

Introduction:

“It is the most desolate world in all human language. It is capable of hurling the heaviest weights the heart can endure. It plays no favorites... yields no mercy, refuses all bargains...Crowds only make it worse, activity simply drives it deeper... Tears fall from our eyes as groans fall from our lips- but loneliness, that uninvited guest of the soul, arrives at dusk and stays for dinner.”

- Chuck Swindoll

Until Loneliness is Understood, it Overwhelms -

- Loneliness is more than being alone.
- Loneliness wears many masks.
- Loneliness is not unique malady, but a universal reality.

You Don't Have to be Lonely, Because...

- **God _____ about your loneliness.**

"The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'"

Genesis 2:18 (NIV)

- **Jesus _____ your loneliness.**

"And the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?' – which means, My God, why have you forsaken me?"

Mark 15:34 (NIV)

- **Jesus _____ you into a relationship with Him.**

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV)

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."

Revelation 3:20 (NIV)

- **A relationship with Jesus means you _____ belong to His family.**

"...so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."

Romans 12:5 (NIV)
See also - 1 John 1:1-4

How Can You Experience Authentic Love and Connection in God's Family?

- By rethinking your view of the _____.
 - An institution vs. a community
 - An event to attend vs. a family in which to belong
 - See Acts 2:42-47

- By revising your approach to _____.
 1. Realize your _____.
 2. Move toward _____.
 3. Be _____.
 4. Challenge distorted _____.
 5. Take _____.
 6. Be _____ -- listen, listen, listen!
 7. Trust _____ -- pray, pray, pray!

Summary: To “lick loneliness,” you gotta _____!

Informal steps + formal strategies = A “connected” community of love.

Discussion Questions:

1. On a scale of 1-10, how “connected” do you feel with those in your world?
2. When do you struggle the most with loneliness?
3. What aspect or truth from this message holds the most promise for helping you with your loneliness?
4. What specific step/action could you take to cooperate with God’s plan to connect you with His love and His family?