

# Small Group Studies



*'Bringing God and people together'*

## Victory in Life Series Defeating Loneliness

By Peter Starr

### Study 4

**"the biggest social problem in the world today is loneliness" - Greg Biddell**

All people will face times of loneliness. It is one those negative emotions that all people will have to deal with from time to time. It may not mean that they do not know other people but that other people are not sharing their experience in life. This can leave a person with feelings of isolation or loneliness. Even Jesus cried out in a state of physical agony, *"My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?"*

**Q What does loneliness feel like to you? Share your most lonely moment.**

Our current world is very fast paced and in some ways very self centred. Many live alone. Others do not know their neighbours. Relationships via the internet are booming. In our prosperous society time has now become more valuable to many than money. In our current culture it is so easy to only have relationships that are superficial. A relationship with no depth can never meet the relational need we all have, which is to connect with other people in a meaningful way.

**Q How can people feel loneliness in a crowd or even in a church service?**

Loneliness usually involves sadness, often because of a lack of companionship. It often involves a feeling of being left out, rejected and unwanted. It is a painful awareness that we lack meaningful contact with other people. It is a sense of inner emptiness accompanied by an intense longing to be needed and wanted by someone else.

It may last a few moments or persist for a lifetime. Lonely people often retreat into a state of self- centeredness, discouragement, and self pity. Occasionally, lonely people attempt to conceal their loneliness by escaping into drugs or alcohol.

**Discuss just how damaging loneliness is to a person if not dealt with in a right way.**

Sometimes loneliness can be either caused or exaggerated within a person because of a poor self esteem. If people feel useless or feel that they are inadequate, unwanted or unloved, they will naturally withdraw which makes them feel intimidated, weak or shy. Self-pity, self-centeredness, anger or fear may deepen the feelings of isolated and being unloved.

**Q How is it possible to safeguard ourselves from such feelings?**

One of the things that can really help all people is working on their relationship with God. Man was created to have a meaningful and intimate relationship with God. He is our Heavenly Father. It is through this relationship that our innermost needs are met.

**Gal.5:22-23 mentions the fruit of the Spirit. Discuss how God meets our needs through his Spirit.**

**Q What is the result of not being filled with the Spirit?**

One of satan's greatest lies is that we have no value. He seeks to destroy godly self esteem which will then cause us to withdraw from other people. We must reject this kind of thinking completely and stand on the reality of who we really are in Christ. An understanding that we are of great value and worth, will help us combat times of loneliness.

**Q Who are we in Christ?**

**Q How do the various forms of fear inhibit solid relationships from forming?**

Relationships with others never happen spontaneously. We have to get to know another person. This will involve us speaking, hearing and feeling. If something clicks between two people there will be warmth and maybe enjoyment. You can feel a warmth in a good relationship that is much more than mere words. A deeper relationship will take time and effort to develop. Often strong relationships have gone through times of testing. People who have fought wars together have a common bond in their relationship. In Christ we have a common bond. We are comrades in the battle. We are all brothers and sisters in the family of God and blood is thicker than water.

**Q How can we cultivate special kinds of strengths and dynamics in our relationships?**