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**No More Orphans**

**John 14:18-21**

**Series: Signs of Life**

**June 13, 2021**

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I. Text

A. **John 14:18-21** (NASB95) —

1. 18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.
2. 19 “After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also.
3. 20 “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.
4. 21 “He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”

II. **Orphans**

A. It’s the hard-knock life for us!

1. It’s the hard-knock life for us!
  - a. ‘Steady treated
  - b. We get tricked!
  - c. ‘Steady kisses
  - d. We get kicked
2. It’s the hard-knock life!
3. Got no folks to speak of, so
  - a. It’s the hard-knock row we how!
4. Cotton blankets
  - a. ‘Steady wool!
5. Empty bellies
  - a. ‘Steady full!
6. It’s the hard-knock life!
7. Don’t it feel like the wind is always howl’n?
  - a. Don’t it seem like there’s never any light!
8. Once a day don’t you wanna throw the towel in?
  - a. It’s easier than puttin’ up a fight
9. No one’s there when your dreams at night get creepy!
  - a. No one cares if you grow or if you shrink!
10. No one dries when your eyes get red an’ weepy!
  - a. From the cryin’ you would think this place would sink!
11. Empty belly life!
  - a. Rotten smelly life!
12. Full of sorrow life!

- a. No tomorrow life!
  - 13. Santa Claus we never see
    - a. Santa Claus, what's that? Who's he?
  - 14. No one cares for you a smidge
    - a. When you're in an orphanage
  - 15. It's the hard-knock life!
- B. It's possible that the closest most of us have gotten to knowing what it means to be an orphan is through the eyes of the most famous orphan of all time, Little Orphan Annie
- 1. "It's the hard-knock life" – song from the musical adaptation of the renowned Harold Gray comic strip
    - a. Which was first penned in the 1920's and published in the New York Daily News
  - 2. It spawned a number of films
    - a. And in 1977 was developed for Broadway
    - b. And of course, there were film adaptations of the Broadway musical
    - c. In which we got to know songs like "It's the hard-knock life!" and "Tomorrow"
- C. But even Annie, in spite of it's portrayal of the dismal life in an orphanage and the precarious existence in the Warbucks' household
- 1. Annie's life as an orphan is somewhat glamorized
    - a. In the musical, even "It's the hard-knock life!" is a rollicking blast, a delightfully choreographed ensemble piece
    - b. It's makes you feel like you could actually have great fun being destitute and without parents
  - 2. Somehow, Annie is able to find hope in the midst of her decrepit circumstances
  - 3. Tomorrow
    - a. The sun will come out
      - (1) Tomorrow
    - b. Bet your bottom dollar
      - (1) That tomorrow
      - (2) There'll be sun!
    - c. Just think about
      - (1) Tomorrow
      - (2) Clears away the cobwebs,
      - (3) And the sorrow
      - (4) 'Til there's none!
    - d. When I'm stuck in a day
      - (1) That's gray,
      - (2) And lonely,
      - (3) I just stick out my chin
      - (4) And Grin,
      - (5) And Say,

- (6) Oh
- e. The Sun will come out
  - (1) Tomorrow
  - (2) So ya gotta hang on
  - (3) 'Til tomorrow
  - (4) Come what may
- f. Tomorrow!
- g. Tomorrow!
  - (1) I love ya
- h. Tomorrow!
  - (1) You're always
    - (a) A day
    - (b) Away!

D. But in reality, for real orphans, it's hard to imagine that kind of stoic optimism

### III. What does it really mean to be an orphan?

- A. **Vulnerable** – susceptible to oppression, slavery
  - 1. With no parent, no family, little in the way of a moral compass
    - a. No sense of when someone is looking out for your interests
    - b. Or when that someone is really just trying to use you
- B. **Impoverished** – lack provision
  - 1. Children of single parents are significantly more likely to end up in poverty than children in intact families with a married father and mother
  - 2. Even more impoverished would be those who neither mother nor father
- C. **Identity** – lacks sense of who we are
  - 1. Without parents, orphans have little sense of personal identity
  - 2. Peter Kamau – who spent 19 years in Kenyan orphanages, reported, “We rarely got called by our names. We were so many, a lot of times it was ‘wewe.’ Wewe is ‘you’ in Swahili... And here is a place you are supposed to call home and you’re not even called by your name.”
- D. **Belonging** – lack connection with family
  - 1. Not only is there disconnection with parents, but with whole families
  - 2. When Peter Kamau’s parents died, he and his five siblings were separated and institutionalized
    - a. They lost a sense of familial relationships
    - b. Relationships that they would never recover
- E. **Purpose** – difficult to gain sense of meaning if you don’t know who you are and who you belong to
- F. **Hope**
  - 1. Being an orphan is a hopeless existence
    - a. Annie notwithstanding, no prospect for real parentage, real family, exists
  - 2. It is a demoralizing existence
  - 3. It’s the way unbelievers are described by Paul
    - a. **Ephesians 2:12** (NASB95) — 12 remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of

Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

4. Separated from Christ – no Messiah, no leader, no bridegroom!
5. No sense of belonging – excluded from the commonwealth of Israel
6. No sense of purpose – strangers to the covenants of promise
7. No hope – no sense of anticipation and expectation of a future
8. Why? Without God in the world
  - a. Unbelievers are the real orphans

IV. **Disciples are about to become spiritual orphans**

- A. **John 14:18** (NASB95) — 18 “I will not leave you as orphans...”
- B. Their great fear was Jesus’ telling them He was leaving them
  1. They had devoted three years of their lives with this Jesus
    - a. They had left everything to follow Him
    - b. Their livelihoods were left behind
    - c. Fishermen left their boats
    - d. Tax collectors and businessmen left their businesses
  2. They had wrapped themselves up entirely in this person of Jesus
- C. **Mark 10:28** (NASB95) — 28 Peter began to say to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You.”
  1. What would they do now?
  2. There would be economic hardship
    - a. Perhaps they could go back to their occupations
    - b. But would they be trusted by the people they would serve?
    - c. They were, after all, those former followers of this character Jesus who got crucified
    - d. Would you trust these people who had gotten themselves deceived into this strange sect?
  3. But most importantly, they would lack identity
    - a. They had so completely identified themselves with Jesus that they couldn’t imagine themselves as anything else
  4. And since they would lose Jesus, they would lose the family
    - a. The comradery they enjoyed with each other would disappear without Jesus
    - b. No longer would they have a sense of belonging
  5. And what about purpose?
    - a. Jesus had infused their lives with purpose
    - b. Purpose unlike any they had ever known
    - c. Purpose that would carry them through any challenge or difficulty
    - d. But now, without Jesus, why would they even get out of bed in the morning?
  6. Then there is the hopelessness of their existence apart from Jesus
    - a. What would they have to look forward to once Jesus leaves them
    - b. Indeed, abandons them!
- D. So their great fear was to be abandoned by the One they loved, the One on whom they relied, the One they trusted

1. But now they would be left alone
  2. It is to these people, these disciples, that Jesus comes and says, “I will not leave you as orphans”
- E. So how does Jesus assuage their fears; how does Jesus encourage these disciples who are on the verge of abandonment?
- V. **Promises His presence**
- A. **John 14:18** (NASB95) — 18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”
1. He will not be the parent who abandons His children
    - a. He will come to them
- B. What does Jesus mean by that?
1. First, He promises that He will be with them after the resurrection
    - a. And He, in fact, does exactly that
    - b. He meets with the disciples – indeed, not just the 12, but the broader group of disciples in Judea
    - c. And with the 12 in Galilee
    - d. Paul says that He appeared to more than 500 disciples during the days following the resurrection
- C. But that’s probably not what He means by that
1. Remember the context of this passage
    - a. He has just promised that He would send “another Helper, that He may be with you forever”
    - b. “That is, the Spirit of truth” (**John 14.16-17**)
  2. The sending of the Holy Spirit – first on the day of Pentecost, and then for every believer throughout history – is a glorious promise that He would not abandon them, would not leave them as orphans
- D. Not every parent can make that promise
1. Parents never know when they might be taken from their children, even if they commit themselves to never leave them
- E. But Jesus can and does make that promise
1. He will be with them – forever
    - a. Nothing can separate them from His love
  2. Why?
    - a. Because He’s Jesus, the incarnate Son of God
- VI. **Promises a family**
- A. **John 14:19** (NASB95) — 19 “After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me...”
- B. Jesus here makes a distinction between His own family and the world
1. Not every human being belongs to the family of God
    - a. It is only by faith in Jesus Christ – the eternally begotten Son of God – that anyone belongs to His family
  2. So to prove that, following the resurrection, Jesus would appear only to His disciples – and not to anyone else!
- C. Before Jesus’ death He was seen by anyone and everyone in Judea and Galilee
1. Indeed – in all of Palestine should anyone – Jew, Roman, Arab – whoever happened to be in the neighborhood where Jesus was visiting – they all

- could and did see Him
- D. But after the resurrection – no one who was not a believer saw Jesus
    - 1. “After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me...”
    - 2. Why you? Why the disciples?
      - a. Because they are His family
      - b. They belong to Him
      - c. He belongs to them
  - E. And by Jesus only appearing to disciples following His resurrection
    - 1. It was great assurance to them that Jesus is who He said He was
      - a. That He was God incarnate
      - b. That He was the Son of God
      - c. And as the Son of God, He would bring with Him siblings
      - d. Adopted in His family
  - F. They would not be orphans – they would have a family
    - 1. **Mark 10:28–30** (NASB95) —
      - a. 28 Peter began to say to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You.”
      - b. 29 Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel’s sake,
      - c. 30 but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life.
    - 2. No orphanage for these disciples
      - a. They would have a family
      - b. God’s family
      - c. Christ’s family
- VII. **Promises life**
- A. **John 14:19** (NASB95) — 19 “... because I live, you will live also.”
  - B. One of the great fears of children is if their parents would die
    - 1. And in dying, leave them without parents; leave them as orphans
  - C. But Jesus assures them that He lives!
    - 1. He lives because He will be raised – even from the dead
    - 2. Even as it might appear that He dies in the crucifixion
      - a. He will be raised after three days
      - b. Just as the scriptures said
    - 3. So there is no possibility that death will separate the disciples from Jesus
      - a. But Jesus always lives
  - D. And of course Jesus has already assured them
    - 1. John 11 – **“I am the resurrection and the life”**
      - a. He has the power of life
      - b. Which he demonstrated by raising Lazarus from the dead
    - 2. John 1 – **“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men”**

- a. Jesus has the power of life in Himself
    - 3. And if Jesus has the power of life in Himself, He will always live for them
      - a. And they will also live
  - E. Are you afraid that Jesus will somehow fail to fulfill that promise?
    - 1. Dear friend – Jesus has demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt that He lives!
      - a. He is raised from the dead
      - b. He sits at the right hand of the Father
      - c. He always lives to make intercession for us, His children
  - F. We will never be orphans because the Lord Jesus lives!
    - 1. And “He came that we might have life and have it abundantly!”
- VIII. **Promises communion**
  - A. **John 14:20** (NASB95) — 20 “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”
  - B. Not only will you have a parent
    - 1. You will have deep and rich fellowship with your Parent
    - 2. Your parent will not be aloof and distant
  - C. Jesus will be in the Father, and we will be in Jesus, and Jesus will be in us!
    - 1. We will know, not just the name of our parent Jesus
      - a. Will know, not just details of our parent Jesus
    - 2. We will know Jesus
      - a. We will know Him personally
      - b. We will know Him intimately
    - 3. And we will know the Father as well
  - D. Just think of it – the communion that Jesus shares with His Father, we will also share
    - 1. And it will confirm to us that we are no longer orphans
- IX. **Promises purpose**
  - A. **John 14:21** (NASB95) — 21 “He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me...”
  - B. We will no longer be orphans stuck in an orphanage
    - 1. In which we are forced to work our fingers to the bone under the domination of an overbearing house mother
      - a. In which we are slaves to do whatever the harsh drill sergeant demands
  - C. No!
    - 1. We will be thrilled to do the commands of our Savior!
      - a. We will take delight in carrying out the will of the Lord Jesus
    - 2. **Matthew 11:30** (NASB95) — 30 “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”
  - D. And that gives us purpose
    - 1. It gives us responsibility
      - a. It gives us great privilege to know that in fulfilling the commandments of Christ we are extending His kingdom
  - E. While the ordinary orphan has a hard time figuring out why he or she exists and

what purpose to pursue

1. That is not the case with us
  2. Jesus will not leave us as orphans
    - a. Because His gives us purpose
- F. And in fulfilling His commands we are demonstrating our love for Him
1. It is purpose driven by love
    - a. Far different than anything the world can concoct
    - b. Far different than what the enemy of our souls would hope to exact from his orphan-slaves
- G. Orphans lack purpose
1. We have no such lack
    - a. Our purpose is clear!
- X. **Promises love**
- A. **John 14:21** (NASB95) — 21 “He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him...”
- B. Orphans lack any sense of love from their parents – who have often abandoned them
1. Or from their caregivers
- C. But Jesus will not leave us as orphans
1. Because He promises His love for us
    - a. And He promises the love of His Father for us
- D. He has already demonstrated His love for us in His death for us
1. **Romans 8:32** (NASB95) — 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?
  2. **1 John 4:10** (NASB95) — 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
  3. **Romans 5:8** (NASB95) — 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
- E. Jesus will not leave us as orphans
1. But will love us in a way that no orphanage could ever do
- XI. **Promises knowledge of Himself**
- A. **John 14:21** (NASB95) — 21 “He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”
- B. Jesus will disclose Himself to us
1. He won’t be a stand-offish parent
    - a. He won’t be aloof and distant
  2. But He will bare His soul to us
    - a. He will open His heart to us
- C. And as a result, we will grow in our knowledge of Him
1. Gaining a sense of the mind of Christ
  2. **1 Corinthians 2:16** (NASB95) — 16 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have



the mind of Christ.

- D. Our Jesus will be no stranger to us
  - 1. He will not be a hired hand; an orphanage director who's just garnering a paycheck
- E. Jesus will be our parent who opens up, who reveals Himself to us
  - 1. He will do it through His word
  - 2. He will do it by His Spirit
- F. But He will disclose Himself to us

## XII. Conclusion

- A. The life of an orphan is "the hard-knock life!"
  - 1. But we are no orphan
- B. Even though Jesus left this earth physically
  - 1. He did not leave us
  - 2. He left us His Spirit
- C. Presence
- D. Family
- E. Life
- F. Communion
- G. Purpose
- H. Love
- I. Knowledge of Himself