

Loneliness is a very tender subject. This is a time when we will want to give extra patience, grace, and flexibility. I pray that we who lead can be vulnerable and humble as we share together.

Much of the questions and discussion below will have few comments from me as I hope this can be a time when God speaks to us and we can huddle together.

## ME TOO

On Sunday, Pastor Doug shared that famous people felt lonely: David, Ruth, Elijah, Job, Paul, Esther, et al. I wonder if we all feel lonely at times. I know that I do. Sometimes I also feel stuck - that I don't know what to do about loneliness. The good news is that God knows and has wisdom and comfort for us.

In reading Pastor Doug's notes to me about his upcoming message, I needed to sit with God and meditate on the truth that I sometimes wrestle with deep feelings of loneliness. After all that God has promised and done in my life, there are still times when I feel alone and afraid.

## AS WITH ALL MATTERS OF THE HEART, LET'S LOOK AT WHAT GOD HAS REVEALED IN THE SCRIPTURES

Though David (later King David) was already anointed to be king of Israel, he was being pursued by King Saul who wanted to kill him. At times, he had to hide in caves to survive.

Let's read through Psalm 142 and consider what David (and God) passed on to us in his low time.

What was David feeling? What specific statements did he make about how he felt?

For good reason, David was not only feeling fearful as he was being chased, but he was probably also confused since he had already been anointed AND had been serving King Saul faithfully. I wonder if we sometimes feel something similar since (1) we already belong to God, and (2) this world can be a difficult, painful, and lonely place.

What was his first impulse to do about how he felt? (1-2)

David cried out to God two times in seven verses.

There is a temptation to trust in someone or something else to bring relief or comfort.

We Americans have many options: Thinks, fun, drink, etc.

David pointed out qualities of God. Which were important for him to remember in those times?

Only God can give mercy

God listens

God knows what David is feeling and why

God alone is a true refuge and comfort

God can rescue

God is strong

God can send in help from people

What did David decide or resolve?

To fully depend on and turn to God

To trust Him to protect and free him from his “prison”

God has much to say about our troubled times (and we all have them). What has He promised in the following verses:

These are amazing references from Pastor Doug.

- James 4:8
- Deuteronomy 31:6
- Psalm 68:6
- Psalm 34:18
- Isaiah 43:1-2

How has God spoken to you? What has He revealed or prompted you to do?

This is an important question and a good time to listen well.

### **DISCUSS TOGETHER**

Which of David’s statements connect with how we sometimes feel?

Opinion / sharing question

Why are we sometimes ashamed or afraid to admit that we feel lonely?

Opinion / sharing question

How can we be God’s comforting agents in one another’s lives?

Opinion / sharing question

Pastor Doug shared four specific applications of how God helps in times of loneliness:

- We can practice God’s constant presence
- We can admit that we feel abandoned and lonely
- We can practice gratitude
- We can gather with other followers of God

Which of these are important for you in these times?

Opinion / sharing question

### **APPLY IT THIS WEEK**

How are you today? Has God spoken to you through His Word, His Spirit, His family? What steps do you believe He is asking you to take this week? If God is speaking to you, don’t delay - follow His lead.

I am praying that God is a refuge and help for you this week.

Steve