Jesus was Abandoned

“And they all left Him and fled.”
Mark 14:50

The wheels were in motion, the storm was now organizing, and the war had begun. Jesus knew this. We hear it in His prayers. We see it as the blood and sweat broke the surface of his skin. Who can imagine the visceral pain of complete abandonment?

Alone,

Alone,

Alone… A trillion miles from home.

The wilderness of the isolation devastates us more than any barren landscape seen by human eyes. It penetrates into the depths of our being. It is not good, this aloneness and void of connection. And yet abandonment is fertile ground for transcendence and growth. It is the wilderness called “Abandoned.”

Wildernesses bring us to a place that no oasis can. The wilderness is where all greatness begins. Jesus went there. Moses went there. Elijah went there. In fact it’s hard to find any one of any importance that wasn’t at one time or another led into the wilderness. We go through wilderness experiences that aren’t on any map, but they are as real as rain. These are regions with names like depression, loneliness, infertility, divorce, lost children, and bankruptcy. We can find encouragement in Christ who leads us into His presence as he meets us in the wilderness of our lives.

He will never abandon you.

Never.

“I am with you always even unto the end of the earth.”

Jesus Christ

It is easy for us to overlook this parting statement of Christ as some kind of “over-and-out” liturgy but it must sink deeply into our bones.

Simply stated: God is committed to us more than we will ever (on this side of death) be committed to Him.

I rest in the truth that He will give good things, and we will never, ever, be alone.

When I find a friend with whom I can reveal my deepest wounds and admit my profound flaws, I’m amazed that they stay. Something deep within says, “He’ll never stick around for ***this*** messy confession.” But more often than not I look up and noticed that they stayed. I often underestimate my friends.

Perhaps you are surprised as well. But even if everyone you love deserts you and flees to the ominous horizon of twilight, One still remains.

The abandonment of Christ stands as a monument of the pain, hurt, disappointment and loneliness we feel when we are left alone. Goodbyes are hard enough. But when someone leaves for good the pain can be devastating. We dream about it. We analyze every step we could have taken. We become angry that we allowed ourselves to believe that things would get better. Shame covers us and we are left with the burden of isolation.

> *One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*
> *Proverbs 18:24*

There is a mysterious peace when you have been left with only

Jesus.

When there is desolation and pain—

When the burden is greater than you thought you could bear—

When the darkness gathers around you—

Even after goodbyes are said—

He is the faithful Friend who is ever beside you when all others forsake you. He is above every present sorrow and every personal struggle. He, too, has walked the paths of brokenness. He, too, has stood beside graves. He, too, was betrayed and conspired against. You share commonality and kinship with the author of the universe.

He placed His mark on you. He claimed you as His own. He looked through the crowd. He found you and said, “This struggling child is mine.” He is enough to fill your empty cup and to calm the storm within. He can be heard if you allow Him into your silence. He can be seen in the sunset of each dying day. Closer, He will be to you—Pulling you closer into His grace… With every struggling moment, when you desire Him more than the fallen world’s rotting junkyard of futile aspirations and empty pleasure— He will be more than what you imagined He could be. And you would have never known the depth of His love so deeply, if you had never suffered so greatly.