

LONELINESS

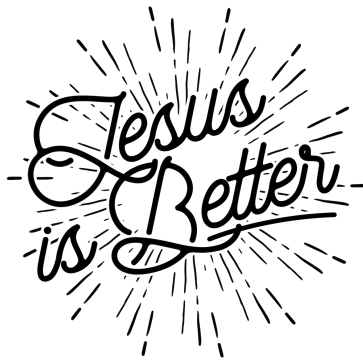
Heavenly Father,

I want to praise you for who you are and for all that you have done, but I am struggling. My heart aches for the simple pleasures of friends: the hug of a child, the smile of a dear one, an encouraging word brought about by your love poured out through another. After all of what you have done, and after the assurance of your promise to be near, why am I so lonely?

I have never felt this level of isolation. Though I remind myself of your great promises to never leave me or abandon me, I feel abandoned. Where are you Lord? Tell me to pray; I will. Tell me to fast; I will. Tell me to read and meditate on your word; I will...just please talk to me. Please, be the God who stoops to listen, and I will pray as long as I have breath.

Your Word describes each of us in the church family as part of your body, your tabernacle. Through your Spirit, you dwell within us supernaturally. We are your people and you are our God. But Lord, my brothers and sisters still seem so far away. How can we neglect to meet together without this overwhelming sense of separation?

You have called us, gathered us together, and betrothed us to yourself as your Bride. It is right that I should feel brokenhearted for that which breaks your heart, our separation. May I even hope that this suffering is one I can count as joy? Yes! Thank you that I can, through your Spirit, consider this current situation as a light affliction, sent to work within me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.



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Forgive me, Lord, as I focus more on my loneliness than communion with you. You have rescued me. In you, I am found even when I feel lost. You have given eternal life. Remind me through the pain of this earth of your promise of a perfect home with you. Please forgive my sin of despair as I search for a solution to loneliness apart from Christ. Help me to be of good courage, even in my loneliness.

Father, may my response to the present desert of isolation bring a refreshing shower upon those thirsty for community. May I intentionally seek to love others well, knowing they must be parched. May my response to loneliness reveal my savior Jesus to others and your love for your people. And may we, as your Church on Mill, be one, as you, Father, are in Jesus, and Jesus is in you.

Amen.