

Isolated (Psalm 22)

On Palm Sunday, Jesus rides into Jerusalem to the sound of fanfare and celebration. Yet in 5 days there is a dramatic reversal, and Jesus experiences traumatic isolation on the cross. He rides in as a King, but this King will be betrayed, denied and abandoned. Why did Jesus experience all of this? And what does it mean for us?

1. Isolated... from the Father (22:1-18)

- physical pain
- emotional pain
- “far” = distance (v.1,11,19)
- Jesus was far from salvation... so salvation could come near.
- 2 Corinthians 5:21

2. Isolated... but not for long (22:24)

- It is an unfathomable mystery how the Son could be separated from the Father.

3. Isolated... so we might be near God forever (22:1, 22-31)

- The answer to the “why” question in v. 1 is so that we might be forgiven and be in God’s presence forever.
- Isaiah 53:5
- Genesis 3:8-9

QUESTIONS (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. What kind of isolation have we experienced throughout this pandemic?
2. It is a mystery how Jesus could be isolated from His Father. It is not our concern to solve the mystery, but rather to allow the mystery to change us from the inside out. How does Jesus’ isolation impact you and what does it mean for the isolation you might experience?
3. Read this quote from the NICOT commentary: *“Crying out in pain and expressing trust are not incompatible. Faith and trust ebb and surge in life, and the appearance of contrasting situations causes a clash in the one suffering. I know what I feel and I know what I believe. The prayer clearly demonstrates the emotional roller coaster of the suffering of a faithful one.”* How have you experienced that kind of roller coaster?
4. Jesus knows the Scripture and He allows the words from Psalms to give expression to his pain. How can Scripture do the same for us? How does it help us process grief and pain?
5. *“To be isolated from loved ones is horrible. To be isolated from the God of love is unthinkable.”* How could God use the isolation experienced during this pandemic as a way to help those far from God understand the pain of being isolated from God? Is there someone you could talk to and express your love and concern that they be able to enjoy God’s presence forever?
6. For those in Christ, *nothing* can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8). How does this shape the rest of your life, no matter what you experience? How valuable is the ever-present Holy Spirit for the seasons of life?