

Friday – April 3

In his book *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.”

Paul wrote to Timothy (2 Timothy 1:4) *I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy.*

*One is the Loneliest Number.* Three Dog Night, 1968

When have you been most alone (even if you were in the midst of a crowd of people)?  
When is a time you reached a critical stage of loneliness?

The time that is etched in my memory occurred during the Christmas season 1975. It was my first year at Denver Seminary, and after finals most everyone scattered for home – including my three roommates. I was left in my top floor, end of the hall campus apartment . . . alone. As well as on campus . . . alone (I didn’t see anyone else around).

Being an introvert, the first couple days recharged me after exams, and after my first semester learning “semin-ese” – the language of a seminary student. Then the aloneness turned to loneliness, and on Christmas Day I was all by myself with no one to celebrate with, no presents to unwrap, no home-cooked food to eat, and no tv or radio to fill the emptiness.

And then the internal darkness set in. I became depressed and despondent – and I was in that black hole for a week until students began returning to school.

This current period of social distancing, even for an introvert, is challenging, and not because I haven’t had personal contact with people, because I have. It’s been hard because the joy of worship and fellowship with my church family has been missing. Read Bonhoeffer’s statement again and recognize the deep truth he writes.

God knows this. *\*It is not good for man to be alone. I will create a helper for him.*

God raised up Aaron to come alongside Moses to reduce the leadership demands Moses was carrying all by himself.

Ecclesiastes 4:9 *Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed.*

Jesus knew this.

Mark 6:7 *And he called his twelve disciples together and began sending them out two by two, giving them authority to cast out evil spirits.*

Jesus Himself didn’t go solo. And in the Garden of Gethsemane a reason He was sorrowful was because the disciples fell asleep and left Him . . . alone.

What’s emerging during this coronavirus pandemic is the confirmation that even with the accessibility we have on Facebook, YouTube, FaceTime, Zoom, Skype, etc., we’re coming to the realization that the personal touch can’t be beat.

Hebrews 10:24-25 *Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.*

I miss you! Stay connected. Reach out. Don’t let someone become a “1”.

\*This is not a devotion about marriage and singleness, it’s about aloneness/loneliness.