



## Never Alone

*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame. But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people. All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads; 'Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver—let him rescue the one in whom he delights!' Yet it was you who took*

*me from the womb; you kept me safe on my mother's breast. On you I was cast from my birth, and since my mother bore me you have been my God. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help. (Psalm 22)*

**M**y God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Perhaps he was only quoting the psalm, as he likely quoted other scripture in the hours before his death, or maybe it really was how Jesus felt at the moment—totally alone, abandoned even by God. It's hard for most of us to imagine such loneliness—the loneliness of those who, in a time of critical need, have no one—no one to comfort, no one to soothe, no one to share the struggle. That is where this psalmist found himself. *O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest.* It is as if he is speaking into an abyss, his words dissipating into the emptiness. Yet, in the midst of this agony of soul, the psalmist takes comfort in the experience of God's providential care. From the very beginning of his life God had been there with him, beside him, and in that memory he finds comfort and hope.

While we may have not known such painful loneliness, there are those around us who may well be in danger of such agony. One of the gifts that we can bring to them is the gift of our presence. We may not be able to make it all better; we may not be able to provide them with a way out of their difficulty, and the last thing they need is unsolicited advice, but as we give the gift of our presence, God's presence is known and God's love is experienced. I am particularly grateful for those in my life who have offered that gift so generously and who have rescued me from the agony of loneliness in the times of distress. Think of those in your life who have done the same and give thanks.

### Prayer

Walk with us, Lord, throughout this day and into the night. Grant us the assurance of your presence and, by your grace, may our company with others in their time of need speak of your love and care. Amen.