

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Glen Weber's Sermon on March 8, 2015
"My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"**

[In today's sermon, Senior Pastor Glen Weber explains that God the Father had not rejected and abandoned Jesus on the cross and the implications for us today.]

Notes:

Introduction:

- Other than the death penalty, the worst punishment that can be given out by a court, or by a terrorist group (a terrible form of torture), or army (an attempt to "break" a POW), is solitary confinement.
- Solitary confinement is when someone is cut off from all human contact – literally confined to a room without any human contact.

- Pastor Glen recounted John McCain's account of his solitary confinement while he was a war prisoner in Hanoi from his book, "Faith of My Fathers".
- He and the other American captives were kept in solitary confinement.
- They were severely beaten if they were caught communicating with each other.

- So, in order to keep their sanity, they developed a taping system, where they taped on the walls of their prison cells.
- They had to communicate with each other so they would know that they weren't abandoned.

- Many times that solitary feeling comes upon us when other people abandon us in this life.
- A family member or spouse can tell you, "I'm out of your life. I'm not going to talk with you anymore."
- A young child can feel abandoned when their dad or mom suddenly die or are killed in an accident.

- And of course, one of the most devastating forms of abandonment is when we feel God has left us alone.
- There is not greater solitary then when we think we are cut off from God.

Jesus experienced abandonment:

Matt. 20:17, Now Jesus was going up to Jerusalem. On the way, he took the Twelve aside and said to them, 18) "We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death.

- Jesus experienced rejection and abandonment by people who should have embraced him – the religious leaders of his day.

19) and will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!”

- Jesus knew that He was going to be abandoned by His own people.

Important Easter sermons:

- Over the two Sundays before Easter, Ron Kelly will be giving a two-part sermon series on the week leading up to the death of Jesus.
- It will be an important set of messages and pastor Glen hopes that most of us will be here to soak in the history and spiritual meaning of it.

At the Lord’s Supper:

Matt. 26:31, Then Jesus told them, “This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written:

- Jesus tells His close disciples that they will abandon Him.

31) ...“I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’

- A fulfillment of a prophecy in Zech. 13:7 where it prophesied that the disciples would abandon Jesus.

32) But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

- Jesus is telling them to meet Him in Galilee.

33) Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.

- Peter is very confident that he will never abandon Jesus, even if all the others do.

34) “Truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”

- Jesus replied to Peter that he would, indeed, disown him, not once but three times.

35) But Peter declared, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same.

- Even though, we, as humans, don’t plan to abandon one another, we still do.

What actually happened that evening:

- Matt.26:69-75, shows us in detail how Peter denies Jesus three times, as Jesus said he would do.

On the Cross:

Matt. 27:45, From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land.

- Jesus hung on the cross for three hours in darkness where he took our place, to feel the pain and anguish that sin causes.

46) About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

- This is a very controversial passage.
- Did the Father actually abandon Jesus?
- A very common teaching among Evangelical Christians today is that God the Father hates sin so much that he abandoned Jesus on the cross.
- Yet we know that Jesus purposefully went to various sinners – tax collectors, harlots, lepers, etc. to heal them physically and spiritually.
- Jesus has told us in John 14:9, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. 10) Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me?”
- Jesus is like the Father, who doesn’t hate or despise sinners, but seeks them out.

Evangelical Christian statements concerning Matt. 27:46:

- *The Father rejected the Son.*
- *As he exhausted his wrath upon the Son, the Father completely abandoned the Son.*
- *The Father hid his face from the Son.*
- *Jesus "became sin." Therefore the Father's wrath was poured out on Jesus.*
- *The Father turned away from the Son.*
- *The physical pain Christ suffered in his passion was nothing in comparison to the spiritual and relational pain that Christ endured as he was separated from his Father.*
- *God cursed Jesus with damnation.*
- *The eternal communion between the Father and the Son was ruptured on that fateful day.*
- *The Trinity was broken that day.*

Counterpoint to these statements:

- There is no way the Father could have abandoned His Son because to do so would have broken up the Trinity.
- If the Trinity was broken that day, we don’t have a caring God anymore.
- If the Father and the Holy Spirit abandoned Jesus, who was perfect, it wouldn’t take much to abandon us, who are so imperfect.
- Jesus took our abandonment to the cross so that when we feel abandoned, we should know that we are not left alone without hope.
- Did Jesus humanly feel that He had been abandoned? Yes, just like we do when we go through trials.
- God’s abandonment of Jesus was to allow Jesus’ physical body to die in order to pay for the sins of humanity.
- The Father abandoned Jesus to our human death, so that Jesus could participate with us in that death, so that we could then participate in His resurrection!!

- The Bible tells us that before God created human life, it was planned for Jesus to die to redeem us, because God knew we were going to sin and reject Him.

Jesus' Psalms quote on the cross:

- Jesus was quoting David's Psalm 22:1, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" in Aramaic.
- The rest of the Psalm talks about the trials we face as humans as well as the trials Jesus faced in his life, including people mocking Him while he was on the cross.
- But this Psalm ends with great praise in verse 24: "For he (God) has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help."
- Jesus began quoting a Psalm that all the Jewish people would know, especially its positive ending.

Jesus' last sayings on the cross:

- John 19:30 tells us that the next statement Jesus cries out from the cross is, "It is finished."
- It is a victory shout because Jesus knows that He has completed what the Father has asked him to do.
- Then Jesus' last statement is: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last (Luke 23:46).
- Jesus could say this because He knew that the Father was there and hadn't abandoned Him on the cross.
- It's part of our fallen nature that we feel abandoned by God when we go through trials and difficulties.
- But it's important to know that God didn't abandon Christ when He was on the cross and he will never abandon us, either.

Implications for us:

- No one who experiences the love of God will abandon another person when relationships get difficult, but will reconcile the differences.
- Yet, it's important for us to realize that a person who abandoned us really didn't know God's love.
- We just have to accept that fact for now and ask God to take away our feelings of abandonment in our hearts.
- We do this, so the next time we see this person in this life or even in the resurrection, we will love them and not reject them for abandoning us.
- Jesus took our abandonment feelings to the cross with Him and personally experienced our feelings of despair.
- So when we feel abandoned, we know that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are totally involved and enraptured in us.

Closing Prayer