians 4:16

**** NOTE: Everybody needs God. Everybody needs somebody. And somebody needs you.****