

Guest Pastor

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[0 : 00] I will turn to the 102nd Psalm, Psalm 102. I'm very excited about this. It is always a privilege and an honor to get to lead us through the Word of God. I'm very excited about it.

It is the only advice, truth, principles that I can give you all that will really help you with anything. It's the only thing with any real worth, any value, any substance or authority in life is the Word of God.

And one thing I'm very grateful for is that our church, something you hear quite a bit is open up your Bibles too. If you have your Bibles, open them up too. So tonight in the same tradition, I hope to ask you to open up the Bible, Psalm 102.

Let's go ahead and give us a read here. Verse number one reads, Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. What a privilege it is to pray. It's something we should never take for granted. It's one of the greatest privileges we have is being able to go boldly to God.

And the psalmist here takes the same liberty. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble. Incline let me run to me in the day when I call.

[0 : 58] Answer me speedily. It's a prayer. And it's one of those prayers. Maybe you all have been there. You're going through something. And that's a prayer that you want to answer quick. Right? It's a prayer that it's not one of those prayers for patience.

It's a prayer that you want the Lord to move quickly on. A prayer that you may be in trouble, danger, whatever it may be. But he says, in the day when I call upon you, answer me speedily. Lord, are you up there?

Is there reception on this heavenly telephone I'm at? Are you hearing what I'm saying? It says, hide not your face from me. Verse number three, for my days are consumed like smoke. We now see why the psalmist is like he is.

For his days are consumed like smoke. His bones are burned as an earth. Verse number four, my heart is smitten and withered like grass so that I forget to eat my bread. Any of y'all ever been there? It's so bad.

You're so anxious. You're so upset. You're so worried. Plug in the variable that you can't even remember to eat. That's how bad it is. It says his heart is smitten. Verse number five, by reason the voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin.

[1 : 54] He's hurting. Verse number six, I'm like the pelican of the wilderness. I'm like an owl of the desert. I watch and I'm as a sparrow upon the housetop. Verse number eight, not only is he hurting, not only is he alone. Look what verse eight says.

My enemies reproach me all the day. He's in a bad way. Let's keep reading verse eight. And they that are mad against me are sworn against me for I have eaten ashes like bread and mingled my drink with weeping.

Because thine indignation, thy wrath has lifted me up and cast me down. My days are like a shadow that declineth and I'm withered like grass. Verse 12, but thou, O Lord, shall endure forever.

That's where the hope's at. This psalm starts off real, real, real, real sad. My heart is withered within me. I forget to eat. I'm rolling in ashes. So on and so forth. Aren't you thankful we have a solid rock foundation, firm truth, loving God that we can run to.

A God who does not change, whose days are everlasting, who is not fickle like we are. Because I may be here, I may not be here. We're up and down. Humans are all over the place. But God is unchanging. He's true.

[2 : 56] A big word, immutable. He's always the same. He's always going to be there. Yesterday, today, forever, tomorrow, whatever it may be, God is always the same. And in this psalm, we're going to see a man who's distressed, a man who's alone, a man who's hurting.

Somebody going through something real, real bad. And we're going to watch them lament. We're going to watch how they run to our Lord. Let's go to Lord in prayer. Father, thank you for this day. I thank you for my church, Lord. Thank you for your goodness to us.

Thank you for being a God who doesn't change. Lord, prepare our hearts for your word. Work in our hearts, Lord. Help us come meekly to receive from your word. Lord, help us obey. Thank you for being so good and merciful, Lord. Thank you for being the God that we can trust.

Thank you for being the God that follows through what he says. Lord, help us take comfort in your promises and in your word. I love you. In your name I pray. Amen. Some think that David wrote this psalm. Others think that he wrote it at the time of Absalom.

Some think that he wrote it, maybe Nehemiah wrote it. Something that Daniel wrote it. It's sort of argued as to who wrote this psalm. Well, we all know the real author of the psalm is God. The Holy Spirit of God inspired this psalm. Whether whoever penned it, we can agree that it starts really sad.

[3 : 58] We can agree that it starts on a minor note per se. But thankfully, the psalm ends in hope about our future Lord, about our Savior, about the Messiah. And aren't you thankful that we have a living hope?

A real, true, eternal living hope. And the psalmist may be in a really bad way, a really bad situation, but he ends the psalm thinking about his living hope. We call this a sad psalm. It's a psalm of lament.

And we read this, and when I first went through, I'm like, what is this guy's problem? What is he on? Why are you so sad? What's going on? What's causing all these issues in your life? You can't even eat. Your heart is smitten.

Your enemies are approaching you. Like, what is going on with this writer? What has he gotten himself into? Well, what can make them feel this way? What can cause all these issues in their life? What can make it to where they groan constantly?

What can happen? He was lonely. Loneliness had ruined his life. Loneliness had contributed to this. And you may be here, and you say, well, I've never dealt with loneliness. Well, you're alone and saying you never dealt with loneliness.

[4 : 53] So that makes you lonely. No, but the cause of this person's problem was loneliness. It wasn't lonesomeness. It's easy to be lonesome. That's not wrong. I mean, when you travel your way from home, you want to be with your family.

You may not be lonely, but you miss something. You're lonesome. Or it's not solitude. Solitude's not a bad thing. Even Jesus practiced solitude. He got away. We need solitude. We need time to get alone. You can be alone without being lonely.

But the psalmist here was lonely. And loneliness is defined as this. Feeling alone. I think I have a slide for it when you don't want to. It's feeling cut off. It's feeling unnoticed.

It's feeling unloved. It's feeling uncared for, unneeded, maybe even just downright unnecessary. Any of you guys ever felt lonely? If I'm being honest, I know I felt lonely. I mean, I'm sure it's a problem that affects most people.

Actually, the CDC says 30% of people at all times are dealing with loneliness. It's a real issue. It's a real thing. And in this psalm, we're going to see this psalmist as he deals with loneliness. It's an issue that sees no discrimination.

[5 : 48] All people can suffer from it. Rich or poor can be lonely. Professionals can be lonely. Homeless can be lonely. I mean, you hear celebrities talk about how they're lonely all the time. You hear wealthy talk about how they're lonely. It affects everybody. Presidents have been noted as being loneliness.

Lonely religious people, prestigious people. Whatever may be. The popular you've ever seen, somebody who's lonely in a crowd. All sorts of people can be lonely. And today, we're going to learn about how God can remedy our loneliness.

Because if we don't get a control on who we are when we're alone, eventually, we don't have a control on us. If we don't get a control on loneliness, it can really ruin some things for us. Psalm 102, verse 6 and 7 says, That's where he sums up how he feels.

He says, I'm like a pelican of the wilderness, which is just a fancy poetic way of saying, I'm all by myself. I'm like an owl of the desert. He felt like nobody gave a hoot. You guys see what he did there? Yeah, yeah, yeah. He watches, and he's like a sparrow alone on the housetop.

He's by himself. He's alone. There's nobody there. Maybe you felt like that. I know I have, right? You're going through something, struggling with something. Nobody cares.

[6 : 56] I'm all by myself. I'm lonely. You know, it's a real comforting fact. You turn to Matthew chapter 10, verse 29. You know God takes notice of that little sparrow that nobody cares about. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your father.

You know what's incredible? You know, when you think you are so small, so destitute, so alone, you know the God of heaven takes notice of you. And in this psalm, we're going to see the cause of this man's loneliness.

We're going to see the consequences of this man's loneliness. But then ultimately, we get to see the cure for this person's loneliness. That's incredible, because no matter who you are, no matter where you come from, loneliness is an issue that we all face.

How can I say that? Even Jesus faced loneliness. So, I mean, if he went through it, I'm assuming that eventually we're going to end up going through it. And, yeah, God's word is perfectly equipped to help us handle loneliness.

I love it. Loneliness has consequences. Loneliness is not a good thing. I'm sure that goes without saying, but if you're here and you don't know, loneliness is not a good thing. How can I say that? Because look what God himself says about it.

[7 : 53] Genesis 2.18, and the Lord said it is not good that the man should be alone. I thought it would be up there. I'm sorry. I'll juke you out. Genesis 2.18 says it's good that man shouldn't be alone.

Not just that. This loneliness had negative effects on the psalmist's life. Look, let's read this. It had consumed their life, one, to where it says they can't even eat. So they had health problems because of loneliness. 1 and 2.4 says, for my heart is smitten and withered like grass, so that I forgot to eat my bread.

He can't even remember to eat. That's how lonely he is. It has consumed his life. It says his heart is smitten. He has butterflies in his stomach, per se. This loneliness had a real physical ramification. Not just that. Look what it says in 1 and 2.5.

By reason of the voice of my groaning, my bones cleaved in my skin. Somehow he was so bad emotionally, spiritually, that it had a real effect on him physically. I don't know if you guys have ever been there. You're so upset, so concerned, so worried.

Anybody here ever forget to eat a meal because you're so worried about something? Or anybody here ever? Ovary? It's hard to walk past that Ben and Jerry's ice cream when you're worried about something? Amen? Is that just me? No? But when you're worried about things, it really can have an effect.

[8 : 54] There's correlations between loneliness. CDC writes this. They increase things like heart attacks, stroke, cancer, even early onset dementia. That can have an issue on our lives. But not that it affects them physically, but emotionally as well.

Psalms 1 and 2.4 says, for my heart is smitten. That's an emotional thing. His heart is smitten. He got to the point where he just didn't want to fight no more. He just had enough fight left in him. His heart was smitten. His heart was hurting. 1 and 2.9.

For I've eaten ashes like bread and mingled my drink with weeping. He cried. He hurt. So we see that loneliness hurts us physically, hurts us emotionally, hurts us spiritually. But look at what the Bible also says in 1 and 2.9.

It had ruined his emotional state. How often does this happen to us, right? Loneliness, we get lonely. And because we get lonely, the domino effect there, it leads to other things. Anxiety, depression, right?

That bad response, that lashing out, that anger, that whatever it may be for you, however it manifests itself. That insecurity, right? That overcompensation, whatever it may be. It's just loneliness or some heart issue manifesting itself.

[9 : 55] And in this life of the psalmist, this issue had eaten his lunch. It had taken over his life. And there's a scriptural premise for the cause of loneliness as well. Genesis 2.18, we already read it. The Lord said it's not good that man should be alone.

And not just that. We read 2 Timothy chapter 2. And we see the apostle Paul. He's in jail by himself alone. And when he's writing this letter, he doesn't ask for more food. He doesn't ask for anything like that.

As opposed to asking for food, he ends up asking for fellowship. He didn't ask for freedom. He asked for fellowship. He was lonely. Loneliness has a real weight. So we see loneliness as consequences.

Loneliness, it snowballs. If it's something we don't get a handle on, it'll have a handle on us. But then we see its causes. And this is the good part because it's one thing to be diagnosed by something, but it's another thing to have an answer to it.

Because what were the causes of this man's loneliness? We can go through this psalm, and God beautifully lays them out for us. Psalm 1.28, Mine enemies reproach me all the day, and they that matter to me are sworn against me.

[10 : 54] Simply put, the psalmist had heard stuff from the enemy. And how true is that? How many times do we go out into our life, go out into the world, we hear something, somebody says something to us, catch an ad on YouTube or TV, whatever it may be, however you hear about it, and then you believe a lie from the enemy.

You're not this enough. You're not this enough. For you to be this, this has to happen to you. You need to look like this and act like this, whatever it may be. A cause of this man's loneliness was he believed lies from the enemies, heard lies from the enemies.

We must be aware of who we listen to. And in a world that's constantly flooding us with information, I mean, you can't even wake up in the morning without your phone full of notifications. Right? You check your email, whatever it may be. We're always flooded with information.

We've got to learn who we're going to listen to. We've got to learn who we're going to focus on. A trick of the enemy has always been, per se, propaganda. Right? Those Hebrew boys in the fire, your God will not deliver you. Pharaoh to Moses, your God will not deliver you.

We said over the Bible, a trick of the enemy has always tried to get you to believe a lie. And if we're going to be rooted and grounded in this battle against loneliness for our minds, we need to know something. We've got to believe truth. Because truth is the only real foundation we can build upon.

[11 : 57] You know the story from Kids Church. There was two builders. One built their house upon the sand. Didn't listen to truth. The other built their house upon the rock. And when the storms of life came, the one on the rock was the one who made it through. If we're going to get through these trials, we need truth.

The enemies had spat out a bunch of reproach against them, a bunch of lies. And in our life, that's so common. It's so often that we hear lies. And it's different for all of us depending on where we're at in life.

But I think you guys all know lies you've heard from the enemy. And what's so dangerous is that we believe those lies. And what's so dangerous is we internalize those things. What's so dangerous is we walk away from truth. We've got to believe truth.

Look at what Jesus says in John 17, 17. Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. So you're like, okay, I hear I don't need to believe lies. That's good, Greg. Where do I go for truth? God's word.

It's full of truth. It says out of the mouth of the Lord proceeds truth. We get truth from God's word. God's word over their word. Look at what the psalmist pens in Psalm 119, 28. My soul melteth for heaviness.

[12 : 52] Strengthen thou me according unto thy word. You want strength for the trials. You want resolve for the trials. You want help in the trials. It's God's word that's going to get you through it. You're going through something, whatever it may be.

Loneliness is what's happening in this specific instance. Anything like that. God's word is where you find the strength, the resolve, the promise, the truth, the covenant, all the good stuff that gets you through it. Because it's the only real foundation.

It's the only real truth. And the psalmist had realized it was God's word. Not just that. Another thing that might make you go through a season only. This might be a trial. Look at what the psalmist writes in 102, 10.

Because of thine indignation and thine wrath for thou hast lifted me up and cast me down. The psalmist recognized God is doing something. He says, Lord, you lift me up. You've cast me down. And he realized that he was in a trial. And I don't know about you all, but how many times have you been in a trial, whether because of your own doing or just a test in life, and you feel like you were totally alone?

You feel like Moses when the Bible literally says he's on the backside of the desert. You feel like you were totally by yourself. God was doing something in our life. And in the midst of this trial, they felt alone. And how often does that happen to us?

[13 : 57] You're in a trial. You're in a storm. You're going through a rough patch in life, whatever it may be. And you feel totally alone. You feel like nobody listens. You feel like God isn't even hearing your prayer. You feel like nobody gets you.

You feel like nobody understands you. Maybe you're like, I can't even communicate how I feel, whatever that may be. That's what the psalmist felt. He says, Lord, you lifted me up. You put me down. Sometimes the trial and the feelings involved are unavoidable.

Sometimes you get put into a trial or temptation because it's something we did. But we can know that God is working. James 1, 2 through 4. Gabe just preached it so well for us. My brother, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations.

Like he said, you're not tempted to die, but multiple temptations. Knowing that this, the trying of your faith, works patience. And let patience have a perfect work that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. So we can know that in the midst of a trial, when you feel alone, don't feel like God's working by yourself, you can go away knowing something.

God is working. And at the end of this trial, I'm going to be better than how I came into it. When I get through this furnace, I'll be refined, fit for the master's use. You can know at the end of the trial, God's making me better. God's making me more like him.

[14 : 57] 1 Peter 1, 7 says this, the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, it might be found in praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. You may be in a trial, you may feel all alone, but you can rest in this foundational truth, that the trials make you better.

The tests are preparation for a higher level. God may be working in the midst of your trial. This psalmist was in a trial. They felt alone in the trial. It was a time of trying, a time of tests. But I can remind you of something too. God often uses the trials and tests in which you feel all alone, all by yourself, withdrawn, isolated, recluse, whatever that may be.

He often uses those times to build his people into what they need to be for the mission he's given them. I remind you, Moses in the desert, he had to wander 40 years before God used him there. Jesus had to go to the wilderness for 40 days before he started his ministry.

That man Elijah had to go spend three years at a creek before he got to be used in big ways. Joseph spent years in jail, years in a dungeon, years in Potiphar's house before he got through Egypt.

Paul had to wander Arabia for a few years. Remember the disciples in that boat in the storm? Before they got to minister to somebody else on the other side, they had to boat across the storm. There's all sorts of times in which God might be leading you through a storm, through a trial, through an issue, and you don't see the way out, but you can know that on the other side of it, once you get through with the Lord's help, that you'll be better equipped to serve him, better equipped to bring him glory.

[16 : 15] The trials do work. That's another cause of feeling lonely. Maybe it's your enemies. Maybe it's a trial. It could just be sorrow. Job 7.16 says this, I loathe it.

I would not live all the way. Let me alone, for my days are vanity. Lost it caused Job to wish he was alone. Maybe that's just you. Maybe you've lost something. Friends, you've been forsaken, cast away, death in the family, anything like that.

Sorrow had caused Job to wish he was alone. Maybe sorrow is doing the same thing to you. Lost and death are another cause of loneliness. Losing someone dear to you. Maybe you've been forsaken of friends. Maybe you tried to do the right thing, do the truthful thing, do the honest thing, and your friend just walked away from you.

He's even warned that that might happen. Luke 21.16, You shall betray to both parents and brethren and kinsfolks and friends. He gave us a little heads up that that might happen. Maybe you feel lonely because of pride manifesting itself.

Maybe you're like one of those Pharisees, or we think we're better than people, whatever that may be, and pride has caused us to isolate ourselves. Maybe we're too good for other people. Another good cause of loneliness is sin.

[17 : 19] You know sin's antisocial. Sin isn't a social behavior per se. Sin's quite antisocial. I can say that. You remember Amnon? When he sinned, he kicked out all of his friends. He pushed everybody out. Saul would often hurt those around him because of his own heart issues.

Maybe loneliness is caused by sin or heart issues. Romans 6.23 even says, For the wages of sin is death. Yes, that's spiritual death, but that most certainly applies to relationships as well. Maybe someone addressed sin is manifesting itself as loneliness.

Maybe it's an unaddressed heart issue. Regardless of the cause, I think the cause of loneliness can be a mile long. Regardless of the cause, we've got to find the solution. We've got to find the cure for loneliness. We've got to find how it can be defeated.

Because loneliness is a real foe that affects a lot of people. But even though it's a real foe, you know it can be defeated. Thankfully, God has given us the Swiss army knife to take on a lot of life's issues. And the psalmist realized that.

He got to the cure of his loneliness. The psalmist was lonely, but knew where his help was. I want to get to the good part. Loneliness is a defeated foe. I want to... I guess he knew where his help was from, but more so than he knew where his help was from, he knew who his help would come from.

[18 : 23] In our life, it's not so much a place, but it's Jesus who's our help. He knew that his comfort was in Jesus. Let me tell you who the answer to your loneliness is. It's Jesus Christ. It's not a what. It's not a person. It's not a thing, but it's a who.

Who else are loneliness? His name is Jesus. We're going to get back to that part because I want to jump ahead. It's really good how Jesus takes care of us. But first things first, in the midst of this man's loneliness, the psalmist knew to pray. You may say, oh, that's so simple, but it's true.

The psalmist knew to pray. You're here feeling lonely? Go run to God. I'm not going to pick up my phone at two in the morning. I don't think your friends are going to pick up their phone at two in the morning. You're lonely? God's 24-7, 365.

He's always open. You can run to him. Run to God in prayer. Psalm 102, 1. We hear how he opens it. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from me into the day when I am in trouble.

Incline thine ear unto me in the day when I call. Answer me speedily. Lord, I need you to hear me. What did the psalmist do? He ran to God in prayer. And what's incredible is we have the same privilege several thousand years later, we get to run to God in prayer.

[19 : 23] I know that's a, maybe it's something we take for granted, but it's a great ability. It's something that, it's amazing. It's wonderful. We get to call on the arsenal of heaven to help us in our situations.

He ran to God in prayer. We can too. It's actually encouraged in scripture. Look at 1 Peter 5-7. Casting all your cares upon him for he careth for you.

Cast all your cares on Jesus. Why? Because he cares about you. Why should you run to God? Because he's actually concerned about your situation, which is so much better than people. Because how many times do we find that co-worker, colleague, and we say, because we grew up in the South, oh, how are you doing?

And then they actually tell you how they're doing. You're like, oh, crud, I wish I wasn't hearing this. Right? No, no, is that just me? Well, with God, it's never like that. We can cast all of our care upon him. He really listens because he actually cares.

God knows. God cares. God is concerned. He is not some cold, isolated deity that's just removed from the situation. He really does care. That's encouraging. I was reading about churches in Ukraine.

[20 : 24] I see what people put up. How encouraging is it to know that God cares about what's going on over there? Those people who are unnamed, no access to technology, suffering at the hands of something they didn't even do to cause, how encouraging is it to know that God cares?

You go to work, you go to school, you live your life, you think nobody cares about what you're going through, you think this situation is too small to ask your friend for help, you think this situation is not relevant enough or it's too weird or I don't want to talk about it or whatever it may be and you just hold it inside, not knowing that you can cast that upon God because he actually cares about you.

You don't have to deal with it alone. You don't have to fight by yourself. You can go to God because he really cares. Not only does he care, but he actually has the power to do something about it. He's not a care bearer. He actually, he can do something about it.

He can change it. That's incredible. We need to run to the Father. There's no problem too big that can't be solved by prayer. There's no problems too big to solve. We're just people who are too small to solve but our God is big enough. So reading my Bible and Luke, what's impossible with God, what's impossible with men is possible with God.

With God, all things are possible. We can run to God with the power to change things. Run to the Lord in prayer. No problem's too small. Nothing's too little for him to care about.

[21 : 34] He cares about you. That's a very short verse but a very incredible verse. I would memorize it. I would commit it to your heart. In the midst of the trial, in the midst of the storm, in the midst of what you're going through, run to the Father because he actually cares about you.

And that's an incredible thing. Not just that. The psalmist knew to pray but Psalm 102, 19 to 20. Let's read this. For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary from heaven to the Lord. Behold the earth to hear the groaning of his prisoner to lose them that are appointed to death.

Can I remind you the most exciting part of this? Prayer is real cool. I love that. But you know what else the psalmist did? The psalmist was looking for Jesus. Look at what he says in Psalm 102, 19. He hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary.

Aren't you thankful we have a God who looked down from the height of his sanctuary about our problems? He was looking for Jesus. Look at Jesus' red words about what it says in these verses about himself. He says, loose those that are appointed to death.

I remind you of Luke chapter 4. Jesus walks into the temple, picks up a scroll, starts shooting Isaiah. And these are the words that Jesus reads about himself in Luke 4, 17. There was a book there, verse 18. You know the psalmist was looking for the Messiah.

[22 : 46] Not just that. Psalm 102, 13. Yea, the time set is come. You know that God, he was looking for the Messiah.

He knew that God was bringing Jesus and he was looking for Jesus in the midst of his trial, in the midst of his storm. And how incredible is that we could do the same thing? He was looking for Jesus, so can we. And I love these verses too. Psalm 102, 13.

Thou shalt arise. Can I remind you of something? Jesus most certainly arose that in heaven, sitting on the throne, being worshipped with all the worship, adoration, affection that he deserved, he was there sitting in heaven.

He saw our problems, our muck and mire, how bad this world was, how we rebelled, and in his loving kindness, goodness, mercy, plugging all the good attributes about God, came down and died on a cross for us, he arose all right.

He stepped right down, he stepped right down the ladder and came to us. He arose, he came down. Look at what the Bible says in Luke 168. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people.

[23 : 46] You know God came down to this earth? Philippians 2, 5 through 7, let this mind be in you, which was in Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought or not robbed or equaled God. That's just a fancy way of saying that.

Jesus really was God. He could say it and he wouldn't be taking anything away from God. He really was God. The God, creator, by him were all things made, creator God. That was him, but made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men.

God stepped out of royalty. God stepped out of heaven, came down to this earth because he loves us. And the psalmist, in the midst of his loneliness, was looking for that. And why was he looking for that? Because what's incredible about that is, Isaiah 53, 53, you know that our God really understands our loneliness.

He is, this is what the Bible says about Jesus. He was despised and rejected. That's not like I was a lot of friends, right? No, he was despised and rejected men. A man of sorrows acquainted with grief and we, and we as, and we as it were, are hid our faces from him.

He was despised and we esteemed him not. Jesus, he was a pretty, I mean, despised and rejected men. Does that sound like a popular guy? Sounds pretty lonely to me. John 1, 11, he came into his own and his own received him not.

[24 : 55] Lonely. Let's look at the way he died. He died alone. Forsaken of friends. Peter in the same chapter denied him not one time, not two times, but three times. The last time he was cursed, profane Peter, he was cursed and he left.

He died alone. His disciples left him. Forsaken of friends, forsaken of family, even forsaken of God himself. Matthew 27, 46, right before he died, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

If anybody's acquainted with being alone and being lonely, Jesus Christ is really, he'd probably be the best at it. He was used to being alone and he knows how we feel and the good part about the fact he knows how we feel is when we go to him, he's not cold, callous and uncompassionate.

He's been there. He knows how we feel. Hebrews 4, 15, for we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but in all points are tempted like as we were, yet without sin. The fact that he went through what we threw makes him a merciful priest, a kind priest, a compassionate priest, a friend with a soft ear, because he knows what you're going through.

He knows what you've been through. He's just not some God sitting up made of gold like a statue who's indifferent. He gets it and that's comforting because I don't know about y'all but I hate when I go tell somebody something and I know they haven't been through it and I say, hey man, this is going on and they say, I know how you feel.

[26 : 08] No, you don't. But Jesus does. He gets it. He understands it. We can run to him and he's not indifferent. He really gets it. He's been through it. Tempted in all points.

There's nothing you're going through that you can't run to Jesus to help you for. There's nothing you're dealing with that he hasn't been through. There's no problem that you're facing that he doesn't know. There's no enemy that he hasn't faced and we can run to him and he's a compassionate priest and it's okay to be lonely per se because loneliness isn't a sin.

Listen, it's not wrong. It may come out of your sin but it's not a sin. How can I say that? Because Jesus was lonely. He understands you. Psalm 139.2, you got down. No, it's my down sitting. I'm an uprising.

Thou understandest my thought. I'm far off. You know Jesus gets you. How incredible is that? Is there no worse feeling than not being able to be understood? Is that just me? Does anybody, like when I travel and I'm trying to order something and they don't understand what I'm saying, that is the most frustrating thing on the planet.

I'm not understood. You don't get what I'm saying and I'm saying it louder and faster and you still don't understand what I'm saying. But with God, he really gets it. He understands. He's truly felt your pain. He really knows what you're going through.

[27 : 14] He can empathize with you. He understands it. He gets it. He can, not just that, he can deliver you from it. Not only can he say, oh, I know how you feel, but then he has the power to do something about it. He can deliver us from sin, deliver us from the trial, deliver us from what we're going through and help us overcome those circumstances.

Hebrews 2.17, wherefore in all things behoove him to be made like unto his brethren. Oh, is that up? Okay, read this with me. Check this out. That he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in thanksgiving to God.

Let's get down to verse 18. For he himself hath what? Suffered being able to succor them that are tempted, which is just a way of saying he's able to help those that are tempted. The fact that he's been through it, he knows that he can help you.

The fact that he's, the fact that he's suffered it, he's able to be a merciful high priest and he has the power to do something about it. Look, he's able to succor them that are tempted. He's able to help you in your trial. You can run to him. Jesus didn't lose anything from being tempted.

He only gained glory, but then he gained sympathy and ability to help his people. How great is that, right? People get frustrated with politicians all the time because they say, they say, you don't know what it's like on the streets.

[28 : 16] You don't know what it's like here. Oh, our God does. He gets it. He walked a mile in my shoes. He walked a mile in your shoes. He really understands it. And Jesus meets the needs of our loneliness. Check this out. Hebrews 13, 5.

Let your conversation be like covetousness. We'll skip to the end of the verse. Run low on time. For he had said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. You know what's good? He sticks closer to the brother. He's never going to ditch you. He's never going to leave you high and dry.

He's always going to be there. In the midst of your loneliness, look for Jesus. Why? Because he will never leave you. What a friend we have in Jesus. Matthew 28, 20. In teaching and observe all things we have and commanded you, lo, I am with you always.

He's never going to leave you. How do we know that? He even says, even until the end of the world, you can't even get out of his range. There's nowhere you can go where he's not going to go with you. Jesus even calls us friends. Friends, John 15, 15.

Henceforth, I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth, but I call you friends. The solution to your loneliness, run to the Lord in prayer. Pray, pray, pray. But just know what a friend we've got in Jesus.

[29 : 13] He's a real friend. Rejoice in that. He's not going to abandon you. People are so good at letting us down. Everyone gets let down by people. I mean, it's what we do. I let people down all the time. We all let people down.

But Jesus does not, never disappoints, never misses, always wins. He is, as you can say in basketball terms, he is captain clutch. He's always going to make the shot. He never lets you down.

And not just that, Jesus not only saves us, gives us a real friend within himself, not only allows us to pray to him and understand how we feel, but then he allows for a real fellowship with other believers. 1 John 1, 3.

That which you have seen over the beginning, that you may also have fellowship with us, and you have fellowship with the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ. Because of what Jesus has done on the cross, because of his blood, and him making this beautiful body called the church, you know that we're able to fellowship together, and there's friendship in that too.

We're able to fellowship, we're able to be together because of what he did, and that's incredible. Because of Jesus, we get to fellowship with God, we get to fellowship with each other, and we should be comforted about that. Not only was he comforted by the ability to pray, not only was he comforted because he was looking for Jesus and the work that he would do on the cross, but he was also comforted because he knew that God was faithful.

[30 : 21] And how great is that? No matter how bad the storm may be, no matter how crazy the situation may be, no matter how wild that text message, phone call, email you just got was, you know that God is faithful, and that should be so comforting.

Psalms 102, 28 through 35, 28. Of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, the heavens are the work of thy hands. Lord, you built this thing, you set this thing in motion. Verse 26, they shall perish, but what thou shalt endure, yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, clothes wear out, just like this earth is going to wear out, vestments shall change, and they shall be changed.

Verse number 27, but thou art what? The same. In thy ears, they have no end. That is comforting. The children of thy servant shall continue, and the seed shall be established before thee.

Our God's not going anywhere. He's not going to change. He's not going to leave you. He is a firm foundation. The hope of the suffering psalmist was solidly grounded. The material world he knew that money you're trusting in, that friend you're trusting, that money's going to burn up and go away, that friend's going to get old and die one day.

All that stuff you're trusting in is going to rust and go away, but God Almighty will always be there. The hope of the suffering psalmist was solidly grounded. The material world and the human order are transitory, but God, the creator, is forever the same.

[31 : 36] His love and his purpose do not fail. We can be comforted and take hope in the fact that God is unchanging. He doesn't change, which is great because people hate change.

I hate change. I hate when things change. We all do, but God doesn't change. Hebrews 6, 18, 19. This is by two immutable things that which is impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation.

Verse 19, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul. You want an anchor? You want some consolation? Leave here knowing that God's not going to change. He's going to be the same yesterday as he was the day before and he's going to be the same as he was today.

That's comforting. We can know there are two immutable things. God's not changing. Gives assurance of that. His promises, he can't lie. The things he said he's going to do, he's going to fall through on them. That hope he gave you, it's not going away.

He's not going to unplug it. We can trust in that. Two immutable things. God does not lie. He cannot change. The fact that God is true and unchanging offers us so much hope. That promise he made you still true, that hope he still gave you still true, his word is still true in your life and he offers plans, they're still going to happen.

[32 : 42] The psalmist knew this. Psalm 1, and we'll finish up here. I've burned through my time. Man, this was such an exciting psalm. But the psalmist knew this. He knew that God wasn't going to change.

He knew that God was always going to be there. This psalmist quoted all over the scripture, quoted in Hebrews, quoted in James, but the psalmist knew that God wasn't going to leave him. He knew that God's plans were not done despite the circumstances or feelings.

Look what he says, the children thy servants shall continue and thy seed shall establish before thee. Lord, even after I'm gone, when it's all said and done and I'm six feet under, I know that your plans, they're going to keep going. And I know what God's out to do, he's going to accomplish it.

He knew that God was not done. He took comfort. So we see loneliness is almost inevitable. We saw its causes. It has some real consequences. But thankfully, God gives us a few cures for loneliness.

Run to God in prayer. Pray, pray, pray. Lift it up to him. He really cares. Look for Jesus Christ. He cares. He's compassionate. He has a part in something about it. And then take hope in the fact God's not going anywhere.

[33 : 40] He's not changing. He's going to be the same yesterday as he was today. How comfort is that? Loneliness may be inevitable, but it's not incurable. Thanks to this wonderful psalm, we have some very practical advice on how we can overcome our battle with loneliness.

The solution is not in a what, a thing, a person. It's in Jesus Christ. Jesus brings victory. He's a friend that seeks close into a brother. He cares for you and me and the world and what we're going through.

You can run to him. He actually encourages you to. You can seek him. You can trust him. He knows how you feel. And I admonish you. Seek him. Trust him. Run to him. Pray to him.

Cast all your care upon him for he cares for you. John 15, 13. I'll close with this verse. Verse, greater love hath no man than this, than a man lay down his life for his friends. And God showed that love because our friend Jesus Christ got down, came down to this earth and laid his life down on the cross for you and for me and for the world, for your friends, for your enemies, for your neighbors, for everybody in this world.

He laid down his life. You're not saved. You can trust him. You can put your faith in it. He showed himself a friend. He laid down his life for you. You can believe him to save you. But then he's a friend that's going to never want to leave you.

[34 : 49] He's always going to be with you in that storm, in that trial. You can trust him. No matter how deep the loneliness is, just know he's got you. He's never going to let you go. I'll close in a word of prayer. We'll dismiss in a song here.

Father, I thank you for this day. I thank you for this song. Lord, I thank you for your word. I thank you for the hope and comfort that it offers. Lord, I pray that you continue to work in our hearts. Lord, I pray that you be real to us.

Lord, I pray that you help us learn to seek you and to trust you, Lord, to run to you. God, I pray for my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, Lord. I don't know what they're going through. Everybody suffers differently, Lord, but I pray that you'd help those in here who feel lonely, those in here who feel like nobody cares, Lord.

I pray that in times we do feel like that, we learn to trust you and depend on you, Lord, to lean on you, to rely on you. Thank you for being unchanging and merciful. God, I love you. I thank you for who you are.

In your name I pray. Amen. Amen.