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I will never be _____.**

Keep your lives free from the love of money
and be content with what you have, because God has said,
“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” Hebrews 13:5 (NIV)

And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”
Matthew 28:20b (NLT)

**Since Jesus faced the wrath and
judgment of God I will live in His _____
and _____ for all eternity.**

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your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.
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Jesus, ²because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives
life has set you free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:1-2 (NIV)

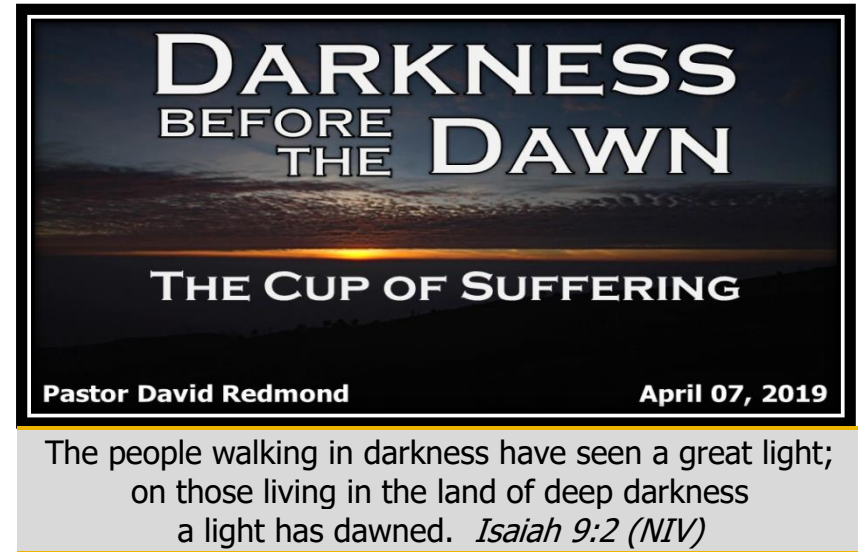
And they speak of how you are looking forward to the coming
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Therefore, it was necessary for him to be made in every respect like
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faithful High Priest before God. Then he could offer a sacrifice that
would take away the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Since he himself has gone
through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being
tested. Hebrews 2:17-18 (NLT)

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**DARKNESS
BEFORE
THE DAWN**

THE CUP OF SUFFERING

Pastor David Redmond April 07, 2019

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned. *Isaiah 9:2 (NIV)*

“Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a
hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns.”
Luke 22:53 (NIV)

He went on a little farther and fell to the ground. He prayed that, if it
were possible, the awful hour awaiting him might pass him
by. ³⁶ “Abba, Father,” he cried out, “everything is possible for you.
Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to
be done, not mine.” Mark 14: 35-36 (NLT)

In the cup of suffering...

**Jesus took the _____ of
humanity in His _____.**

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we
might become the righteousness of God. II Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed
him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God,
a punishment for his own sins! ⁵ But he was pierced for our rebellion,
crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was
whipped so we could be healed. ⁶ All of us, like sheep, have strayed
away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid
on him the sins of us all. Isaiah 53:4-6 (NLT)

For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps. ²² He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone. ²³ He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly. ²⁴ He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed.
I Peter 2:21-24 (NLT)

Jesus experienced being _____ by the Father.

From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. ⁴⁶ About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”). Matthew 27:45-46 (NIV)

Your eyes are too pure to look on evil;
you cannot tolerate wrongdoing. Habakkuk 1:13 (NIV)

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE”—
Galatians 3:13 (NASB)

“No human has suffered more in embracing the will of God the Father than God the Son.” (John Piper)

Jesus faced the _____ and _____ of God.

Awake, awake! Rise up, Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of his wrath, you who have drained to its dregs the goblet that makes people stagger. Isaiah 51:17 (NIV)

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them. John 3:31 (NIV)

I said to myself, “God will bring into judgment both the righteous and the wicked, for there will be a time for every activity, a time to judge every deed.”
Ecclesiastes 3:17 (NIV)

Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. Hebrews 9:27-28 (NIV)

And since we have been made right in God’s sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God’s condemnation. ¹⁰ For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. ¹¹ So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.
Romans 5:9-11 (NLT)

Application:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. I John 1:9 (NIV)

Since Jesus bore my sin I am _____.

For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, ¹⁴ who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins. - ²¹ This includes you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions. ²² Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.

Colossians 1:13-14; 21-22 (NLT)

Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. Romans 5:1 (NLT)

My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, o my soul.
(Horatio G. Spafford)

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Christ endured all that hell is on the cross.

Artists and poets have speculated over the centuries
about hell (“Dante’s Inferno,” etc.), but the clearest
revelation of hell is given at the cross. Hell has six
dimensions and Christ experienced all of them on the
cross. Let me remind you of them briefly...

1. He is in conscious suffering
2. He is in blackest darkness (2 Peter 2:17)
3. He is surrounded by demonic powers
4. He is bearing sin
5. He is under judgment
6. He is separated from the love of God (2
Thessalonians 1:9)

That is hell.

Hell is conscious suffering in blackest darkness, surrounded by demonic powers. It is bearing the guilt of your own sin under the judgment of God.

But the hell of hell will be to know that there is a God of love, and that you could have known his love, but now it is beyond your reach.

When Christ bore our sins, he entered into the judgment for our sins.

*Soldiers taunted and abused him
Crowd turned on him and mocked him
The religious leaders scorned and ridiculed him
The thieves insulted and derided him
The disciples scattered and abandoned him*

*Jesus Christ took
And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup [of divine wrath] from Me; yet not My will, but [always] Yours be done." ⁴³ Now an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴ And being in agony [deeply distressed and anguished; almost to the point of death], He prayed more intently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down on the ground. Luke 22:41-44 (AMP)*

Jesus endured all that Hell is on the cross, he bore what would have been ours. Because Jesus bore sin, if you are in Him you do not bear its guilt, and because Jesus was forsaken by the Father, you'll never know what that is like, because He bore the wrath of God for you.

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." ³⁹ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." ⁴⁰ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹ "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴² He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done." ⁴³ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing. ⁴⁵ Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

"This was his chief conflict, and harder than all the other tortures.... For not only did he offer his body as the price of our reconciliation with God, but in his soul also he endured the punishments due to us. ... Nothing is more dreadful than to feel that God, whose wrath is worse than all deaths, is the Judge. ... He maintained a struggle with the sorrows of death, as if an offended God had thrown him into a whirlpool of afflictions."

(John Calvin)

That is why we look to Jesus as the “author and perfecter of our faith” ([Hebrews 12:2](#)). He is our great high priest who understands, far better than we do, what it’s like to willingly and faithfully endure the sometimes excruciating, momentarily painful will of God for the sake of the eternal joy set before us ([Hebrews 4:15](#); [12:2](#)). And now he always lives to intercede for us so

*For God took the sinless Christ and poured into him our sins.
Then, in exchange, he poured God’s goodness into us!
II Corinthians 5:21 (TLB)*

Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand,¹⁰ he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. Revelation 14:9-10 (NASB)

In ancient times it was customary to mix wine with an equal or larger quantity of water to prevent intoxication at ordinary meals. Here, the mixing is ironic because the “wine of the wrath” is to be consumed at full strength.

Jesus drank the cup of God’s wrath for us so that he could extend the cup of God’s fellowship to us. It might include suffering, but not wrath. We don’t get wrath anymore — now we get God. We get the sweet, satisfying reality of his eternal fellowship in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

This is the cup we drink now and forever. This is the cup that we offer to those who don’t know him yet, imploring them in God’s mercy, *Come, drink this cup with us because Jesus drank that cup for us.*

This is the deepest, darkest part of Jesus’ suffering. Social abandonment was horrible but came from outside. Emotional desertion was painful but only inside Jesus. This spiritual forsakenness, spiritual wrath from the Father, occurs deep down in the very godhead itself. We dare not speculate lest we blaspheme. But something was torn in the very fabric of the relationship between Father and Son.

To get a sense of this, we must remember what the relationship between Father and Son had been from eternity past. The opening words of the apostle John’s Gospel tell us. [John 1:1-2](#)—“*In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. He was with God in the beginning.*” For all eternity, Jesus lived with the Father. And not just with the Father. The Greek word *pros*, translated “with”, can have the sense of “to” or “toward.” In other words, the Word, Jesus, was with God, turned toward Him in face-to-face fellowship. That’s all the Lord Jesus had ever known—the loving, approving, shining face of His Father.

And to be turned face-to-face with God the Father is the Bible’s idea of the highest possible or imaginable

blessing and happiness. This is why God teaches Moses to bless the Israelites in [Numbers 6:24-26](#)—

²⁴ "The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace."

To see the face of God became the highest aspiration and hope among the holy and righteous. [1 Chronicles 16:10-11](#) exhorts the faithful with these words—"Glory in His name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice; Look to the Lord and His strength; seek His face always." The psalms repeatedly include that last exhortation—"Seek His face always!" That became the highest and happiest ambition of man.

And conversely, having the Lord turn His face away became the deepest fear and dread. So David brings together that high and holy aspiration with that deep and fearful dread when he writes in [Psalm 27:8-9](#)—"My heart says of you, 'Seek His face!' Your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, O my Savior."

The words of [Psalm 27](#) could have easily been spoken by our Incarnate Lord at Golgotha. For in His earthly life and ministry, the Lord Jesus continually sought the Father's face. He sought to live in a way that earned the Father's approval and favor. And He did—perfectly.

But on that dark mid-day on Golgotha, when the sun refused to shine, the unimaginable and indescribable happened. That beautiful, shining, loving face of the Father withdrew into the dark, frowning, punishing face of wrath. He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us ([2 Cor. 5:21](#)). The Son of God himself "bore our sins in His body on the tree" ([1 Pet. 2:24](#)). He became accursed for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree" ([Gal. 3:13](#)). And when our sins were laid upon Him, then Jesus felt the full horrible truth of [Habakkuk 1:13](#)—that God the Father's "eyes are too pure to look on evil; He cannot tolerate wrong."

At 3 o'clock that dark Friday afternoon, the Father turned His face away and the ancient, eternal fellowship between Father and Son was broken as divine wrath rained down like a million Sodom and Gomorrah's. In the terror and agony of it all, Jesus cried, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

"[T]his was his chief conflict, and harder than all the other tortures.... For not only did he offer his body as the price of our reconciliation with God, but in his soul also he endured the punishments due to us. ... Nothing is more dreadful than to feel that God, whose wrath is worse than all deaths, is the Judge. ... [H]e maintained a struggle with the sorrows of death, as if an offended God had thrown him into a whirlpool of afflictions."[\[1\]](#)

In Jerusalem that day hung a picture of Hell as the Son of God was cut off socially from everyone, deserted emotionally on the cross, and separated spiritually from the eternal Father with whom He had always lived face-to-face. That's hell.

Sinner, that's our place! That's the horror that awaits everyone who dies in their sin not repenting from sin and trusting in Jesus alone to save them *from* the wrath of God and *for* the worship of God. It's not pretty. It's dark and horrifying and unimaginable. Even the God-man cried out and died!

Here's what we must remember and treasure: Jesus willingly suffers this so sinners may escape it. Jesus' abandonment means the sinners adoption. He takes our place on the cross so we can take His place in the kingdom. Because He was abandoned socially, we may be children in the household of God. Because He was deserted emotionally, we become whole again—renewed in the image of God. Because He suffered spiritual separation, we may be spiritually united to Him through faith so that we will never be separated from God's love. Because He was forsaken, we are forgiven. Now *He* says to *us*, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

It is finished! Sinner, our salvation has been completed. We need only to turn from sin and trust in Jesus.

And if you need evidence to sustain your trust, remember this: The Father went back for the body. He raised Jesus from the grave alive and ruling in glory. Three days later the Father reclaimed a resurrected and living Son! Jesus was not *finally* forsaken and neither is anyone who trusts in Him.

<https://sermons.faithlife.com/sermons/100840-when-darkness-reigns>