



## The Face of Loneliness

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Loneliness is the darkest path that we face in our grieving process. It is as if a big hole has been ripped out of our hearts. Sometimes we wonder, "What is there to live for?" The light of our life has been snuffed out. One woman told me that she didn't know what she was going to do because her husband did so much around the house. It is as if we have been swallowed up in a gulf of emptiness. We feel all alone.

Naturally we withdraw from life. We spend our times alone at home. We don't venture out like we once did. Phone calls are hard to handle. Our family and friends begin to worry that something is going to happen to us. All of this is normal in the early stages of our grieving. There is a time and place to pull back from our sphere of relationships and activities. We need space and time to be by ourselves pondering what this all means now that our loved one is no longer with us. Their absence is great and our longing just to see them and touch them one more time is heavy. Often we think to ourselves that they are going to walk right through the front door any minute. But, nothing happens. They are gone and we are all alone. Though we have family and friends who support us, we can still experience loneliness in the midst of a crowd. What shall we do? Just today a family member said to me, "Mike, what am I to do?" God has much to say about the sorrows of life. One verse in particular caught my eye recently. Psalm 25:16 says, **"Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted."** When we face these lonely times what do we need? This verse identifies two of our main needs: God and His grace. When we are alone we need to know that God has not forgotten us and that He will help us through this time. We also need to know of His love and mercy to us in our darkest moments and that He will sustain us and bring us through this time. For He all too well understands what we are going through. He is more than capable of bringing us through our loneliness. Why? Because He is willing to meet us there.