

“MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAS THOU FORSAKEN ME”

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In one of the most painful moments in the Bible, we see our Lord hanging on the cross, bruised beaten and dying. It is in this moment that an even more hurtful event occurs, God's turning His back on His own son. Why? Why was this necessary? Why is Christ crying to His father in His suffering and asking why He has been left to die there, abandoned and forsaken.

It was Christ's sacrifice for us that brought us to this point. This is the moment when our turning from God is most evident in Christ's painful death. Here in this moment He takes on the sins of the whole world in His offering on the cross. Not one sin, nor a hundred, but billions of billions. Every vile thing that man could ponder, every corruption, every pathetic deed, all of his failures. The very essence of man in all his evil. Murder, adultery, lust, theft, disrespect, gossip, cruelty to others, fornication, cursing of God, desire, rape, torture, lying, and worse-our turning from an all loving God.

It is in this moment that the weight of the world's sins bears most heavily upon our Lord. Here is the reason He is there on the cross, here is the true example of His love for us. No greater love hath a man than to lay down his life for those he loves.

Here in all the world's cruelty, Christ shoulders the sins of those who have lived, those who were living and those yet to be born. Here in this moment all that is unholy is focused on Christ as He looks to His father for strength and solace. But here in this moment, the weight of our sins becomes evident. It is our continued turning from God that now causes God to turn from His own son in recognition of the price He is paying for us. It is in this moment that Christ is separated from God, His love blocked from Christ by the wickedness that fills His creation.

It is incomprehensible to me that God would even abandon us, yet here He abandons His own son. I can't imagine God turning from us, no matter how bad we become. Hasn't He promised us to always be there, to always stretch out His hand, to lift us up? Do we not take this for granted, do we not turn from Him, do we not expect Him to always be there for us. Yet, why His own son? Imagine someone you love so dearly that they fill your lives. Imagine that person treating you so cruelly that finally you cannot handle it any more. You look at that person and say that they are no longer your son, or your daughter, or your wife, or your father or mother. -----Imagine the tears in God's eyes when He must turn from His most beloved son not for Christ's sins, but for ours. "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."

Christ knows the price He must pay for us, out of His love for us. "My God, if it be possible for this cup to pass from me, let it be so-but not my will but yours." Our Lord's anguish in what He must endure is evident in His desire to ask God to reconsider what must happen. And then, after the torture, the cruelty, the suffering inflicted by those

who He loves and is sacrificing Himself for, He sees in His abandonment by God, the cost of our sin. To be separated from God, to have no hope, or promise.

The moment of Christ's sacrifice is summed up in a well spoken statement. Jesus died to pay a debt He didn't owe, for our debt which we couldn't pay. **“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me”?**

I know no greater fear than to be abandoned by God, no greater worry than to not have His love, no greater pain than the thought of being separated from Him. Imagine being in a position where there is no hope, no solace, no salvation. Who of us have not worried day by day over some incident or sickness or concern for a loved one in our earthly lives? Who of us has not feared for our souls when we know we have sinned? **To be without God!** To be separated from His unfailing love? Is this not worse than any malady that could befall us in our lives?

But what of this man now high on the cross? It is not His actions that caused His separation from God in this moment, but ours. Why is He dying on the cross? We are the ones who deserve to die, not Him! We are the ones who should be held accountable for our sins, not Him! We are the ones who for our misdeeds and failures, for things we have done, and left undone, that deserve that separation from our heavenly Father! Why do I deserve anything more than to suffer in the fires of hell for all eternity! Why in spite of all I do to hurt Him, does He still love me?

My God, my God, why do you love me? My God my God, why are you always there for me, a worthless sinner? My God my God, why did your son have to die for me, for my sins, for my corruption?”

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son to die for us, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”