



The Most Wonderful or Most Lonely Time of the Year?

“God places the lonely in families” —Psalm 68:6

Many people find Christmas to be one of the hardest and most lonely times of the year. Personally, I really love Christmas time. They are singing our songs out there—about our Savior. I love getting with our friends and family members. I enjoy making snow angels and the cold weather (it's like free air conditioning in Dallas). Yes, I love the lights, Jack Frost nipping at my nose and chestnuts roasting on the open fire (or maybe just the fire). It's sad that many people find this time of year so stressful. I feel for them! I just learned that George Gallup reported that one out of three adults admit that they experience frequent bouts of loneliness. And thirty percent of Americans say they have felt lonely for long periods during their lifetime.

Face it, no one is totally immune to loneliness and it doesn't always have to do with solitude. Ultimately, everyone is born lonely for closeness with God, but many don't ever recognize it. Thousands line up outside stores and fight to get Christmas presents, but His *CHRISTmas presence* is what everyone really longs for. Jesus can meet every need! Warren Wiersbe said, *“Loneliness is the malnutrition of the soul that comes from living on substitutes.”* God offers things that truly satisfy like: abundant and eternal life (that can start here and now), spiritual peace, understanding and an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ who was born of a virgin—right. But we all need to be born again to deal with loneliness because we were born wrong the first time—in sin.

We also need time to be alone for personal reflection and candid communication with the Lord regularly. Loneliness isn't the same thing as being lonesome—that's just a temporary condition before we reconnect with our friends. Being away from family or friends for a short time might make you feel lonesome. And we can do something about that quickly.

Did you know that King David felt lonely? He cried, ***“I lie awake, lonely as a solitary bird on the roof”*** (Psalm 102:7 nlt). You can feel this way even when you are surrounded by crowds of laughing people during Christmas parties. Sometimes a fun loving crowd can even push a person into deeper feelings of loneliness.

Do you feel lonely and need comfort? Don't turn to the bottle. Jesus promised us, ***“I will never leave you nor forsake you”*** (Hebrews 13:5), and that promise can apply to you forever. Get to know Him today! There's no substitute for a friendship with Christ! That must come first. And get involved with a network of committed growing believers. God wants you with them—with real friends who care and will build you up. You need them in your life. The psalmist said, ***“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”*** (Psalm 133:1).

We just got a shocking call regarding a man that I used to work with named, James Minot. He was a Les Clefs d'Or gold key concierge for many years and well liked by many people.

James had been trying to find solace in drinking for a long time and not too long ago he was caught messing around with another woman on the side even though he was married with two kids. I remember talking with his wife Carey who had divorced him in a heartbeat after that, and she expressed how she still felt very concerned about him. She told me how hurt and confused the kids were. But James started drinking even more to find comfort after he then lost his employment. It was all very troubling and sad for him and for many of us who knew James.

He said he needed a job real bad and I remember having some talks with him about a greater comfort that could be enjoyed in a healthy way—in the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. I remember carefully letting him know what it meant to become a real Christian and how that could all come about. I told James that God could meet all his financial needs. We remained friends. He's always been a very humors type and friendly, but he never became interested in spiritual matters. James was a Dallas Cowboys fan and an avid golfer and that was all he wanted to talk about. He really knew a lot too, but not enough ...not much about the reality of God's love and excellent plan for his life. He came by to visit not too long ago and he was stressed out and lonelier. He really missed his kids he said. Man, James looked so skinny. His skin looked grey just like death the last time I saw him. I said, *"I hear you are staying at the Ozone Physique Studio Gym. James what are you doing there? It's a bar. We feel concerned for your overall wellbeing. Are you ok?"* He told me He was fine.

What they called about was this: The police just found James Minot in his apartment dead and say it was from either murder or suicide. I was taken aback and stunned! Some of my friends are devastated now. Some of them are Christians and they repeatedly tried to reach out to James more than once lately, but now they're feeling really down. Were we too late? Please pray for his ex-wife Carey and their two precious hurting kids, Kathie and Jim.¹ Everything has changed.

It's not too late for you and yours!² Please also remember your family members in prayer as we do ...and that: There are no substitutes for the wonderful Counselor, Jesus, who can comfort anyone who will let Him. Who or what can replace Him? No big packages tied up with glittery bows, no fancy holiday galas, no spiked eggnog, no nothing can take the place of a satisfying, fulfilling relationship with the One who was born in the manger. When you have Him, all your needs will be met and it will be a wonderful time of the year.

In the Fisher's mighty hand,
kurt



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¹ Some names were changed in this devo for protection's sake.

² If you would like to get right with God, then go to www.fish4souls.org/How2KnowHim.htm