

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Ms. Dannels, Mr. Dowling, Mr. Garner, Mr. Hadley, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Owens, Mrs. Ross, Mrs. Siota, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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“My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?”

By Derek Long

The Bible records for us seven statements Jesus makes while upon the cross. Luke 23:34 records Jesus saying, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (NKJV). Luke 23:43 records Jesus’ words to one of the criminals who were being put to death with Him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise” (NKJV). Luke 23:46 records Jesus’ cry, “Father, into Your hand I commit My spirit” (NKJV). John 19:26 records Jesus’ statement to Mary, “Woman, behold your son!” (NKJV). John 19:27 records Jesus’ words to the disciple whom He loved, “Behold your mother!” (NKJV). John 19:30 records Jesus saying, “It is finished” (NKJV). Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34 record Him saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” which means, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (NKJV). All of these statements made by Jesus from the cross are short but powerful and full of lessons for us today. Let’s look a little closer at Jesus’ statement, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

Jesus’ statement, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” is a quotation from Psalm 22:1. Psalm 22 is a Messianic psalm. In other words, it was predicting things which would happen to the Messiah. Other places in Psalm 22 where we can see its Messianic nature include:

- Psalm 22:8 records what would be said to Jesus while He was upon the cross.
- Psalm 22:16 speaks of them piercing His hands and feet which took place when Jesus was crucified.
- Psalm 22:18 speaks of them dividing Jesus’ garments.

- Psalm 22:22 is quoted in the book of Hebrews as something Jesus would say of His brethren (Hebrews 2:11-12).

Jesus quoting Psalm 22 should help us and those who were there at His crucifixion recognize His death was the fulfillment of what Psalm 22 was talking about.

It is common to hear people use this statement of Jesus upon the cross to speak about Jesus taking on the sins of the world (2 Corinthians 5:21) and as a result the Father turning His back on Him, not being able to look at Him, etc. in that condition. While I have often heard the statement, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” explained in this manner, there are some things which I have trouble reconciling with such an explanation of this statement. Here are some things which I think present a problem for such a view:

- Psalm 22 is not describing the condition of a person whom God had truly forsaken in some absolute sense. Psalm 22:21 says, “You have answered Me” (NKJV). Psalm 22:24 says, “For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; nor has He hidden His face from Him; but when He cried to Him, He heard” (NKJV). One of the rules of proper Bible study is to not apply the passage in a manner which does not respect the context in which the passage is found. If Jesus quoted Psalm 22:1 in an effort to prove God turned His face from Him, then Jesus took Psalm 22:1 out of its original context. Certainly Jesus would not handle Scripture in this manner!
- Jesus had spoken of the Father not leaving Him. In John 8:29, Jesus says, “And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him” (NKJV). When Jesus speaks in John 8:29, it is obvious the Father had not left Him alone. However, the question might still exist as to whether the Father would leave Him alone at some future time. In John 16:32 Jesus told His disciples, “Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me” (NKJV). Jesus appears to be talking about the period of time when the disciples would forsake Him which would seem to include while He is upon the cross. During this time, Jesus says He will not truly be alone because the Father

would be with Him. John 8:29 seems to indicate the Father would be with Jesus as long as Jesus did “those things that please Him” (NKJV). It pleased God for Jesus to obediently offer Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the world (Isaiah 53:10). Why then would the Father leave and abandon Jesus when Jesus is demonstrating His obedience to the Father’s will (Philippians 2:8; Hebrew 5:7-9)?

Someone might attempt to argue, “If God did not forsake Jesus while He was upon the cross, Jesus was lying.” Is this a valid argument? First, Jesus is not saying the Father forsook Him explicitly but is asking a question. The Psalm asks the same question but obviously did not mean God had forsaken the individual in the manner some depict God forsaking Jesus on the cross (Psalm 22:24). It might be argued that God forsook Jesus in the sense of not sparing Him from the suffering and death which Jesus was undergoing. Second, if Jesus meant to say the Father had completely abandoned Him upon the cross, then Jesus was equally unaware of the reason why the Father abandoned Him upon the cross. It is interesting how those who normally take this view explain to you why God forsook Jesus on the cross. Do these people know something Jesus Himself did not know? I think it is clear Jesus appeared to be forsaken by God, God was allowing Jesus to suffer and die, and yet God had not truly hidden His face from Jesus, etc. while Jesus was upon the cross (Psalm 22:24).

Why does a topic like this matter? One reason this subject is important is because some people want to teach when God saw Jesus on the cross He saw all our sins and when God looks on a saved person He sees Jesus’ righteousness. Jesus’ personal righteousness though is not imputed to us. Rather, it is the sacrifice of Jesus (1 Peter 1:18-19) which is able to allow God to forgive us of our sins and reckon us to be righteous because our sins have been forgiven by Jesus’ blood (Revelation 1:5). The consequence of this teaching is to say when a Christian sins God does not see the Christian’s sin but rather still only sees Christ’s personal righteousness imputed to Him. The Bible teaches though when a Christian sins he falls from grace (Galatians 5:4) and must return to God through repentance, confession, and prayer in order to have forgiveness and apply the blood of Christ to that sin (1 John 1:5-10; Acts 8:22).