

## Opportunities and Threats, week 2: Isolation, Lonliness and Community

August 16th, 2020 by Kasey Crawford

**Today's Passages: Hebrews 10:39, 1 Thess 5:1-11, Acts 2:42-27**

We are in the midst of a cultural earthquake...

**But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls. Hebrews 10:39**

Rather than shrink back, this is a time to rise up, to dig in to the goodness of God and then advance the Kingdom of God (in us and through us) to our families, our city, our state and nation.

Today's Threat: Isolation and Lonliness

During late June, 40% of Americans of U.S. adults reported struggling with \_\_\_\_\_ health or substance abuse. -CDC

Among those 18-24, \_\_\_\_\_% reported having seriously considered suicide in the last 30 days. -CDC

"We've never seen numbers like this, in such a short period of time," he said. "I mean we've seen a year's worth of suicide attempts in the last four weeks." -Dr. Mike deBoisblanc

"More Americans could lose their lives to deaths of despair, (deaths due to drug, alcohol, and suicide), if we do not do something immediately. Deaths of despair have been on the rise for the last decade, and in the context of COVID-19, deaths of despair should be seen as the epidemic within the pandemic...Across nine different scenarios, additional deaths of despair range from 27,644 (quick recovery, smallest impact of unemployment on deaths of despair) to 154,037 (slow recovery, greatest impact of unemployment on deaths of despair), with somewhere in the middle being around 68,000." -Well Being Trust

God has a solution to the epidemic of isolation and loneliness: It's called church

The very basic meaning of the word church is \_\_\_\_\_. But don't let the simplicity of the word, define the depth of its significance. I **"For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst." Matthew 18:20 NASB**

For such a time is this. We have the opportunity to recapture the sacred and \_\_\_\_\_ calling of being the church for one another.

**Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11**

In the middle of a crisis when people are saying all sorts of things, from false security to doom and gloom destruction, what should we do? Just \_\_\_\_ the church: encourage one another and build one another up.

**And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Acts 2:42**

3 of the 4 core key devotions (mentioned) of the early church can happen with just \_\_\_\_ other person: A meal, fellowship and prayer.

This crazy season is an opportunity to get really good at what we are supposed to be really good at: \_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_ relationships.

**Responding to God...**

Who are you encouraging? Who are you building up?

Are you "devoted" to structured and spontaneous times of relational connection? If more is needed, what could that look like?

Answers: mental, 25, gathering, supernatural, be, one, life-giving