

Lonely Teens and Broken Relationships | Ron Luce, M.A.

Introduction: Loneliness is an issue of the heart. In fact it is a sickness of the soul. It can lead to depression, drug abuse, sexual immorality and perversion, alcoholism, and other desperate behaviors. However, this behavior doesn't solve any of the loneliness-it only makes it worse.

I. Loneliness is a sickness of the soul: Sickness of the heart and not about getting around more people.

- A. Drive desperate behavior – maybe to be noticed and no matter what happens, they still feel lonely. “Some attention is better than no attention”
 - 1. Comedian, cool joy, jock, or drugs and alcohol
 - 2. Boyfriend and girlfriend
 - 3. Sexual immorality
- B. This behavior only makes things worse
- C. Loneliness is in epidemic proportion among teens. And it's probably getting worse because of technology and attention grabbers.

II. How do we deal with this sickness?

- A. A need to fill a void. The only one who can fill this void is Jesus.
- B. Christ is the only answer
 - 1. Loneliness is really a desire for God
 - 2. Father and friend
- C. Adults need to model a passion for God for teens
 - 1. Teach them to follow Christ
 - 2. Christ speaks in whispers that requires a closeness to hear
- D. We are designed for intimacy
- E. We need to teach teens how to experience Christ. He asked people to come follow Christ. Philippians 4:9 “Any my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”
- F. We usually have fillers for this loneliness: ignore it, food, religion, sex, etc. So what do we do? We need to present the gospel and allow them to experience what it really means.

III. Parents need to be a part of the solution

- A. Be available to your teen. They don't want your stuff...they want you. John 15:15 Jesus has made known his heart to them. Jesus' example was made plain – first it was a master/servant but then in vs. 15 he talks about being a “Friend” (sharing heart) with them.
- B. Parents need to teach teens how to open their heart. Share a part of yourself...share your hurts, struggles, joys... But they can come back and say “but they don't need to know my business?” No, but they do need to know your heart – tried and failed, failure as a parent, asking for forgiveness, their relationship with Jesus.
- C. Become a real friend
 - 1. Transition from parent to friend as they grow older
 - 2. Open your heart to them
 - 3. Develop trust in the relationship. Give them advice on how to approach certain situations. The only way we can influence them after they're 18 is that they invite us...and we do this by honest, open, relationships.
 - 4. Model wholesome relationship
- D. Beware of the technological influence in your teen's life. Parents have to look for who owns the heart of their child. Do you actively woo the heart of your teen?

IV. Youth pastors - Teach your youth how to have healthy relationships. Look for opportunities for real friendships to be fostered.

- A. Needs to include both sexes
- B. Define healthy friendships for them

1. Youth retreats
2. Create opportunities for bonding; discussion groups
- C. Friends shouldn't be found accidentally
 1. Friends should be whole not needy
 2. They should have something to offer
- D. Model good friendships and relationships for them

Soul Care Notes:

Phillipians 4:13

John 15:15

Study Questions:

1. What is meant by sickness of the soul?
2. Discuss why Christ is the answer to loneliness.
3. Discuss ways you can help define healthy relationships for your teens.
4. Why is technology an issue that can help contribute to loneliness?
5. Describes ways you can be a true friend to a teen.