

**Monday
December 7, 2020**



2020 – Emmanuel, God Is Still with Us

There are lots of 2020 jokes going around that make light of our current dilemma. My favorite:

Isolation is going well. Struck up a conversation with a spider today. Seems nice. Turns out that he's a web designer.

Social distancing and isolation have taken a toll on us. We're stuck in our depressing little boxes and we're looking forward to the day that we can go back to normal lives. We want to resume our favorite activities and interact in-person with friends and family. We miss human contact.

The social media experiment of the past 15 years has failed to replicate the type of social interactions we humans need to thrive. Public health experts say that using social media doesn't translate into better connections. In fact, it often leads to feeling lonelier. "Our screens are our own little boxes, keeping us together while keeping us apart."

Man is by nature a "social animal." 2000 years ago, Aristotle wrote: "Being social is what made us human." Modern science has shown that it's probably the other way around. But social media (texts and emails) don't meet our social needs at all.

According to experts this "loneliness epidemic" is a public-health issue. Both loneliness and social isolation are having a negative impact on our response to the COVID-19. We entered this virus as an unhealthy society with a crisis of connection. The coronavirus has forced us to keep apart and underscored the many ways in which we were disconnected to begin with.

As Christians, how do we cope with this isolation and loneliness? Loneliness eats at our insides and brings a vacuum of emptiness. It causes a hunger for wanting to belong, to be understood, and to be loved. But as a believer in Jesus Christ, you are never alone.

Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you. ~ Hebrews 13:5

God **is** always with us. Loneliness may be a signal that it's time to spend more time with God. Maybe God is trying to get our attention. God's answer to loneliness is wrapped up in a person—Jesus Christ.

From one of my favorite contemporary Christian Christmas songs ***Emmanuel, God with Us*** by Amy Grant

"... the child once born in Bethlehem is still among us now."

When we drive our cars on empty, we become stressed and driving becomes laborious. Spiritually, we occasionally run on empty too. Spiritual emptiness is one of the most serious threats to Christian health. We can try to overcome spiritual emptiness by receiving spiritual nourishment and engaging our spiritual gifts in service.

Try to use the coronavirus down time as an opportunity to connect with God. Spend time in prayer, Bible study, and connecting with others. Take advantage of online prayer meetings and studies and opportunities for ministry.

God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ~ Acts 17:27

Arthur Morgan