

ii. It seems as if the hope which has transformed him, is found as he reflects on his unity to the greater body of God's family: those in past history, those in the assembly, and those in the future, those yet unborn.

iii. 2 Timothy 4:17

### Conclusion/Summary

Psalm 22 is about a rugged faith which can hold on to God, even demand answers from God, in a rotten world.

But it is also about a faith that is transformed by hope – the hope of another day, a final judgment when wrongs are made right.

Karl Barth: *“To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world.”*

### LIVE THE STORY

*The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Have you ever felt abandoned by God? What kinds of questions did that experience raise in your soul? How might Psalm 22 give words to your anguish during a time like that?
- In what ways do the characters in this psalm not act in accordance with the purposes for which God created them in His image? How is the dehumanizing effect of their behavior revealed in the psalm?
- What does it mean to say that the “why” of v1 is not looking for an explanation? What answer is it looking for?
- How do his detractors express that God's abandonment is a sign of God not “liking” him? How might this shame the person of faith? How does Romans 5:5 (1-5) take up this theme and give us assurance that we need not fear this abandonment?
- Has God ever used hope in His ultimate triumph over history as a means of turning your loud cries for deliverance into loud proclamations of His praise and name?
- Why is the psalmist's faith a rugged faith, the kind necessary for a rotten world and not unbelief in expressing God's abandonment? Contrast his response with that of unbelief.

## A Rugged Faith for a Rotten World

Jerry Cisar — March 13, 2016

Text: Psalm 22

### Introduction: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

#### I. The Silent Absence of My God (1-11)

A. His question expresses the pain and even betrayal which the psalmist feels as He prays.

i. “but you do not answer,” and “but I find no rest.”

ii. Contrast this with how God responded to the cries of Israel past.

B. *But I am a worm.* (7-8)

i. Two things combine to give him a sense of being less than human:

a) The scorn, derision, and abuse of his enemies. He was being treated as less than human.

*Oppression has a dehumanizing effect on both the oppressed and the oppressors.*

b) God's inaction.

ii. Vv4-5 Trusting God and not being put to shame.

➤ Romans 5:5

C. Yet You! (9-10)

- i. The psalmist ends this section where he began.
- ii. *"I have a history with You! In fact, not only do I have a history of trusting You, You are the One responsible for that trust to begin with!"*

D. What does the Psalmist want? (11)

**II. The Roaring Presence of My Enemies (12-21)**

- A. While God may have been absent and silent, the enemies have been close and loud.
- i. These abusers are "bulls... strong bulls of Bashan" a place known for its huge bulls.
  - ii. They are "roaring lions" which will aggressively attack their victims.
  - iii. They are a pack of wild dogs surrounding their victim.
    - a) 1 Peter 5:8
    - b) Philippians 3:2

B. The psalmist is close to the point of death.

C. The plea the closes the second part of his lament. (19-21)

**III. The Loud Proclamation of a Victorious Hope (22-31)**

- A. Earlier the psalmist had recounted the story of how the *ancestors* trusted and were saved. Now looks forward to *descendants*, to future generations.
- i. In v24 he declares what he knows to be true of God's character, despite the fact that it is not his current experience. God hears the afflicted.
  - ii. The day is coming when the feast will begin (26). And it is this victorious hope, this recognition that God's history with His people from beginning to end will be one of salvation and triumph that spurs his loud proclamation of v22 and the call to the rest of the community, those looking on his suffering, to turn to God in praise.
- B. God has turned his loud cries into loud declarations about God and His kingdom.
- i. How? By giving him hope. Hope rooted not in His present condition but in the future judgment of God in which the poor will eat and be satisfied and the rich will eat and be brought low. (see James 1:9-10)