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# Sermon Notes

July 8, 2018

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## Pray With Jesus: When You Are Lonely

Psalm 22

### Psalms

- ❖ The Bible's hymnbook... the Bible's prayer book
  - songs of prayer for every occasion
  - happy times, moments of celebration, lament, heartbreak, depression and betrayal
- ❖ Bonhoeffer: *The Prayerbook of the Bible*
  - when we pray the psalms, we pray them with Jesus
  - the Psalms are not only the Word of God **TO** us "but also the word which God wants to hear **FROM** us."
  - the Psalms are words that Jesus prays during His earthly ministry and which He now invites us to pray with Him
- ❖ When David speaks or writes the words recorded in the Psalms, the future Messiah speaks in him
- ❖ We learn to speak with God by speaking back to Him the words that He speaks to us
  - God speaks to us in His Word
  - we speak to God by repeating His Word back to Him

### All the Lonely People

- ❖ Many people struggle with loneliness and a sense of abandonment
- ❖ The "epidemic of loneliness"
  - over 40% of adults in America report feeling lonely
  - how/what are we to pray when we feel desolated and deserted?
- ❖ In Psalm 22 both the human and divine authors of Scripture remind us that even in the worst of our loneliness, we have a Savior who is a fellow sufferer

### Psalm 22

- ❖ The NT quotes from or alludes to this psalm 24 times
  - *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*
  - "God, You seem far away **AND** You seem silent."
  - scorned, despised, the laughingstock of others
- ❖ David's pain is intensified as he thinks about the ways God has come through for and been close to His people in the past
  - even though David comes to God in faith, he does not find the comfort his forefathers were given
  - David gets nothing but grief and aggravation
- ❖ A menagerie of adversarial animals (bulls, lions, dogs)

- ❖ A detailed description of the things that take place as Jesus is nailed to the cross of Calvary (700 years before death by crucifixion is even devised by the Romans!)
- ❖ David's prayer in vv. 19-21 is a prayer Jesus invites you to pray with Him
  - no matter how intensely alone you are, you can pray this prayer with Jesus knowing that He understands
  - “Do thy friends despise, forsake thee...”

### Help and Hope

- ❖ The turning point in Psalm 22 comes in v. 21
  - God steps in and intervenes
  - God rescues David as well as “the greater David”
- ❖ Speaking through David, Jesus offers up testimony
  - Jesus summons us to praise and worship because of His triumph over death and the grave (*cf.* Hebrews 2:12)
  - in v. 25 David is once again connected to the worshipping community, *the great congregation*
- ❖ When loneliness envelops us, keeping eternity in view will remind us of the One who has promised never to leave us or forsake us
  - we shall eat and be satisfied
  - all the families of the nations shall worship the LORD
  - the LORD rules over the nations
  - the LORD has done it! (IT IS FINISHED!)

### Personal Application

1. Have you ever felt abandoned by God or by another person? What helped to sustain you through that experience? How do the lessons of Psalm 22 help prepare you if you should go through a similar experience in the future?
2. Why do you think God allows us to experience spiritually dry times as well as spiritually rich ones?
3. What does Psalm 22 teach you about being honest with God?
4. When you are discouraged, do you tend to withdraw or surround yourself with others? What kinds of problems might withdrawing precipitate? What kind of community should you surround yourself with when you are discouraged?
5. How does praising God in the company of other believers work to shape your attitude?