



NT Group Sermon Study

I'm WITH Nobody

January 17, 2016

Break the Ice:

(A key part of healthy group life is to make sure your group gets to know each other and builds good relationship.)

- Imagine you have one whole day totally to yourself—how would you spend your day (other than work)?

Everyone from time to time has a season in their life when they are lonely. Many times when we think of loneliness we think of being alone, by ourselves. But some of the most difficult times of loneliness are when we are surrounded by people and we still feel all alone. We feel misunderstood, mistreated, neglected, overlooked or not included. Although these times of loneliness can be incredibly difficult, they can also be times when we learn how to rely on God and be with Him in a new way.

Since we are created to be in relationship with God AND people, it is not surprising that since the beginning of time people have felt times of loneliness. David, God's chosen king of Israel had some lonely times even before he became king. In spite of David's faithful service to him as king, Saul, out of his mind with jealousy, is trying to kill David. So David has been on the run. Without his best friend Jonathan (Saul's son) for support, David finds himself living in another country, a rival nation, in a city called Ziklag. Check out what happens next:

Prayer:

(Take some time to pray for God to speak to your group through this week's study.)

Read 1 Samuel 30:3-4, 6.

He is at the bottom: a man without a country, friends, or family. He's got nobody.

- Compare David's situation to someone (real or fictional) who has lost it all and everyone seems out to get them.
- What kinds of things do people do to try to cope with or relieve loneliness and stress?

In verse 6 above, it says, "But David found strength in the Lord his God." This verse makes me wonder what it really means to find strength in the Lord. From what we know of David's life, let's look at some patterns and habits that he put into play, that may also help us as we find strength in God during lonely times.

Focus on God being WITH us:

We learn even more about David through his writings in Psalms. Here is a sample of David's writing from Psalm 139:

Read Psalm 139:7-12.

- The overall theme of David's writing here is the idea that God is always WITH him. What circumstances and seasons of our lives is it most difficult to believe that God is actually WITH us?
- Share a time in your life where the fact the God was WITH you gave you strength?

Honesty with God:

In many of the Psalms written by David we find that he does not hold back his feelings, frustrations and disappointments from God. David has a way of laying it all out there. You might call it “venting” with God.

Read Psalm 142:1-4.

- We often think prayer is just about asking God for things. What do you think keeps people from just talking to God about their feelings, complaints, fears and frustrations?
- Is it difficult for you to believe that God wants to hear all your junk? Why or why not?

Remember God’s Faithfulness

David was encouraged by remembering and recalling God’s faithfulness in his own life and in the life of his people.

Read Psalm 136:3-4; 13-16.

- Share a time in this last year where God demonstrated his faithfulness in your life.

Practice Being Alone with God

David found strength in the Lord in his loneliness because he had learned to be alone with God. David wrote so many Psalms to God, many of them set to music. I would guess that not only did he write them; he probably sang them over and over again. This time of worship and focus demonstrates David’s ability to spend time alone with God.

- What situations or circumstances are most conducive to you connecting with God?
- Share a lonely season or experience in your life. What made that time particularly lonely? What did you do to get through this time?

What’s Next?

We discussed the following ways of finding strength in the Lord:

- Focus on God being with you.
- Honesty with God.
- Remembering God’s Faithfulness.
- Practice being alone with God.

Which one of the above things are you willing to spend 30 minutes on this week? What would you do with 30 minutes of focusing on this thing? (pray, journal, talk to a friend, read related Bible passages on the topic) Share next week with the group about your 30 minute experience.