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Title: The Cure for Our Loneliness

Text: Matthew 27:46-47

⁴⁶About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”—which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” ⁴⁷When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.”

Jesus Identifies with Our Feelings of Loneliness.

Genesis 2:18 - The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

Luke 5:16 - But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

Hebrews 4:15 - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

NEW STUDY

A new study has found that nearly half of all Americans feel lonely with young people in particular experiencing the brunt on the pain.

Health insurer Cigna took a nationwide survey of 20,000 adults and found that 54% of respondents said they feel like no one actually knows them well, NPR reports.

Additionally, 56% of people said the people they surround themselves around “are not necessarily with them,” and approximately 40% said they “lack companionship,” their “relationships aren’t meaningful,” and that they feel “isolated from others.”

HEALTH

“Half of Americans view themselves as lonely,” David Cordani, Chief Executive of Cigna, said, according to NPR.

He added that social isolation can also have an effect on health. “There’s a blurred line between mental and physical health,” Cordani said. “Oftentimes, medical symptoms present themselves and they’re correlated with mental, lifestyle, behavioral issues like loneliness.”

Additionally, the survey found that younger Americans are hit harder by loneliness. The generation born between the mid-1990s and early 2000s, generation Z, is coming to age now and feels lonely the most, researchers found.

Those respondents had an average loneliness score of 48.3, compared to the average score for all Americans of 44. Millennials scored 45.3.

But the Baby Boomers and Greatest Generation scored just below the American average at 42.4 and 38.6, respectively

While common definitions of loneliness describe it as a state of solitude or being alone, loneliness is actually a state of mind. Loneliness causes people to feel empty, alone, and unwanted. People who are lonely often crave human contact, but their state of mind makes it more difficult to form connections with other people.

Loneliness, according to many experts, is not necessarily about being alone.

CAUSES

According to research by Dr. John Cacioppo, who is the Tiffany and Margaret Blake Distinguished Service Professor of Psychology and of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience, and Director of the Center for Cognitive and Social Neuroscience, University of Chicago, causes include the following:

- physical isolation
- moving to a new location
- divorce
- the death of someone significant in a person's life can also lead to feelings of loneliness
- depression
- internal factors such as low self-esteem

HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH LONELINESS

Loneliness has a wide range of negative effects on both physical and mental health, including:

- depression and suicide
- cardiovascular disease and stroke
- increased stress levels
- decreased memory and learning
- antisocial behavior
- poor decision-making
- alcoholism and drug abuse
- the progression of Alzheimer's disease
- altered brain function

"Lonely adults consume more alcohol and get less exercise than those who are not lonely. Their diet is higher in fat, their sleep is less efficient, and they report more daytime fatigue. Loneliness also disrupts the regulation of cellular processes deep within the body, predisposing us to premature aging." Dr. John Cacioppo

Having just three or four close friends is enough to ward off loneliness and reduce the negative health consequences associated with this state of mind.

Loneliness Can Be Contagious

Loneliness Can Be Contagious in Social Groups

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO PREVENT LONELINESS

- Place your faith in Jesus Christ.
- Unite with a church get involved and remain faithful.
- Recognize that loneliness is a sign that something needs to change.
- Analyze the effects that loneliness has on your life, both physically and mentally.
- Consider doing community service or another activity that you enjoy
- Focus on developing quality relationships with people who share similar attitudes, interests, and values with you.
- Expect the best. Focus on positive thoughts and attitudes in your social relationships.