



Lord, Why Have You Left Me Alone?
Kris Swiatocho

Editor's note: Today's article is the third in a series about "fine line" areas of our lives. Areas where we struggle to discern truth from sin. Areas we prefer not to deal with so that we can continue living on the edge, where the "fine line" is. Click here to read about Happiness vs Joy and Judging vs. Accountability.

Part 3: A Fine Line: Loneliness vs. Alone-ness

Why Lord, why am I still single? Why have you left me so alone? I am so lonely I can't stand it. I hate it. I simply hate it.

These comments and many more are things I hear all the time from fellow singles. I have taken poll after poll with loneliness coming up as the number one thing singles hate about being single. This is especially the case if they were once married, in a relationship, or had kids living at home. That loss of company in their life has caused such emptiness, making it hard to function sometimes. This loss can even lead some people to pick bad choices for friendships, dating and eventually marriage. The loneliness seems to overpower any sense of wisdom on their part. They would rather put any person in their life (whether from God or not), than to feel lonely.

Personally, until three years ago, I had never experienced utter loneliness. Sure, I had been alone and would miss friends and family sometimes, but this sense of hopelessness was something as a Christian I had never experienced. Then my dad died and for the next year I would find myself lying on the couch, in a state of depression and deep hopelessness. My dad had been sick for many years with Alzheimer's. I had the honor of moving in with my parents the last nine months of his life to help take care of him. He left this earth and went into the arms of the Lord. So why would I feel any loneliness? Why would I feel so hopeless? Well, the loss of a person, a friend, a career, or anything significant can lead to these emotions. But this emotion is not based on truth. For a Christian, this emotion can be sinful, and can be something the enemy uses to attack us. The loss of my dad left me alone but not lonely.

So what is the difference of feeling alone versus feeling lonely? What is the fine line?

As a Christian, when you say you are lonely it may be because you are, in fact, alone. Being alone is a real place we find ourselves in, sometimes, whereas being lonely is something a person experiences. For a non-Christian, there is no hope in Christ, no hope of an everlasting life, and no hope in your future. To say "I feel alone" is being honest, because in some cases we are, and it isn't much fun.

Jesus felt alone many times in various ways. He understands what it feels like to have the whole world on your shoulders, to carry the load. Even though he had twelve disciples who were there to help him, they would abandon him over and over.

Judas would betray him.

So many of you know what it feels like to be betrayed. To have that one person you cared about the most lie to you. Maybe it was an ex-spouse, business partner or friend who betrayed you. They were smiling to your face all the while stealing from you.

And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. They were delighted and agreed to give him money. He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them



when no crowd was present (Luke 22:4-6).

Peter would deny him.

Maybe you got into a situation where you needed your friends to be there. You needed the support of your family, only to have them deny you. Friends who said they had your back but when things got really tough, the phone calls went unanswered and emails bounced back. Peter would deny Jesus as well. Even Peter was surprised at what he was about to do.

I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times" (Matthew 26:34).

Jesus' disciples would forget him, fail him.

How many of us have had folks let us down? Maybe it's a project you are working on. Maybe you led a team at your company or your church, only to have your teammates fail to follow through. Some might have even quit, causing more work for you. Jesus shows that even he could not escape those who would forget. But Jesus would have grace to forgive and forget. He knew they were imperfect. Despite their efforts to follow-through, they would fail sometimes.

When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. 46 "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation" (Luke 22:45-46).

Jesus' disciples would abandon him.

Your former spouse said you would be together til death do you part, but "death" turned out to be five or ten years. Maybe it was a parent who abandoned you as a child or withheld support from you as you grew older. Maybe your child has abandoned you, a child you raised, loved, cried, and worried over. Sure, maybe it's growing pains and they will return like the prodigal son. But in the meantime, it feels horrible to experience rejection after having loved your child so unconditionally.

But then again, Jesus understands too. There was Jesus, on the cross, and only one disciple shows up: John, one of his best friends. But where were all the others? Where were the men he spent the last three years, day and night, 24/7 with? The ones whom he taught, encouraged, and trained to take over for him? Where were they now? If Jesus, who is perfect, could have his closest friends abandon him, then surely we are going to have people abandon us. The issue is not if it's going to happen, but when - and how do we handle it?

Jesus focused on the present, asking his best friend and mother to care for each other. He focused on Mary Magdalene and Mary, wife of Clopas. Mary Magdalene would be the first to see Christ rise from the dead; the first "evangelist" so to speak. Although most of his disciples did abandon him at the cross, they would not abandon him afterwards. His teaching, his love for them, his example would come through in the end. So yet, again, Jesus is showing us that through the things that would cause most people to feel lonely and hopeless, they are in fact merely causing us to feel alone. But Jesus had God and so do we. We have a choice in how we live through these situations. We have a choice in how we use circumstances to bring glory to God.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your



son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home (John 19:25-27).

We are not truly alone.

Jesus reminds us: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). This should give us comfort when we are trying to carry burdens such as kids, a home, finances, elderly parents, or work. But here is a cool thing about being alone: when you know the Lord as your Savior, you are never truly alone or forsaken. God is always with us, giving us comfort, encouragement, and hope.

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you (Deuteronomy 31:6).

Despite what the world does to us, despite betrayal and abandonment, God is still there. He has not moved or changed. Doesn't that make you smile? Doesn't that make you rejoice? The lost are lonely because they are alone in every sense. All the more reason we have to keep our focus on reaching the lost versus feeling discouraged about ourselves.

So then, why are we physically alone? Why hasn't God brought me someone?

First, we are physically alone* sometimes because that seems to be the only time God can get our attention. When are alone (the kids are gone, the house is empty, work is done) and all we have is silence and God, we are forced to talk (and listen) to God. The problem is that most of us don't want to be alone, so we do whatever we can to avoid this. We watch TV, talk on the phone, play on facebook, eat, shop, and whatever else we can do to avoid talking with Jesus. We avoid having to hear him say that this is where we are going to be for now. But in avoiding hearing God say this, we are also avoiding hearing God say he is with us. We avoid all the plans he wants to share with us. We avoid all the things he wants to tell us. Things that will help us in this journey as single adults. God wants to empower, encourage, and equip us. Our alone times should be precious and valued.

So then the question is, why hasn't God brought someone to help fill in these "alone" times? Well, you have asked the million-dollar question. I simply do not have the answer you seek. I just know God is still in charge and knows best. For me, it doesn't appear getting married was a part of his plan. But thank God, because of my singleness I have been able to encourage so many others to live full and complete lives without being married. I have been able to write, speak, and teach all over the US and abroad, imparting that our only hope is found in Christ. So that when the enemy whispers "You are so lonely, no one will ever want you, you were lied to before and you will be lied to again" you will have the knowledge and strength to rebuke the enemy because you know the truth. You do have hope, and even though right now you are alone, you do have a future and it's with Christ.

The Fine Line Revealed:

With my dad's death I allowed the enemy to take this loss and make me feel empty, when in fact I was full. I was full of memories, full of my dad's love and friendship. My dad was such a blessing to me. No one could take away his love for me or what he meant to me. My sense of loss was simply loss and not abandonment, rejection, or denial. He was just gone. But because I know Christ, I will see him again. I will get to sit beside him while we watch the Braves play baseball, sharing a bucket of hot butter popcorn. I will get to feel his hugs again because I am not alone.

*Author's Note: In John 10:10 the enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy, but Christ came to give life. The enemy loves to



get us by ourselves so he can lie to us. Remember there are times when we are alone so we can hear from God (quiet time) but there are other times when being alone is not good. We need the support of our family and friends. We need other believers around us so the enemy does not get a stronghold. So if you live alone, think about adding a roommate. Get involved in a Bible study or book club. Find more places to serve at your church. Do not avoid the fellowship of others as we are stronger when we are together. So when there are times you are alone, the enemy does not have power over you.

Kris Swiatocho is the President and Director of TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries and FromHisHands.com Ministries. Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 25 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is the author of three books: *Singles and Relationships: A 31-Day Experiment* (co-authored with Dick Purnell of Single Life Resources); *From the Manger to the Cross: The Women in Jesus' Life*; and the most recent, *Jesus, Single Like Me with Study Questions* (includes a leader's guide and conference/retreat of the same name). Kris is currently working on her fourth book: *FAQ's of Singles Ministry* coming 2013.

TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries helps churches, pastors and single adult leaders evaluate, develop and support their single adult ministries through high-energy speaking engagements, results-oriented consulting and training and leadership development conferences and seminars. Click [here](#) to request a FREE "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" guide.

FromHisHands.com Ministries is Kris' speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!

Publication date: December 25, 2012