

R e a d

Hebrews 4:14-5:10

C o n s i d e r

Barna and World Vision International looked into the lives of eighteen to thirty-five-years-old in countries around the world in the Connected Generation project. Over fifteen thousand young people responded to a survey and translated it into nine languages; Barna asked if they *often* felt “lonely and isolated.” The result has shown that 1 in 3 adults in the U.S. often feels lonely, and 1 in 3.5 adults in Canada often experience loneliness.¹

If I ask you the same question today, how often do you feel lonely and isolated? What would be your answer? Research studies show that having an appropriate amount of alone time can be healthy and beneficial. However, constantly feeling lonely contributes to many mental and physical health issues. Loneliness is about relationships. We know God through a relationship. Have you ever thought about having God, our Lord Jesus, who understands us to manage your lonely feelings? Let’s pray together and look at the passage below.

Rev. Amy Yu

P r a y

Father God, whether it is something that I feel honourable or not, they are all in your sight. Sometimes I think of life as a struggle. So many people are grieving the loss of a loved one. Others have experienced the pain of divorce or broken relationships. Some have lost jobs. Many are facing huge debts. Others are hurting for grown children who seem to have lost their way. Some are facing new diagnoses and health issues. Others are still waiting for answered prayers, feeling like God, you have somehow forgotten us.

Though people surround me, yet lonely inside, struggling through fears and darkness, battling worry, here is nothing that I can hide from you. So let nothing would hinder me from coming before your throne today. When reading your Word, I pray your Holy Spirit will speak with me. In Jesus’ name, I pray, Amen.

D i v i n g D e e p e r

What does a priest do for himself and his people? (5:1-4)

What does the Great High Priest (Jesus) do for Himself and His people? (4:14-16, 5-10)

What is the difference between a priest and the Great High Priest: Jesus? (See Gen 14:17-20 and Heb 7:1-28)

When was the last time you were able to identify with someone in a difficult situation?

What did you say to make the other person feel better?

Empathy is primarily understood as the ability to understand another person's feelings and to consider another person's perspective. By building empathy, you can broaden your worldview. Practising empathy also helps you to relate more to others. When we are in tune with our own emotions, we can relate to other people's emotional realities more readily and effectively. It is just like how Jesus chose to experience human life and be able to empathize with our weakness, yet he did not sin.

How does the fact in v.15 we have a God who can "empathize with your weaknesses" affect your relationship with Him? Would empathy become one of the solutions to other people's loneliness?

How can we live closer **WITH GOD** in our lives?

How are we being **TRANSFORMED** to be more like Christ?

How is the Holy Spirit empowering us to imitate Christ in what we **D.O.** this week?

¹ Mettes, Susan. *The Loneliness Epidemic: Why So Many of Us Feel Alone--and How Leaders Can Respond*. Brazos Press, 2021.