



Nobody an Orphan!

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[Jesus said] I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. John 14:18-19

“It’s the Hard-Knock Life.” That’s a song from the musical Annie. Annie is a little girl who lives in an orphanage. She sings that life is hard because she has “no folks to speak of”—no mom or dad to take care of her. An orphan is a child without parents to care for them. That can feel lonely, scary, and sad. Who tucks you in at night? Who helps when you’re sick? Who gives hugs when you’re hurting? Children need someone to love them and care for them.

That’s why Jesus gave his disciples a very special promise.

On the night before Jesus died, he told his disciples he was going away. He was going to suffer, die, rise again, and later return to his Father in heaven. Imagine how the disciples must have felt hearing that. They had walked with Jesus, listened to Jesus, and leaned on Jesus. Now it sounded like he was leaving. Life without Jesus probably felt scary. Maybe a little like being orphaned.

But Jesus gave them this promise: “I will not leave you as orphans” (John 14:18). Jesus knew life in this world would still be hard. The devil is a roaring lion looking to devour us. A sin-broken world wants to bring us down. The enemy is even inside us—our sinful nature—looking for every opportunity to betray us. On our own we don’t stand a chance against any one of these enemies. But Jesus says you are not alone. You are not on your own. You are not forgotten. You are not an orphan.

Jesus may not be standing next to us where we can see him, but he is still with us. He promises to be with his people always. And he sends the Holy Spirit to help us, comfort us, and keep us close to him. The Holy Spirit works through God’s Word. He works through Baptism. He works through Holy Communion. Through these gifts, Jesus is with you. He forgives you, comforts you, and reminds you that you belong to him.

So when life feels lonely . . . when life feels scary . . . when you feel like no one understands . . . remember Jesus’ promise: “I will not leave you as orphans.”

Questions for Younger Children

- What is an orphan? Why might being an orphan feel scary or sad?
- What are some good gifts God gives children through parents? What are some ways parents care for their children?
- How do you think Jesus' disciples felt when Jesus said he was going away? Why might they have felt afraid or alone?
- What are some promises from God that help when life feels scary?
- Sometimes the guilt or shame of our own sins make us feel like God will abandon us. What does God want us to do with our guilt and shame? What promises does he make when we are feeling this way? (Hint: 1 John 1:8–2:2)
- A Christian teacher (his name was Bernard of Clairvaux) long ago said, "The Word is the kiss of God on the lips of the soul." What do you think that means? How does God's Word show his love and comfort in today's devotion?