Gail Cawley Showalter First Rights

152 Grand Chase Drive 787 words

Nederland, TX 77627

(409) 721-5953

gail@gailshowalter.com

Grace of Aloneness is Amazing

When I was born my siblings were eight, twelve, and sixteen, much too old to want to play with me. I spent my early years entertaining myself. I spent many hours in solitude. Later in life after a divorce, with three young children, I craved that time alone. And then I resented it passionately when it came, like the anticipation of a delicious meal with its aroma and enticement and then the unpleasant indigestion that follows after over indulging my appetite.

Never confuse this: being alone is not the same as being lonely. Perhaps the fear of loneliness keeps you from experiencing the grace of aloneness.

As a single mom you may feel lonely especially if you are often alone. Perhaps this is not the life you had dreamed of. Difficulties and disappointments faced alone can be daily events for single mothers. There are, however, some gems that can be polished when we are alone. Being alone brings a grace all its own. Grace is often explained as ‘unmerited favor.’ In other words something good that happens to us that we don’t deserve. There is grace that comes to you when you are alone that cannot come any other way. The following are points of grace you can experience when you are willing to accept aloneness as a pathway to inner peace.

**G** Growth is what the Christian life is about. You may avoid it because growth is painful. For the seed to sprout it must first crack open.

“God never put anyone in a place too small to grow.” - Henrietta Mears

 If you haven’t noticed look around. Physical growth is a constant.  Of course, I’m speaking of spiritual growth here. As all grown-up Christians we should ask ourselves how we have grown lately. Am I the same person I was a year ago? What have I learned? Would others say I was different?

**R** Aloneness can renew, refresh and give us valuable reflection. Living an alone life requires more work for those who experience it. There is stress, sometimes overwhelming stress, being a single adult raising children, especially. Jesus often went away to pray. So should we. Take the time for refreshing. Reflect on God’s plans for you.

**A** Acceptance is powerful. Mary, the mother of Jesus, wondered, “How can this be?” And then quickly accepted, “Let it be … Truly accepting God’s will is the essence of prayer. Yet for us it seems an insurmountable feat. We don’t have God’s perspective.

Once my daughter accepted that she was not able to conceive, she was open to adoption. Eleven years later we can’t imagine our lives without our beautiful granddaughter from Russia.

When you arrive at the place where you are no longing attempting to fix, control, blame, judge or persuade others—you have reached acceptance.

**C** Compassion is usually developed after we experience a valley of our own. It wasn’t until after my father’s death that I realized it was important to be there for my friends when they lost a loved one. After the heartache of divorce my compassion for single mothers developed into a passion. We are creatures designed to have empathy for others.

**E** Education is a terrific journey to take when alone. Learning something new can change your entire perspective. Learning comes in many forms. A new hobby requires learning. Career development demands acquiring new knowledge. It is so much easier to read a book when you are alone.

When we are alone it can seem as if even God has forsaken us. We fail to realize, as Oswald Chambers put it,

 “God will keep narrowing us in until He gets us alone. When God gets us alone by affliction, heartbreak, or temptation, by disappointment, sickness, or by thwarted affection, by a broken friendship, or by a new friendship-when He gets us absolutely alone, and we are dumbfounded, and cannot ask one question, then He begins to expound.”

In those times He reveals to us why He needs our attention. If we want to truly hear Him, we must be quiet and still. Then He will reveal Himself.

Aloneness is not all bad. It can be a time for great insight and changes in your life.

Being alone can be an opportunity to reach out to new experiences. Bruce Wilkinson says, “Unfortunately, many people have never come to this, because they’ve never ventured beyond where they feel safe. These people will seldom, if ever, see God working powerfully in their lives.”

Don’t you want to see God working powerfully in your life? Take the time to be alone. Allow aloneness to perch on a branch in your soul so you can experience its amazing grace.