



## THE VOICE OF EVANGELISM INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

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### HAVE YOU EVER FELT FORSAKEN BY GOD?

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We want to take our Scripture text today from ***Psalms 22:1-2, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent."*** Every blood bought, born again child of God reading this newsletter today has at one time or another felt forsaken or abandoned by God while in your pilgrimage. The word forsaken in the Hebrew is azav #5800 and it means to loosen, to relinquish, to be set free, to be abandoned, or to be left behind. Needless to say, at one time or another we have all felt abandoned or left behind by God. However, nothing could be further from the truth. It is one thing to feel lonely yet another to feel abandonment. David without doubt felt abandoned by the one person whose support he could least afford to lose: and that was the support of the Lord. I want to encourage you profusely today that no matter where you may find yourself or whatever circumstance you may be facing you are not alone in your battle. Many times you will find your faith tried and that trial or test will authenticate your faith in God. We read in ***1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:7, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."*** More times than not our faith will be tried as with fire and Peter describes this test as a trial. The word trial #1383 means: the proving

of something or someone, a test by which something is tried or proven.

Our faith is often times tested by afflictions, suffering, and sometimes undue hardships. When these tests come to us as believers, we often feel they are unnecessary, and we certainly do not deserve to be tried in such a manner. In the engineering industry everything must be tested and proven concerning its validity and ability to do what it was designed for. As a Christians: trials, testing, and sufferings validate our purported testimony as being a child of God. Today there are a lot of professors and few possessors of the true faith. When there is an extreme sense in feeling forsaken then terror from the very hordes of hell seek to discourage us in believing that for some reason God has forsaken us. But we must exalt the truth: God will never leave neither abandon His children. As a parent, I would never abandon my children no matter what they may have done even though my love is nowhere near as superior as the love of God. God's love is far greater and superior than human love, thus there is no possible way to compare the degree of our love versus God's love. Jesus said to each of us in ***John 15:13, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."*** Jesus made it emphatically clear that no man could have greater love than His love. Jesus also said in ***John 10:17-18, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay***

***it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*** This particular passage of Scripture authenticates the power of Christ and that He willingly laid down His life for our sakes and He had the power to take it again because He had received this commandment from His Father. Jesus himself knows what it means to feel abandonment, because while on the cross, we find those renowned words of Christ in ***Matthew 27:46, "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*** People often times misunderstand this particular Scripture verse concerning the relationship of Jesus Christ and the Father. What we need to understand is that while on the cross Christ was covered with the entirety of man's sin and man's iniquity. When Jesus looked into that bitter cup and saw the dregs of sin and of iniquity, which were your sins, my sins, and the sins of the whole world, as a man He did not want to drink of that iniquitous cup. But He went on to pray: nevertheless not my will but thine be done. The reason Jesus felt forsaken is because of the purity the Father possesses in which the human mind cannot fathom: the Father momentarily turned His eyes away from His only begotten Son. We read in ***Habakkuk 1:13, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity."*** During that brief moment when Christ, who knew no sin, became sin that we might be

made the righteousness of God in Him, the Father was forced to turn away and not behold the enormity of the sin that had covered His Son our Savior. In other words Jesus was drenched, covered, and soaked in all of the iniquity and sins from the past, present, and future: thus the human mind cannot fathom the gravity of what Jesus looked like in the eyes of the Father when His Son was covered with the sins of the whole world. We read in **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:21**, "**For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.**" I want you to try and grasp what Paul just said; the **Father made him to be sin** who knew no sin so we could be made in the righteousness of God through Him. When you feel you have been abandoned or forsaken remember that will never take place from God's perspective because Christ died to forever reconcile man back to God the Father. All of us at one time or another have felt profuse isolationism, but God was still there in spite of our feelings. We read in **Psalms 13:1**, "**How long will thou forget me, O Lord? Forever? how long will thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?** Does that sound like a man who was sensing the presence of God? However, I want you to look closely how that David ended that Psalms here in verse **13:6**, "**I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.**" Simply put, at the end of the day not only did God deal bountifully with David, but the Lord rewarded him and repaid him for his faithfulness in trusting His promises. When you trust God, you are acknowledging that God has not abandoned you neither forsaken you. If someone has abandoned you or has truly forsaken

you, how can you put any trust in them? The truth is you can never put faith, confidence, or trust in anyone who has abandoned you and forsaken you. The Scriptures are replete, confirming repeatedly God is with His people, for we read in **Matthew 28:20**, "**Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.**" This is the very reason we are commanded to walk by faith and not by sight. If one walks by sight and by what they feel they will always live a life of discouragement and one of defeat. We are admonished by Paul the apostle in **2nd Corinthians 5:7**, "**(For we walk by faith, and not by sight.)**" In closing I want to share two passages of Scripture that I trust will embolden you as well as encourage you to understand you will never be forsaken. We read in **Psalms 27:1**, "**The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?**" I want you to notice how emboldened the psalmist David becomes when he understands that God is his deliverance and his strength in the time of trouble. Paul the apostle reiterates that same spiritual disposition found in **Hebrews 13:5-6**, "**Let your conversation being without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.**" Again, I want you to notice the empowerment and strength that Paul the apostle receives, knowing that God has never forsaken him either. It is the devil who lies to us every day and seeks to destroy as well as to crush our faith and trust in the Lord. For that reason we are to never give place to the devil. To give something place means you have to make room

for it: thus we never give room or space for the enemy to have a place of residence within our hearts or our lives. There will undoubtedly be times in your life when **you will feel forsaken**, but that is only a **feeling** and not the reality of God's promises. Some days I feel good in my body and some days I do not feel so well in my body: but that does not negate the abiding presence of God in my heart! The pilgrimage for every child of God is based upon their trust in what God has promised us. As Paul said so well in **1st Corinthians 15:19**, "**If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.**" Simply put, if Christ was only real in this life our lives would be full of absolute misery never having any hope or promise of eternal life after death. I want you to rest assuredly: if God is for you who can be against you? He did not bring you this far to lose you, so remember you are never forsaken in any capacity whatsoever. As always, we humbly thank you for your love and support for the ministry here. It takes a lot of time and effort in writing these monthly newsletters: therefore I trust they edify and strengthen you each and every month.

Serving With You All,

Pastor / Evangelist David W. Lankford

**P.S. Please visit Steve Quayle's website for the September 15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>, meeting in Branson Mo. I will be teaching Saturday evening and ministering Sunday morning and serving communion. We would really love to see you there!**