

College Loneliness

- The first thing I learned at AU was that living on your own isn't always all it's cracked up to be
 - o You have to cook yourself (or eat taco bell)
 - o You have to pay bills and clean house
 - o Until I moved down here I thought my clothes just magically cleaned themselves
- Once you get used to all of that, other problems begin to creep up
 - o New friends...none of them fulfilling that "BFF" role at first
 - You miss out on what's going on at home
 - Friends, church, younger siblings
 - o My Dad has to work in Tennessee away from the family
 - We shared our hardest problem: **no one to share the day with**
- Loneliness creeps in to college life. How do we deal with it?

A. Loneliness is "the state of being alone" or the *pain caused by the desire for companionship*. We're NOT talking about romantic relationships

1. Paul experienced the pain of standing alone (**2 Tim 4: 16-18**)
 - a. Taking a stand excludes us from many worldly companions
 - b. The most popular and easiest way to find friends is the sorority/fraternity party lifestyle. Christians don't partake in that.
 - i. Even though we may not testify our beliefs in front of a worldly audience, our righteousness can automatically make us outsiders in the world.
2. David in **Psalm 142** passionately describes his loneliness
 - a. **V.4** – look to the right and see; for there is no one who regards me, There is no escape for me; *no one cares for my soul*
3. Job was taken from comfort and honor to a place of hunger and humiliation (**Job 29: 4-12; 30: 10-11, 26-29**)
 - a. There are events that can thrust us from a state of comfort to a state of total isolation
 - i. Moving to college
 - ii. My Dad's job change
 1. One day he was with us, the next we'd only see him on weekends

B. Loneliness effects every aspect of life

1. We don't feel complete and secure (**Eccl. 4: 9-10**)
2. We tend to focus on ourselves
 - a. What am I doing wrong? What can I change about myself?
3. It can change who we are...
 - a. it can drain our energy, it can hinder our prayers, it can cause us to question God.

C. Loneliness is not always an absence of people. Most often it is a lack of true companionship.

1. We have been made with an innate desire for companions who can share our joys and bear our hurts with us. One person can make the difference in a life!
2. This is what we should be able to find here at this church. (**1 Cor. 12: 22-26**)

- a. We all know people can slip through the cracks and quit coming to worship. Companionship can encourage them when they are down.
- b. Even those who are “regulars” can be here and still not have found even one person who they can call a kindred spirit
 - i. *We're all kindred spirits in the Lord!!*
- 3. There are those who find it easy to make friends and create bonds with others
 - a. Some people have a gift that allows them to make friends easy, to make others feel comfortable.
 - b. We have a responsibility to your brothers and sisters to make them feel supported within the local congregation
- 4. There are those who have been down the lonely path before, those who have overcome despair
 - a. *These have a responsibility to strengthen those who are suffering now.*
 - b. That's how the Lord's body is intended to work. The strong comfort the weak (**1 Cor. 12: 22-26**).

D. To the suffering: Don't give in to despair!

- 1. Learn from David, seek the Lord as your companion (**Ps. 142**)
- 2. Christ knows everything there is to know about Loneliness!
 - a. What did he do before his crucifixion? (**Matt 26: 38-41**)
 - b. Pray, Sing, find a passage to comfort you
 - i. Memorization is a lost art. Memorized verses become companions that can come up in tough situations
 - c. Cast your burden on the Lord, because he cares (**Matt 11:28-30**)
- 3. God is the only answer! Do not try to supplement
 - a. Many Christians, when they feel like outsiders in the church, attempt to find companionship in groups and places they ought not be.
 - i. True security can only be found in God. **It's how we're made.**

Conclusion:

- Loneliness is a part of living. We cannot escape.
 - o Why? **We are not made for this world**
- Draw near to God in the good and bad times
- Bear one another's burdens, and draw strength from them. (**Heb. 10:33-34**)
 - o We're all in this together!!