

Max Lucado Suggests a Powerful Answer to Loneliness

One thing seems certain about this time of battle with the COVID-19 virus—many of us have experienced acute loneliness. A recent national survey of adults 18-24 revealed that 24% of the surveyed young adults had considered suicide in the past 10 days.

God didn't form us to be cut off from each other or live in what feels like a never-ending quarantine. Even while walking down the street, we notice people crossing to the other side to avoid our leper-like potential to spread the virus.

Max Lucado said in a recent interview on the *Greenelines* podcast, "Loneliness is in and of itself a form of a pandemic. We find ourselves in an increasing sense of hopelessness. It's a difficult season to be alive."

Lucado spoke about his new book, *You Are Never Alone*, which is based on lessons learned from the Gospel of John.

"When you look at the miracles of Jesus in the Gospel of John, these miracles speak to the lonely heart," Lucado said. The miracles speak to the person who thinks, *I have to fix everything by myself*, or *There's nobody here to help me*. At the very beginning of the book, I tell about a conversation that I had with a lady in a hospital as we sat in the waiting room. She told me about her 17-year-old son who had been in a car wreck and was going through withdrawal because he was also addicted to opioids.

"It had been three days of torture for her; she hadn't slept, and she was exhausted,'" Lucado told me. "Finally, she said, 'This is just all up to me. And I ain't much.'"

Lucado suggests there is an almost universal feeling that "I

don't have much to offer, but I know that if we are going to get through this season, it depends on me."

"It's all up to me, and I ain't much," he repeated. "And I told that story because I think all of us feel that at times. You know, 'It's all up to me. There's no solution unless I come up with my own solution. And when I look inside me, there's not much there.'

"Well, the miracles in the Gospel of John stand in opposition to that line," Lucado said. "They remind us that Jesus is there, whether it's a relatively mundane problem such as running out of wine at a wedding or something as profound as a dead Lazarus in the tomb. Jesus shows up. And He alters the circumstances.

"And I believe those miracles are in the Bible, not just to show us what Jesus did, but to show us what Jesus does," Lucado said. "Of course, the greatest miracle is yet to come. And that's our eternal life or presence with Him, which will be carefree."

We must believe that our miracle-working heavenly Father is still right here with us. We are never alone. {eoa}