

LAST WORDS: NEVER FORSAKEN

Life Group Questions | Sunday, March 15, 2020

Mark ends his passion narrative with an astounding statement from Jesus: “My God, my God why have you forsaken me?” With his last phrase, Jesus clings to hope and proclaims victory in the face of immense despair and suffering.

Take a few minutes to read Mark 15:33-39

How have you read Jesus’ last words (“why have you forsaken me”) in the past? That he was indeed forsaken by the Father in that moment? Or perhaps, it was a cry of hopeful expectation and praise, in light of the promises of deliverance?

How has your interpretation affected your overall theology of God?

Now turn to Psalm 22. Read through the Psalm and note the similarities between Mark 15:24-34 and Psa. 22:1-18. What parallels do you see?

Jesus’ quotation of the first line of the Psalm serves as a hyperlink. It draws us into the Psalm as a whole, and paints a larger story of God’s unfailing deliverance, in times/seasons of suffering and injustice.

Have you experienced moments/seasons of despair and hopelessness? Have you ever felt forsaken? What was that experience like? Do you feel comfortable crying out to God – whether in lament or praise – during these experiences?

Consider and discuss the following statements:

- Jesus experienced death, so that we might experience life. He suffered for us and suffers with us.
- Jesus was never forsaken. In a communal act of self-giving love, the Triune God gave the Son over to death, so that those who believe might have life.
- We are never forsaken. God is always with us.

How have you tried to recognize God’s presence in times that feel desperate and forsaken?

Close in prayer. Take a few moments, to consider how you can represent Jesus, and love and serve those around you, in this time of uncertainty. Before you end, read Psa. 46:1-3, and 10-11 together:

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. He says, ‘Be still, and know earth.’ The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.”