

# YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Loneliness is an issue that a lot of students are dealing with. You probably can easily think of a time when you felt lonely. Loneliness is something that all students will deal with at some point in their lives. It's not a case of *if*, but *when*.

## I. Loneliness Is Normal

- a. Everyone feels lonely at times. It's normal and natural.
- b. You are not alone in dealing with this issue – though you may feel like it!
  - i. The 90's is the decade of loneliness!
  - ii. You are members of the loneliest generation ever!
- c. We need to deal with loneliness – prolonged loneliness leads to depression.

## II. Loneliness Is More Than Being Alone

- a. You can be lonely in a crowd – it's more than just being alone.
- b. It's a feeling of being an outcast or outsider.
  - i. Lack of value/significance: *Do I really matter?*
  - ii. Lack of purpose: *Do I really have a purpose in life?*
  - iii. Lack of a support system: *Is there anyone who really cares about me?*

## III. Jesus Knows What It's Like To Be Lonely

- a. Read Mark 14:31,50
- b. Jesus knows what it feels like to be deserted and lonely.
  - i. He sees and cares!
  - ii. The people He needed the most, trusted the most, all deserted Him!

## IV. Working Through Loneliness

- a. Don't withdraw.
  - i. Withdrawal is our first impulse. *Don't*; keep in touch!

- ii. Isolating yourself only makes it worse.
- iii. Don't medicate your loneliness with drugs, sex, food, TV, video games, bad relationships, etc.
- iv. We need each other (Hebrews 10:24,25)

b. Depend on God.

- i. Reach out to God in the midst of your loneliness.
- ii. Read Psalm 23 and 25:16-18
- iii. Tell Him what you're feeling. He really cares!
- iv. He is always there for you, whether you feel it or not.
- v. He will always believe in you, your significance and value.
- vi. When lonely times come, go to God with your loneliness.

c. Develop special friendships.

- i. Reach out to others instead of pulling back.
- ii. Cultivate special friendships:
  - 1. People you can rely on during lonely times.
  - 2. People who genuinely care for you, value you, accept you.
  - 3. People who give you a support system in those times of need.
- iii. Reach out and serve others. Be others centered.
- iv. One of the best things you can do to work through loneliness is to take your eyes off yourself and place them on others.

d. Devise a P-L-A-N for when you feel lonely.

- i. **P** = Prayer: Seek God in prayer; bring your feelings to Him – He cares!
- ii. **L** = Lean on others: That's what friends are for!
  - 1. Who could you seek out? You need to grow friendships.

2. You need a sense of belonging and the support of others.
- iii. **A** = Activities: What could you do or get involved in?
    1. Something to restore your feeling of value and significance.
    2. Something that restores your feeling of purpose.
  - iv. **N** = New experiences
    1. Try something new with others.
    2. Build memories that will help you through the tough times.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Some experts say that you are the loneliest generation ever. Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. How can loneliness be destructive? How can it be helpful?
3. How does knowing that Jesus was also lonely at times help and encourage you?
4. How can relationships impact your loneliness?
5. Complete the following sentences:
  - a. I'm most lonely when...
  - b. I wouldn't get so lonely if I could just...
  - c. You could help me when I'm lonely by...
6. What are some things you can do to work through loneliness in your life? Think about relationships and activities that might help.