



## Encouraging Words with DARLENE SALA

### Facing Loneliness With Courage

In his book *Facing Loneliness*, J. Oswald Sanders tells of visiting Hannah Higgins, a woman who for 69 of her 82 years was in constant pain from a progressive bone disease. As a result of the disease, she lost both arms and legs.

For 43 years Hannah lived in one room, but she didn't let her isolation or the fact that she had no arms limit her reach. She had an attachment fixed to the stump of her right arm so that she could write with a fountain pen. Using her whole body to form the words, she wrote thousands of letters to people all over the world. The walls of her room were covered with the photographs of people she had ministered to and in many cases led to a relationship with the Lord.

"I have so much to be thankful for, so many mercies," Hannah said. "I have often tried to count them but it is impossible....Although I am deprived of health and strength and my limbs, Jesus is far more precious than ever....I can truthfully say that I never feel lonely."<sup>i</sup>

How could Hannah be so isolated and yet not be lonely? She had discovered a secret, and that secret is the fact that God was with her every moment. Most of us know this in theory but Hannah knew it as an absolute reality. She knew that God meant it when He said, "Be strong and courageous...for the Lord your God...will never leave you nor forsake you" (Deut. 31:6).

Loneliness and sorrow will no doubt come to all of us, and as one person said, "Sorrow certainly does color life." But remember that you choose the colors. You can't keep difficult times from happening, but when they do, you make a choice. You can run away from life or look the facts in the face and meet them with the courage God will give you. Which choice will you make?

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<sup>i</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Facing Loneliness* (East Sussex, England: Highland Books, 1988), 54, 55.