

LOSING SIGHT?



"I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you."

John 14:18

When we begin to wake up from our spiritual slumber and open our eyes to the real world, we soon discover that God's ways are a mystery to us. God doesn't mesh his plans with ours. The awesome promises of the Lord Jesus are rarely fulfilled as quickly as we would like. We begin to wonder if we're missing out somewhere.

"I've prayed and prayed and prayed to God to remove that vile thing from my life - it's still there."

"I've pounded on heaven's door until my hands bled, begging God to spare my loved one for His Kingdom - nothing happens."

"I've wept and tarried and tried everything I know to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit - others receive and go on to mighty things, while I wait."

Jesus says,

"If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Luke 11:13

Was this promise meant for everyone but me?"

"if you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will"

John 15:7

"Who's He talking to? Nothing happens when I ask."

"Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows."

Luke 12:6-7



"Beautiful words but, where's the evidence in my life?"

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Luke 12:32

"I went along with that. I got rid of the excess baggage in my life. I cut my ties with mammon.... sought that heavenly treasure --- and where am I now? Desolate!"

"I'm getting tired of waiting! I'm getting tired of trying to smile and pretend everything's all right when within my soul it seems like eternal night. Is there some kind of curse on me? Has God turned away His face?"

"O God, why do you cast us off forever? Why does your anger smoke against the sheep of your pasture?"

"I say to God, my rock: "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?""

Psalm 74:1 & 42:9

When a person who has never met Jesus Christ begins to experience desolation of soul we say, *"Praise the Lord! He's come to the end of himself. He's given up trying to be his own god. Now he's ready to meet Jesus."*
"Come on brother, Let's go up to the Cross." "Let's get down on our faces. Jesus wants to come into your life and make you a new creature."

And as soon as that opens the door of his heart, the Son of God enters and makes him a child of Heaven.

But what do you say to a believer who has known the love of God - experienced the power of the blood? Who has known what it is to walk and talk with the living Christ - but is now empty, dry, joyless, and desolate.

Has God turned away His face? *Never!*

"I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Has Jesus cast them aside? *Never!*

"Whoever comes to me I will never cast out."

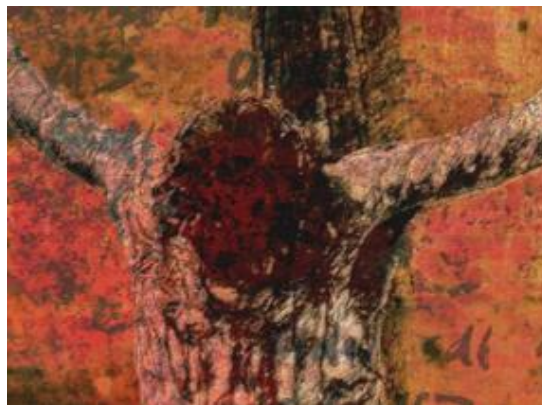
Understand this forgotten fact:

There is only one person who ever experienced real desolation –real God-forsakenness, and that's the Son of God.

When Jesus hung on that cross, He was desolate.

The Father had drawn back and turned away His face from the sin that was laid on the dying body of His Only Begotten.

"My God, my God, why hast you forsaken me?"



Jesus could truly cry out those words - and He alone.

No human being has ever experienced anything close to the desolation that broke the heart of that Man of Sorrows, as He hung there abandoned by Heaven and earth and as the kingdom of Hell did its worst to Him.

It looks to you like your dreams are being smashed.

- Your loved ones are being taken.

- Your health is being taken.

- Your hope is being taken.

....and God doesn't seem to care.

But have another look at Calvary.

If you are experiencing desolation....

It's because you have lost sight of His desolation.



You've forgotten about the desolation He suffered for you.

His loved ones were walking down the hill shaking their heads. His health, yes His very life, was ebbing out of His body drop by drop, breath by breath.

His Father was gone.

He looked up and saw no light - only a closed door. And why did He go through this?

So that you would never have to be desolate!

The enemy will come along and try to tell you that you are the desolate one - but it's a lie.

Jesus is the desolate one.

You're the one He did it for - because He loves you.

He loves you!

And there's no clearer proof that He loves you than to see Him hanging there dying.

God never promised that your loved ones wouldn't be taken.

God never promised that your life wouldn't be taken.

But God did promise to those who abandon their lives to Jesus -

Nothing in all creation will be able to separate you from His love.



The Son of God who hung up there in desolation and rose from the grave....

....promises to be with you to the end of the age.

"I will not leave you desolate. I will come to you."

"How long do I have to wait, Lord? When will it be?"

"What do you mean?"

Here I am. I am with you right now. Whose hand do you think is resting on your shoulder right now?"

If you think you're desolate, it's because you are closing your spirit's eye to the glory that shines from His face upon your soul this very moment.

And all of us, with unveiled faces, reflecting like bright mirrors the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same likeness, from one degree of radiant holiness to another, even as derived from the Lord the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (WNT)



How could we reflect His glory?

How could we be changed into His likeness if Jesus weren't with us?

And this is for you who are reading these words. All of us!

And all of us, with unveiled faces....

If we're not reflecting that glory, it's not because Jesus' face is turned away from us -

- it's because our faces are turned away from Him!

If all we can see is our own desolation, it's because we are looking into our own shadow, cast by the light of the Cross blazing on our backs.

All we have to do is turn around and look to Him and we see instantly that our desolation was a lie.

He is here! Jesus is here!

You're not waiting, Friend....

He's waiting.



- Waiting to fill you with all the fullness of God.
- Waiting to anoint your head with the oil of God's Spirit, until it runs down over your face and covers your garments.
- Waiting to give you victory in that battle your flesh has been losing all these years.

He's waiting for you to turn away from all else and just behold Him.

"Whoever has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me. The one who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and reveal Myself to him."

John 14:21

Jesus cannot manifest Himself to you.... when you're looking back into the past and feeling sorry for yourself.

Jesus cannot manifest Himself to you.... when you're turned in upon yourself - morbidly fascinated by your own issues.

Jesus cannot manifest Himself to you.... when you're looking with envy at the world - lusting after things, vindication, and respect.

Jesus cannot manifest Himself to you....when you're looking at the crooked and cold world - seething with rage.

Jesus can only manifest Himself to you.....

....when you are looking up toward Heaven, toward that Cross.



Look up and you will see Him.

And you will know beyond the shadow of a doubt that Jesus is keeping His promise to you.

There is no reason why you can't know that Jesus is with you all the time - day and night -

- when you're alone,
- when you're in a crowd,
- when you're working,
- when you're talking, eating, sleeping.

Know that He is there!

It's knowing that Jesus is there - that is our joy.

- If we have Jesus, we have everything.
- If we have everything else but Jesus, we have nothing.

He is our joy.



Of course, Jesus never promised to save you from desolate circumstances.

In fact, He promised that in the world you will have tribulation.

You will live in the midst of trouble.

Your life will be spent amid all kinds of sorrow, and confusion, and danger, and tragedy.

Yes, and even persecution..

"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you."

"... a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God."

John 15:18 & John 16:2

And yet he commands you to keep on serving.

"We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work."

"Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

John 9:4 & John 4:38

Jesus does not join himself to;

- idleness,
- laziness,
- people who want to do their own thing and call it "the Lord's work".

But Jesus does promise that in the midst of....

- the most desolate circumstances,
- the worst persecution,
- the hardest labor

He will be with you and in Him you will find rest for your soul.

I will not leave you desolate.

I will come to you.

I will manifest myself to you.

I will refresh you with the breath of my Spirit.

I will give you rest.

And all of us, with unveiled faces, reflecting like bright mirrors the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same likeness.

The Spirit of God comes with special blessing to those believers who have thought that they were being left out. All you need to do is name your need before Lord Jesus.

Tell Him where it hurts, and He will touch you with the finger of God



Prayer: Lord, when we feel desolate, lost, alone, unloved, unworthy, help us to see your love for us. Help us to remember your very nature, to remember all your promises...that nothing can separate us from your love, that you will not leave us desolate, that you will never leave us, that you will come to us and be with us to the very end. Thank you, thank you that we are not forgotten. Help us not lose sight of this. And Lord, may we also not lose sight of the desolation you suffered for us, so we would not have to be desolate. Thank you, Lord, for waiting for us to turn around and look. Help us to turn away from all our hang ups, our losses, our disappointments, our fears, and our obsessions. May we truly behold you and take your hand until your radiant holiness shines on us and transforms us into your likeness, so that we never lose sight of your perfect love again. Amen.

Message: Richard E. Bieber Easter 1973 aka How Long Lord.

Featured Art: The reaching hand of Christ by Neil Breebaart. The Last piece is by Deedra Everett, a friend of a friend. And the rest of the art is by Lisa MD. Skinner at lisamds Skinnerart.com

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