

# TAKEAWAY

## Fighting Shadows

### Loneliness

*In line with our goal to be a church of disciples who make disciples, this session is focussed on action, so that we are 'doers of the word' and not just hearers/people who enjoy a good discussion! It encourages focussed practical outcomes in the lives of the individuals in the group so that our discipleship as followers of Jesus is deliberately pursued.*

#### DESIRED OUTCOMES

*You don't necessarily need to discuss these, but be aware as a leader.*

- To benefit from sharing our own experiences of loneliness with others.
- To have some practical steps towards contributing to a community that, when healthy, responds to the problem of loneliness.

#### SHARE

Have you ever felt lonely? If so, share about it.

If you're feeling lonely at the moment, share what you'd like to happen in your relationships to make you feel more connected.

#### READ & DISCUSS

##### Psalm 25:16

*"Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted."*

##### Psalm 142:4

*"Look to my right and see; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life."*

David wrote about his experiences of loneliness, which happened even though he had a relationship with God. What does this tell us?

##### Matthew 27:46

*"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*

Why is it significant that Jesus experienced loneliness (and did so for us)?

What does this have to do with our own experiences of loneliness?

##### 1 Corinthians 12:25-26

*"There should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it."*

How do verses like this one speak to the problem of loneliness?

How can and should the Church be a place that combats loneliness?

#### DISCUSS

What habits or practices do you have that help you get closer to people?

What habits or practices do you have that prevent you from getting closer to people?

In your experience, has church helped or hindered you in developing deeper connections with others? Why do you think this is the case?

What could *this* church do to better enhance meaningful relationships that fight loneliness? (If you have any thoughts you feel strongly about, do feedback to leaders).

#### PRAY

## **TRYOUTS**

This week, take the initiative to contact someone (maybe someone who normally takes a lot of initiative with you) and spend quality time with them.

Just like a food log, note how much time this week (after work hours) you are giving to various things (Social Media, TV, exercise, clubs etc.). What do your findings suggest? Are there any changes you want to make to bring you closer to other people?