



4 Things Loneliness in Ministry Taught Me About Friendship

Loneliness in ministry came as a big surprise to me.

Maybe you feel the same way? You didn't expect the misunderstanding, the larger-than-life expectations, the walls that go up and the opinions that come out too freely.

Today we're going to unpack this inescapable part of ministry life. I hope you will find much grace and hope in what I've written about on the blog, and in this worksheet.

If you haven't already read the blog post that correlates with this worksheet, you can find it here. →

<http://kristyscottage.com/4-things-loneliness-taught-me-about-friendship>

What kind of loneliness are you experiencing? Go ahead and circle or underline everything that feels like what you're dealing with right now.

→ I'm lonely because I don't really have any friends.

→ I feel really lonely in my marriage.

→ I feel lonely because we moved away from family.

→ Something else: _____

Statistics about ministry life tell us:

- 80% of pastor's wives feel left out or unappreciated by their church members.
- 56% say they have no close friends within the church.

With all the many challenges of ministry life, loneliness is the **number one issue** impacting the wives of preachers. **Have you ever felt this way?**

I want to focus on **what you and I can learn** from this aspect of ministry life. **Because, how we respond to life determines how we will live, lead, and grow as women.**

Take a few minutes (or days) to journal your thoughts and unpack the following:

#1 Loneliness is not circumstantial; it is a state of the heart.

➔ What makes you feel lonely right now? Be really honest and share about your current circumstances, and how you feel about them: _____

➔ If, at it's core, *loneliness is a state of the heart*, how is your heart right now?

➔ Do you believe that there is hope for your heart, even if your circumstances do not change? _____

2: There is no perfect friend.

➔ Do you often feel disappointed by your friends? Or maybe frustrated by the lack of friends in your life? _____

➔ Finish this statement: **I would feel less lonely if I had a friend who** _____

➔ Do you have the courage to ask God to help you *become* that kind of friend to the women in your life? What could be your first step of growth in this area?

3: Takers are always empty on the inside.

➔ If there are only two kinds of people in the world- *givers and takers*- which are you? _____

➔ Have you been waiting for a person or circumstance to change so that you can feel happy, whole, or understood inside? What happens when that person or circumstance doesn't change to meet your needs? _____

_____.

➔ If your inner wholeness is dependent upon people or circumstances, then you are actually a victim. According to God's Word, you are an over comer because of Christ. Which of these will you choose to be: a victim, or an over comer _____

"In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

Romans 8:37

4: Friendship is a gift I can give without expecting anything in return.

➔ This last step is a result of the overflow that can happen when you allow God to begin to mend the "holes" in your heart that are causing you to fill empty inside. The abundant overflow of a full heart is a treasure you can draw from, as you learn to give to other women- *without expecting anything in return*.

The first step is realizing that you must let people be people; only God can fill the up gaps in your heart. What He will fill you with is Himself.

If you're ready to take the first step, tackle this next worksheet!

If you're not quite there yet, that's okay too. Let God do some "inside work" in your heart for a while before you come back to this. Be sure and read the prayer on the next page, and invite God to begin a healing work in your heart.

➔ **Taking the first step.**

Chances are, there are lots of women in your life who have needs right now; maybe even needs that you haven't paid much attention to because your eyes have been focused on your own needs. As you trust God to fill you up with Himself, you can reach out and offer the gift of friendship to someone else. **Can you think of a few women whose hearts you can invest in? Write down a few names who come to mind:**

As God gives you opportunities, be proactive about investing some of the fullness of your heart into someone else. You can do that by sending a card or encouraging text, inviting a friend over for a meal, or out for coffee. Other small ways you can invest right now are: _____

Realize that you will be investing without strings attached. Release any expectations to God and trust Him to teach you how to live abundantly in a broken world. As you grow in maturity and faith, you will live as the kind of woman who is drawn to healthy people, and whom others can draw from.

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for meeting me in my place of need. I acknowledge that the loneliness I have been feeling is a heart issue, not just a circumstance. I do not have to be a victim to people or circumstances in my life. Since I can't change or control those anyway, I release them to You, in the name of Jesus. I especially give You _____, and ask for your grace to leave it in your hands.

Please begin to heal those empty or broken places inside my heart and fill them up with You. I want to be whole in Christ. Fill me with your abundance so that I can generously invest into the lives of other women, who have needs just like I do.

Thank you for your provision of wholeness. I trust You to lead me to healthy, like-minded women with whom I can enjoy friendship.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

There are
really only two
kinds of people
in this world-

givers & takers-

Which are you?