**Isolation mode**

(*Adaptation of Sabbath school ‘When Alone’ - April 20-26*)

*If it is possible, use an iPad or computer in the groups to show the images supporting the discussion, especially when Deaf are present. Or the suggestion is to print the pictures in order to facilitate the meaning of the sentences. The questions are suggestions to open a dialogue.*

**PPT p2:** Loneliness. A feeling that we have all experienced, albeit with different intensities.

Loneliness does not mean being alone. You can be happy even if you are alone. Loneliness is what those who are socially isolated feel, it is felt when there is a lack of connection between desired social relationships and real relationships.

**PPT p3:** Feeling isolated may mean that you need to reinterpret the vision of your social interactions. If you feel that someone is avoiding you, ask yourself if you have been hostile or in 'isolation mode' and if they are only reacting to your behavior.

**PTT p4**: But there is also the 'isolation mode' determined by personal choice and lived with satisfaction.

Loneliness starts from a chosen personal assumption or immediately. We have categorized three reasons why people find themselves living apart from the rest of the world.

**PPT p5:**

a. they choose to be alone

b. the circumstances of life lead them to live alone

c. they are alone because others have abandoned them

**PPT p6: a.You choose to be alone**

There are men and women who, by choice, determine within themselves not to have relations with others of the same kind. They lock themselves up in their loneliness because they think they live well like that. The relationship with themselves satisfies them and they do not need outside contact. Sometimes these are time-limited choices to live a particular experience, sometimes they are choices determined by people’s social condition.

**PPT p7**: Let's think about hermits. A hermit is one who lives, by his own choice and to a certain extent, in isolation from society, often in a remote place. The main reasons that can lead to such a choice are usually spiritual or religious.

PPT p8: For example the choice of being single.

Although we must bear in mind that there are circumstances in life that "oblige" us to choose to remain single, it is not a question of being completely isolated. It is undoubtedly a choice dictated by the life goals we want to pursue. It is a choice determined by a clear personal position regarding the life of a couple.

What do you think of this choice?

**PPT p9:** Being single, the thought of the Apostle Paul: I Corinthians 7: 25-28

**PPT p10: b. Circumstances of life lead you to live alone**

There are those who find themselves alone despite themselves. Something has happened in their life that has projected them into this condition of separation, putting them in 'isolation mode'.

A choice suffered, at times, due to an event that deeply affected their lives.

The death of a loved one, especially a spouse, the single status, not having found a partner with whom to share their lives, finding themselves a foreigner away from their homeland, having disappointed their friends, being in prison, an illness ... divorce.

**PPT p11**: Divorce is one of the most traumatic experiences that destroy the divine family project.

Despite some of the most justified causes, those who live in solitude because of a divorce suffer the sad consequences.

**PPT p12**: The death of a loved one, especially a spouse, always creates a heartbreaking emotion for those who remain. And this is the proof that God created us to live an endless loving relationship.

Losing a loved one who has always loved us makes solitude a form of exile. The greater the love shared, the harder the exile is to endure.

**PPTp13:** But even a state of infirmity or disability can activate the 'isolation mode'.

Unfortunately, society is refractory to the disinterested encounter with those who are different, especially when this diversity is established by a state of health. And then the social barriers that activate isolation rise "automatically", especially as an element of protection.

Do you have an example of someone who has activated the 'isolation mode' because they are forced by circumstances? A divorce, the loss of a loved one, a disability: How do we approach whoever is in such circumstances?

**PPT p14**: Read the Apostle Paul's exhortation on the support we can give to those who are alone, in spite of themselves: Galatians 6:1-9.

**PPT p15: c. You are alone because they have abandoned you**

This is the saddest condition, because you find yourself forced to live alone.

Many elderly people live this sad reality, but also people with disabilities, or people who are victims of extreme conditions and who have been rejected, and even people who have made a religious choice that is not shared. Sometimes we are responsible for these refusals, sometimes we are victims of them.

**PPT p16:** Being old or disabled is never a good reason to exclude and/or eliminate a person.

A serious deprivation that elderly people or people with disabilities suffer is not the weakening of their bodies, but the abandonment, exclusion, deprivation of a sincere love contact.

Ideologies such as individualism, egocentricity, and materialistic consumerism break down social ties, increasing a mentality of "rejection", which leads to the denigration and abandonment of the weakest, those who are considered "useless". In this way, human relations suffer from a social impact that is increasingly selfish and self- interested.

**PPT p17**: Among these solitudes, there are those related to religious choices. The conversion of a spouse who is not convinced by his/her partner generates a condition of spiritual solitude, of abandonment.

**PPT p18:** If you were in the same condition of being abandoned, what would you want to be told or have done to get you out of isolation?

Jesus alerted us when he said: Mark 10:42-45.

Unfortunately, in this experience of abandonment, we also include God. There are many people who denounce that they have also been abandoned by God. Failure to answer the many prayers, both on the level of health and on the level of existence, can generate this feeling of abandonment on the Lord’s part.

**PPT p19**: God said: Isaiah 49:14-16. Matthew 28:20

How can we help those who feel abandoned by God to regain that trust in Him as they once had?

**Conclusion**

Need some company.

We were not made to live alone.

When God created Adam, He established in him the need for companionship, inviting him to evaluate the animal world, already coupled. It is our Creator who said: "It is not good that man be alone" (Genesis 2:28).

This assumption did not refer only to the need to have a family companion, but it expands to include all those interpersonal contacts that make up our social context.

**PPT p20**: It can happen that we are alone in the midst of so many people. Among the loneliest individuals are those who live in the big cities. Have you ever observed people on the bus, or in the metro, or on the train, people reading, people talking, people staring at the void, waiting to get off?

How can you proactively seek to be more sensitive to whomever those people might be? Think about and ... let your "drop" make the difference!

**PPT p21**: Read the following written by Ellen G. White:

"*Though now He has ascended to the presence of God, and shares the throne of the universe, Jesus has lost none of His compassionate nature. Today, the same tender, sympathizing heart is open to all the woes of humanity. Today, the hand that was pierced is reached forth to bless more abundantly His people that are in the world. "And they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." The soul that has given himself to Christ is more precious in His sight than the whole world. The Saviour would have passed through the agony of Calvary that one might be saved in His kingdom. He will never abandon one for whom He has died. Unless His followers choose to leave Him, He will hold them fast."* (DA 480.5)

**PPT22** : Image of the poster Special Needs Awareness Sabbath