

# The Cure for Loneliness



Everything was perfect for Adam in the Garden of Eden! Everything except...what it was he couldn't quite find words to describe. He certainly had no complaints. God had lovingly provided everything for him in this heavenly paradise. Everything was beautiful, wonderful, except...there was this strange empty aching feeling deep inside.

The Lord understood that deep emotion. And He had allowed it to show Adam that he was never going to be truly happy with these beautiful things that the Lord had created until he had someone like himself with whom he could SHARE them. And so God decreed that "It is NOT GOOD that man should be alone; I will make him a companion."—Genesis 2:18. And not long after that, Adam got his Eve!

So God didn't intend for people to be lonely or to live alone. He intended for us to live, love and share our lives TOGETHER with OTHERS in FAMILIES. "God sets the lonely in families."—Psalm 68:6. So, with the great fragmentation of family life that has taken place in modern-day culture, it is hardly surprising that loneliness is a greater problem than it has ever been since the beginning of history!

With "the love of many growing cold", as Jesus predicted it would in the Last Days (Matthew 24:12), loneliness is on the increase. And it is no longer just a problem confined primarily to the aged. It is also a serious concern among children and teenagers. In the U.S., a recent study showed that the main complaint among urban elementary school children was LONELINESS! The medical profession can attest that more and more doctors now view loneliness as actually being DANGEROUS to one's health! Research shows that people who live alone require medical treatment much more frequently than do married people.

Loneliness also can bring on self-destructive behaviour such as increased smoking and drinking, and can make people more prone to risk-taking behaviour such as reckless driving. The suicide rate of people who live alone is FIVE TIMES HIGHER than "the norm".

But the cure for loneliness is not a pill, & certainly not suicide, but rather another PERSON! The lonely need companionship, someone with whom he can share his life. No one has trouble understanding why Adam couldn't live

alone in Paradise, but in today's World people somehow tell themselves they can make it alone!

This myth of independence, which we see exalted every day in advertising and other media, makes it appear that to admit we need each other is a sign of weakness. We are told that individuals should look out for THEMSELVES first and foremost, and, above all else, live for "ME FIRST", not caring about others.

So, is it any wonder that so many people today are lonely?—Especially in cities, where city life has been aptly described as, "Millions of people being lonesome together". Just having a lot of people living

AROUND you won't necessarily relieve loneliness, because loneliness comes from being INSULATED from others, not only ISOLATED. Loneliness, sad to say, is often self-inflicted.—People build walls around themselves and then complain of their loneliness. They build WALLS instead of BRIDGES! How do we "cure" loneliness? The solution is simply summed up in this little proverb: "To love others makes us happy; to love ourselves makes us lonely." Consider this true story:

There was a very lonely woman once who was always seeking a new lover, a new love, but never finding one that satisfied or lasted or that relieved her loneliness. Why? Because she was always seeking to GET love, to RECEIVE love, to BE loved! But when it was suggested to her that perhaps she needed to learn how to GIVE love, and to love UNSELFISHLY for the benefit and happiness of ANOTHER, after years of searching, this struck her as an entirely new idea that had never occurred to her before! She went out and soon found what she was looking for all the time—true love!—By trying to find someone SHE could make happy by GIVING her love to THEM!

So there's the key, the simple solution to loneliness!—The same as it's been since Man was first created: If you GIVE love, you'll GET love! If you're sincerely concerned about OTHERS and show THEM love, they'll be concerned about YOU and show YOU love! Of course, as Christians we can share with them the Love of ALL loves from the Lover of all lovers, Jesus Himself!—And as Christians, that is HOW we should love and reach out and help others, by telling them about JESUS, Who alone can satisfy that DEEPEST yearning of every human heart for TOTAL love and COMPLETE understanding! For we know that only in JESUS will anyone find COMPLETE and PERMANENT fulfillment, as HE is the ONLY One Who can truly satisfy that empty lonely feeling that we ALL sometimes feel, no matter HOW many friends or loved ones surround us.

The Lord has created a special place in our hearts that only HE can fill. For although the BODY is of this EARTH and is satisfied with the THINGS of this Earth, the human SPIRIT, that intangible personality of the real you that dwells in that body, can never be completely satisfied with anything but utter union with the great and loving SPIRIT Who created it.

Of course, Jesus wants us to love and be close to others, but that first place in our hearts must be reserved for HIM! As the old song says, "Only Jesus, only Jesus! Only He can satisfy!"—And even when we have someone dear

and close to us physically, there will always be that certain deep feeling inside that can only be satisfied by giving HIM our whole heart and drawing closer to HIM!

14. Actually, this is another side to loneliness!—There are times when it may even be good for us to feel somewhat lonely. There are times when the Lord allows us, His children, to feel a little lonesome in order to enrich and deepen our relationship with Him!

It reminds me of the story of the famous Christian songwriter, George Matheson. He was deeply in love and soon to be married, when he was told by his doctor that he was losing his sight and would be a blind man within six months! He was heartbroken of course, but he didn't think it fair to his sweetheart not to tell her and give her the choice whether she still wished to go ahead with the marriage or not. He felt that if she really loved him she would still want to live with him and take care of him.

So he went to her house that night and they sat on the couch holding hands and chatting about this and that, until finally he plucked up the courage to tell her, "Honey, I have some very, very sad news. The doctor tells me that by our wedding date I will be completely blind!" All of a sudden he felt her hand quiver and loosen its grasp. Then icily, coldly, it was withdrawn from his as she turned away and burst into tears and said, "Oh, I'm so sorry, George... but I COULDN'T be married to a BLIND man!"

Crushed, and heartsick, his whole world falling apart, he walked despondently back to his home where he sat down alone at his desk and thought about how the only thing that he had left in the whole World now was JESUS. Then he took a piece of paper and his old quill pen and he wrote the famous hymn that has since been a comfort to millions, "Oh Love that will not let me go"—JESUS!

"Oh Love that will not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in Thee,  
I give Thee back the life I owe,  
That in Thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be!"

That's the wonderful thing about being a Christian!—You'll never again be completely alone because you'll ALWAYS have JESUS! Even when everything else is passed away, you'll STILL have JESUS! When all others forsake you, there'll STILL be JESUS! When the loves of this World and your friends or lovers desert you because they're not willing to become Christians, you'll still have JESUS! Jesus promised, "I am with you ALWAYS, even unto to the END of the World!"—Matthew 28:20. When the WORLD has nothing left for you, you'll still have JESUS!—And Jesus is ALL you really NEED!

So there are two main reasons why the Lord allows Christians to be lonely: Number One, so you will look to JESUS for your DEEPEST satisfaction and companionship. And number Two, so you will reach out to OTHER lonely hearts

with Jesus' Love and comfort! There are so many OTHERS around you who are just as lonely and longing for love as YOU once were, and just waiting for you to make the first move!

So step out by faith and talk to someone today about Jesus and God's Love and help THEM to be FULLY satisfied and COMPLETELY happy FOREVER, not just with HUMAN love and companionship, but with the Love of GOD, because God IS Love and He will satisfy your & their need for love FOREVER!—1John 4:8.

So love someone TODAY! Find out what wonders love can do! You'll find a whole new World of love you have only dreamed of! There are wonders of love that you yourself can enjoy along with other lonely hearts—if you will only try!

Remember, however, the purpose in showing the Lord's Love to others is NOT just to win them to YOURSELF so that they can merely satisfy YOUR personal needs for companionship, but to win THEM to the LORD, Who is the ONLY One Who can TRULY satisfy the DEEPEST longings of their hearts! So let them know clearly that it is the LORD'S Love IN you that makes you show such love and outgoing concern for them; otherwise, they may be tempted to put all their emphasis on their relationship with YOU and leave the Lord OUT of the picture. The result: They will STILL be lonely when you're not around and not find TRUE fulfilment.—And if you are not strong in the Lord and in His Word, and you ALLOW them to do so, it could even eventually cause YOU to fall away from putting the Lord first in YOUR life!

So make sure that YOU put the LORD first in your life, and then THEY will TOO!—Otherwise, your relationship could wind up being just another case of two lonely people trying to fulfil their selfish desires and needs in each other, and will end in disappointment. 2Corinthians 6:14 warns us, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers."—In other words, don't allow yourself to get into a relationship with someone who only loves you physically, but wants nothing to do with the Lord. Make it CLEAR that the LORD and His WORD are FIRST in YOUR life—that they can't pull you away from HIM!

The KEY is to get them hooked on the LORD and on the WORD like YOU are, if you want them to keep things in their proper perspective. TRUE happiness—yours AND theirs—comes from sharing the Word and the Lord with others. So if you truly want to help someone, make sure to ground their life on the right foundation. Amen?

We hope these words of love will help you find the love YOU need to make YOU happy and no longer lonely, and that OTHERS will find happiness through your love too! God bless and keep you and make you a blessing with His Love! Remember:

All the BEST things in life are SHARED!—LOVE isn't put in your heart to STAY, Love isn't LOVE till you GIVE it away!

Copyright (c) 1997 by The Family International