

# Message Notes

## Easter Hope when darkness is near

# Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

**Introduction** – *“Every night we get to experience Good Friday”*

*What do we do when the Darkness comes?*

*What is Darkness?*

Luke 23:44-56

**Today’s Message:** *“Easter Hope when Darkness is your closest friend”*  
Luke 23:57

### Psalm 88

*You’re my only hope*

*I am completely separated*

*I am alone*

*Where are you, God?*

*This has gone on for a long time*

*Darkness is my closest friend*

### Spoken Word:

*Darkness...and Hope*

~ Mike Kelly and Kate Mattison

Death, Sin, Defeat, and the devil do NOT get the last word!

Happy Birthday to ME!

### The candle in the cave

*Even darkness is not darkness to God*

Psalm 139:12

*Jesus Christ is the Light of the World*

John 1:5

*If you are in Christ, you are now “out of darkness”*

1 Peter 2:9

### **Easter Application**

*Are you in the light of Christ?*

*Will you put your hope in the Risen Christ, even when the days feel very dark?*

Luke 23:57

### Psalm 88:15-18

<sup>15</sup>From my youth I have suffered and been close to death; I have borne your terrors and am in despair.

<sup>16</sup>Your wrath has swept over me; your terrors have destroyed me.

<sup>17</sup>All day long they surround me like a flood; they have completely engulfed me.

<sup>18</sup>You have taken from me friend and neighbor – darkness is my closest friend.

### Psalm 139:7-12

<sup>7</sup>Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? <sup>8</sup>If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. <sup>9</sup>If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, <sup>10</sup>even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. <sup>11</sup>If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,” <sup>12</sup>even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

### John 1:1-5

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

### 1 Peter 2:9-10

<sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. <sup>10</sup>Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.



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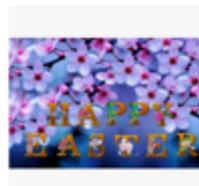
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**When the  
Darkness comes.**

This week's Message:  
*"Easter Hope when Darkness  
is your closest friend"*  
Luke 23:57



**Caravaggio**, *The Taking of Christ*, c. 1602  
oil on canvas  
133.5 cm × 169.5 cm (52.6 in × 66.7 in)  
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin

## Luke 22:52-53

<sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him,

“Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? <sup>53</sup> 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 23:44-56

<sup>44</sup>It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, <sup>45</sup>for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. <sup>46</sup>Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.”

When he had said this, he breathed his last.

## Luke 23:44-56

<sup>47</sup>The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, “Surely this was a righteous man.” <sup>48</sup> When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. <sup>49</sup> But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

## Luke 23:44-56

<sup>50</sup>Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, <sup>51</sup>who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he himself was waiting for the kingdom of God. <sup>52</sup>Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. <sup>53</sup>Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. <sup>54</sup>It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

## Luke 23:44-56

<sup>55</sup>The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. <sup>56</sup>Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.

**Luke 23:57**

*Psalm 22:1-18*

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me,  
so far from my cries of anguish?

My God, I cry out by day, but you do not  
answer, by night, but I find no rest.

Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;  
you are the one Israel praises.

In you our ancestors put their trust;  
they trusted and you delivered them.

To you they cried out and were saved in  
you they trusted and were not put to  
shame.

But I am a worm and not a man,  
scorned by everyone, despised by the people.

All who see me mock me;  
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.

"He trusts in the Lord," they say,  
"let the Lord rescue him."

Let him deliver him,  
since he delights in him."

← BULLY  
TO JESUS

Yet you brought me out of the womb;  
you made me trust in you, even at my mother's  
breast.

From birth I was cast on you;

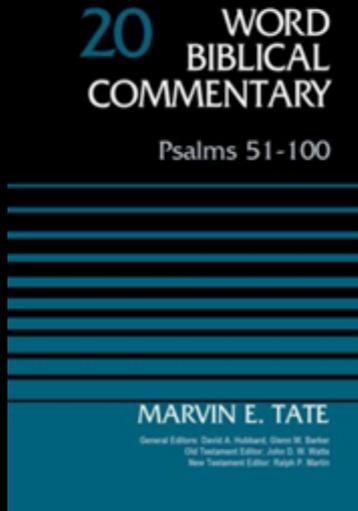
Lord, I am  
SO UN!

From my mother's womb you have been  
my God.

- Worthy  
- ABLE

Do not be far from me

Ps 88 is frequently described as a gloomy psalm: “the saddest Psalm in the whole Psalter” (Kirkpatrick, 523); “unrelieved by a single ray of comfort or hope” (Weiser, 586); “stark and lonely and pain-riddled” (Durham, 352).



~ Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, vol. 20, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 404.

## Psalm 88

*A song. A psalm of the Sons of Korah. For the director of music. According to mahalath leannoeth. A maskil of Heman the Ezrahite.*

<sup>1</sup> LORD, you are the God who saves me;  
day and night I cry out to you.

<sup>2</sup> May my prayer come before you;  
turn your ear to my cry.

**You're my only hope**

## Psalm 88

<sup>3</sup> I am overwhelmed with troubles  
and my life draws near to death.

<sup>4</sup> I am counted among those who go down to the pit;  
I am like one without strength.

<sup>5</sup> I am set apart with the dead,  
like the slain who lie in the grave,  
whom you remember no more,  
who are cut off from your care.

<sup>6</sup> You have put me in the lowest pit,  
in the darkest depths.

**I am completely separated**

## Psalm 88

<sup>7</sup>Your wrath lies heavily on me;  
you have overwhelmed me with all your waves.

<sup>8</sup>You have taken from me my closest friends  
and have made me repulsive to them.

I am confined and cannot escape;

<sup>9</sup>my eyes are dim with grief.

I call to you, LORD, every day;

I spread out my hands to you.

**I am alone**

## Psalm 88

<sup>10</sup>Do you show your wonders to the dead?

Do their spirits rise up and praise you?

<sup>11</sup>Is your love declared in the grave,  
your faithfulness in Destruction?

<sup>12</sup>Are your wonders known in the place of darkness,  
or your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion?

**Where are you, God?**

## Psalm 88

<sup>13</sup>But I cry to you for help, LORD;  
in the morning my prayer comes before you.

<sup>14</sup>Why, LORD, do you reject me  
and hide your face from me?

<sup>15</sup>From my youth I have suffered  
and been close to death;  
I have borne your terrors and am in despair.

**This has gone on for  
a long time**

## Psalm 88

<sup>16</sup>Your wrath has swept over me;  
your terrors have destroyed me.

<sup>17</sup>All day long they surround me like a flood;  
they have completely engulfed me.

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darkness is my closest friend.

Darkness is my  
closest friend

Psalm 88 makes people uncomfortable. It confronts the ways we pray and the ways we think prayer must be done. It confronts all of the memories we have of dark and lonely nights in our own lives. It confronts the relationship we have with God. It confronts each of us with its truth stripped bare of any nice platitudes. It shines a bright light on the darkest places where the human soul wallows...

The psalm also teaches a lesson about the real world, for sometimes there is no happy ending, no gap to jump in a prayer for help that gets us to praise.



The hard truth is that people suffer and even die, sometimes in horrible circumstances and crying out to a God that seems silent. For me, this prayer provides legitimacy to all the prayers of praise where the world looks perfect. It speaks to times when there is no reason, theological or otherwise, that can explain the images of violence burned into my brain. It also speaks to those who die feeling as if God is nowhere to be found, for here their words of fear and anger appear as sacred Scripture, showing that God did indeed hear their cries.

~ Beth Tanner, "Book Three of the Psalter: Psalms 73-89," in *The Book of Psalms, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, 672-673.







*That's all Folks!*

*That's all Folks!*





KEEP CALM  
&  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY  
TO ME!







## Psalm 139:7-12

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## John 1:1-5

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## 1 Peter 2:9-10

<sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. <sup>10</sup>Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

*Psalm 22:19-*

But you, Lord, do not be far from me.

You are my strength; come quickly to help me.

Deliver me from the sword,

my precious life from the power of the dogs.

Rescue me from the mouth of the lions;

save me from the horns of the wild oxen.

I will declare your name to my people;

in the assembly I will praise you.

You who fear the Lord, praise him!

All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!

Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!

For he has not despised or scorned

the suffering of the afflicted one;

he has not hidden his face from him

but has listened to his cry for help.

From you comes the theme of my praise in the

great assembly;

before those who fear you I will fulfill my  
vows.

The poor will eat and be satisfied;

those who seek the Lord will praise him —

may your hearts live forever!

All the ends of the earth

will remember and turn to the Lord,

and all the families of the nations

will bow down before him,

for dominion belongs to the Lord

and he rules over the nations.

All the rich of the earth will feast and worship;

all who go down to the dust will kneel before

him —

those who cannot keep themselves alive.

Posterity will serve him;

future generations will be told about the Lord.

They will proclaim his righteousness,

declaring to a people yet unborn:

those who cannot keep themselves alive.  
Posterity will serve him;  
future generations will be told about the Lord.  
They will proclaim his righteousness,  
declaring to a people yet unborn:

He has done it!

He has done it  
He has done it!

It is Finished!  
It is Finished!

HE HAS  
DONE IT  
IT IS FINISHED

# Easter Application

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*Are you in the light of Christ?*

# Easter Application

*Are you in the light of Christ?*

*Will you put your hope in the Risen Christ,  
even when the days feel very dark?*