

Loneliness Has a Purpose

But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. —**Luke 5:16**

Billy Graham said that London is one of the loneliest cities in the world. He also pointed out (and I didn't know this) that next to divorced people, university students are the loneliest people in the world. Paul said that loneliness may be a person's thorn in the flesh. As for Paul's actual thorn in the flesh, as we have seen, there is endless speculation. We do not know what Paul's thorn in the flesh was, but it is possible that it was loneliness. He said in 2 Timothy 4:16, "No one came to my support, but everyone deserted me." He said in 1 Corinthians 9:5, "Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas?" You can read between the lines. Whether Paul was single, married, or a widower, he said he had the right to have a wife.

He was no doubt lonely, and all you have to do to confirm this is to look at his description in 2 Corinthians 11:25-30. Whether or not this was Paul's actual thorn in the flesh, we don't know.

This may be your thorn in the flesh, ordained by God at least for the moment. The devil will use it to torment you, but remember this: there is a purpose in everything that happens, and God Himself takes the responsibility for it.

Everything is for a purpose, and if I am describing your own thorn in the flesh—loneliness—then God has allowed it. The devil will exploit it, but the loneliness has a greater purpose.

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