

Surviving the Summer

A series on surviving...and even thriving!

"I know how to survive..." Philippians 4:12a Voice

"Surviving Loneliness"

"So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the Lord your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you or abandon you."

Deuteronomy 31:6



A. Loneliness is on the increase...

"Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.'" Genesis 2:18 NLT

1. The most common answer to the question, 'How many close confidants do you have?'
In 1984 – 3 close confidants
In 2004 – 0 close confidants
2. It is said, you can last...
"40 days without food, 4 days without water, 4 minutes without oxygen, 4 seconds without hope!"
3. Increasing medical concerns for loneliness are:
 - Depression, suicide
 - Heart disease, stroke
 - Increase in stress levels
 - Decreased memory and learning
 - Antisocial behavior
 - Poor decision-making
 - Alcohol and drug abuse
 - Progression of Alzheimer's
 - Altered brain functioning
 - Increases changes of death by 14%
 - Reduction in immunity

4. Loneliness is a state of mind or the perception of being alone!

"Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD will personally go ahead of you. He will be with you; he will neither fail you nor abandon you." Deuteronomy 31:8 NLT

B. Some of the causes of loneliness...

"Even if my father and mother abandon me, the Lord will hold me close." Psalm 27:10

1. Aging
2. Death/Divorce
3. Moving
4. Physical isolation
5. Low self-esteem
6. Opposition
7. Transition/Change
8. Rejection
9. Commuting
10. How you handle social media

"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." John 14:8 NIV

C. How should we respond to our feelings of loneliness? R-E-F-U-S-E

1. **R**ecognize that it is a sign that something needs to change.
2. **E**ffects of loneliness are physical and mental.
3. **F**ight the emotions that would isolate.
4. **U**nderstand that servicing will be a great defense.
5. **S**earch for and build quality relationships who share values, attitudes, beliefs and interests.
6. **E**xpect the best and begin consciously thinking positive.

"Who stood up for me against the wicked? Who took my side against evil workers? If God hadn't been there for me, I never would have made it. The minute I said, 'I'm slipping, I'm falling,' you love, God, took hold and held me fast. When I was upset and beside myself, you calmed me down and cheered me up." Psalm 94:17-19 The Message

D. What is God's answer to loneliness?

Paul is alone! 2 Timothy 4:6-18

"But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth." 2 Timothy 4:17

1. So...always recognize that God is with you! (Paul confessed that "*the Lord stood at my side*")

"I will never leave you; never will I forsake you." Hebrews 13:5b NIV

2. Trust God's strength to carry you. (Paul knew it was God's strength working in him... "*and gave me strength*")

"For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13 NLT

3. Use your time wisely. (Paul stayed busy sharing the Gospel... "*the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it*")

"Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity." Colossians 4:5 NLT

4. Understand the paralyzing effect of loneliness. (Paul wrote at least 4 books while in prison.)

"Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can." -John Wesley

5. Allow God to fulfill His purpose through you, no matter your circumstances! (Paul saw the message of Christ still needed to be shared... "*through me*")

"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." Ephesians 2:10

Next week:

July 24 – Surviving Your Doubts

"But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind." James 1:6