

Speaking to the soul



God is with you

All of this occurred to fulfil the Lord's message through his prophet: "Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.'" Matthew 1:22 - 23

Loneliness is one of the greatest problems of our society today - and it is on the increase. This matters because loneliness is incredibly dangerous. It increases the risk of

death by 26 per cent, is more damaging to health than obesity, and increases the risk of high blood pressure. Loneliness, living alone and poor social connections are as bad for your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, according to research. But the person who knows Jesus personally need never experience loneliness, because he is Immanuel, God with us, and when we live with him day by day, we are instantly connected to a worldwide family of his people.

The difference between our relationship with God and with other people is that God never leaves us. He is always by our side. We may have warm relationships with our friends, colleagues and family but, because they are human, the experience is constantly changing. Sometimes, they are busy with other things. Added to that, they have good days and bad days. They go on holiday and get ill and can sometimes be distracted by other calls on their time. However firm our relationships with others, they are variable. But our relationship with the Lord is different. At any time, whatever our circumstances or mood, the Lord is by our side. He is always with us.

As we celebrate Christmas this year, let's not allow ourselves to become so distracted by the busyness of the celebrations that we fail to see Immanuel, the God who never leaves us. We have often been told that dogs are for life and not just for Christmas. But immeasurably more important is the fact the Jesus is for life and certainly not just for Christmas.

QUESTION

In what ways are you encouraged by the fact that God is always with you?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, thank you that you will never leave me or forsake me. Amen

Photograph - Bethlehem nativity

