

Loneliness Is A Sign of Spirituality

In my role of an area church consultant for more than two years for forty five churches in San Francisco south to Monterey, Joyce and I drove about 1800 miles per month. In the early morning travels we tuned into Al Hart on KCBS for the weather and traffic news. We heard him speak about his retirement after 52 years of broadcasting. He chose to step down to care for his wife Sally. She had ALS disease (commonly called Lou Gehrig's disease.) It had robbed her of her voice. She could no longer say Good morning, it's a beautiful day, or How are you feeling? Without the camaraderie of his radio team and audience Al would experience some deep loneliness. Sally no doubt has already tasted of loneliness because of the one way conversation with fewer and fewer people. We need to pray for folks like this couple.

YOU DON'T NEED TO BE OLDER OR PHYSICALLY AFFLICTED TO EXPERIENCE LONELINESS. .

When Jesus was on earth he had a life changing conversation with a lonely woman. How do I know she was lonely? Because: [The communicator can exegete the passage and find these two thoughts.] The distance she walked to get water. The time she went to get water.

SHE HAD GOOD REASONS TO BE LONELY

She was a woman. Study the place of women in that society. She was a Samaritan woman. Study the relationship of the Jews with the Samaritans. She was a scandalous woman. Perhaps she was drawn to losers [The communicator can submit other possibilities.] Regardless Jesus made this a special journey. Because he saw a heart that was ripe (hungry) for the life of God.

MOST IDENTIFY LONELINESS AS A DISEASE; A PLAGUE, A DISABILITY, BUT JESUS SAW IT AS A SIGN OF SPIRITUALITY.

[The communicator can do research on the following people who have written on loneliness or solitude.] I chose excerpts from the writings of: Maggie Ross, Dag Hammorshold and Richard Foster

JESUS CHOSE THIS LONELY PERSON TO EXPLAIN THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF THE FATHER.Â 4:24

What a change came into the life of this lonely person. She became an instant evangelist. She left her water jar and she became a fountain of life to the people of Sachar. [The communicator can work on the phrase, "If you knew who it is that asks you, you would have asked him..." Then show from the passage:

The Supremacy of Jesus,

The Sovereignty of Jesus,

The Sacrificial love of Jesus.

Jesus had to go through Samaria to identify a potential worshipper. Her loneliness was a sign that she was ready for something far more important than natural water. He knew that she would experience the unconditional love of the Father. All other supposed loves had been conditioned by her body, her eyes, and her lips. She was tossed aside when the uncaring spouse lusted after another. But this Jesus knew all the things that she had done and still wanted her as a worshipper. As an aside Jesus shared with this outsider the theology of worship. Her heart was now so fully filled with adoration she fairly skipped into town persuading people to come see the Long Awaited One. They responded to her words of worship and believed on Jesus. They begged him to stay and he stayed on two days.

Invitation: Some of us deal with casual needs, those needs that are not life demanding, not terribly serious. Jesus dealt with the crucial needs that are eternally vital. The eternal life he offers. You would have asked him and he would give you living water. And you would be a fountain of life for God and others. Come to him acknowledging the emptiness, confusion and loneliness. He will give you the refreshment that comes from a cleansed heart and an eternal reason to live.