

There Are No Orphans Of God

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I am looking at this world, and I ask myself,
What is wrong with this world?
What's wrong with these people?
What's going on with this planet?

Just think about it:

It's the twenty-first century, the year 2022. Technology is flourishing as never before in the history of the world, and despite that, we observe the most critical downfall of human relations – between human beings, families, nations, and entire countries. The world is in crisis. And the crisis did not only hit Ukraine as a news headliner country, the one where I serve God now. The crisis did not only hit Russia where I was born. Crisis is not even about the countries of territories bleeding and destroyed by war, and the ones where freedom is just a word on paper. It is not about economies of our world, the economies devoured by inflation and corruption. It is not about morals and norms that are humiliated rather than respected. And it is not about love that has become synonymous to lust, and not about freedom that has become synonymous to indulgence.

It's not even about the global crisis. It's all about the crisis in the most important place on earth – in a human heart.

And I see six reasons for this crisis.

First, it's an internal personal crisis. We, the people, do not have a rock-solid foundation of the Word of God. We stand on the shifting sands, right amidst the damp of postmodernism, where everything is relational and conditional.

There are four important aspects of this internal crisis.

Designation Problem

We do not prayerfully seek our designation in our Creator who made us, but, rather, rely on our own experience and meaning, on the things we like, the figment of our imagination, merely ghosts, or even fakes. We try to live by our temporary goals – jobs, families, education, hobbies – but not the things that have eternal meaning. We confuse temporary goals – and maybe even good ones – with our eternal designation. And when these temporary goals disappear or are ruined, a crisis grasps our souls, while our bodies are gripped by diseases. And these people come to my office and become my patients.

Confusion of Goals and Meaning

This happens when goals do not correspond to design. Because the goals and meaning of life are not in harmony, a person cannot be happy, but is always sad and feels unsatisfied with life.

Happiness Problems

A person can't understand correctly what happiness is. You see, happiness is not about our feelings and desires. Happiness is a conscious decision to follow God's will. Real happiness is a condition of a soul that is called the Heavenly Kingdom. And it definitely goes along with our designation, dreams, and goals. Never vice versa.

Fake Resources

When I ask my patients, "What gives you the power to live?" it turns out they choose a temporary resource instead of the eternal one, a virtual thing instead of a real one. They choose internet, relations with other people, their bodies, caffeine or other stimulating agents rather than relationship with the Lord, natural lessons, water, or simple rules of a healthy living. They even choose their jobs or ministries as a resource without understanding that jobs and ministries are the places where you have to invest, not take, God's resources. They get exhausted and suffer from loneliness and heavy burnout.

The second reason for the crisis is thinking one thing and doing another. People live in a very risky manner as if they are immortal, but at the same time, they rush to do everything, to make more money, to achieve more, because they will die soon.

This type of mismatch of thoughts and deeds creates disharmony and dissonance.

They act as if they are ever hungry, ever unsatisfied, and ever deprived orphans.

But they can stop rushing and racing for adrenaline, they can start enjoying eternal life right now, start building plans leading them straight into eternity, appropriate eternal values, and even win people for eternal life. They just lack the wisdom to accept simple words once uttered by Jesus Himself, "Most assuredly I say to you, he who hears My word and who believes in Him who sent Me, has everlasting life..." (John 5:24).

The third reason for the crisis is the illusion of loneliness. On a regular basis, we live and think as if we are orphans, thinking we are alone, we are lost, and deprived, and no one wants us. We are like Elijah the prophet in the wilderness – "I alone am left, and they seek to take my life" (1 Kings 19:10). And this was happening exactly at the time when God Himself was next to him, as well as thousands of those whom he just did not know. As someone noted once, "If I am alone with God, it makes a majority." We are not orphans. We are not lost. Jesus said, "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:18).

Yes, billions of families live without love. They have experienced a betrayed trust and they have never had an experience of justified confidence. But they really need it. It's easier for many to love their pets, plants, and their hobbies because they will never betray you. This is how people shift their natural attachment. However, it does not help them handle their crisis. And the Lord has a different plan.

The fourth reason for the crisis is fear. Fear is the best-seller with an ideal marketing potential. Orphans have trouble trusting others because orphans went through an experience of betrayal early in their childhood. The pain of betrayal imposes fear. Even though they desperately want to trust someone – they have a need to trust – they just can't. A saying goes, "It is not scary to trust; it is scary not to trust."

Any orphan can tell you about this. Orphans who received a great gift from the Lord – a mentor or a loving family, or wonderful friends – can tell you lots about the issue of trust. In February 2022, in Ukraine, more than 130 orphans from local orphanages located in the war zone were evacuated to a Christian Youth Camp called “Your Camp” in Western Ukraine. These kids spent their childhood in their ‘family war’, and now they had to suffer as a result of a real war. Some of their mentors and educators were killed during the process of evacuation. The kids were very good but terribly scared. They had pain and a mute question in their eyes. When I saw them first – and it happened as soon as they arrived there – I could see, as an experienced psychiatrist, that the kids had a number of psychiatric symptoms from the international code of clinical diseases besides their tormented and worn-out souls. I spent time praying for patience and heavenly wisdom for the camp team. These kids now live in the same camp with Christian young men and women who became their mentors for this life and guides for the life everlasting. The children learn to love, forgive, and trust. Here and there, after only seven months of their stay, you can meet kids praying to God through their own desire. The government wants to send them to other orphanages. What do you think? The kids don’t want to leave the camp. They feel comfortable in the family with a heavenly atmosphere. They have somehow perceived that they are not orphans anymore. They just don’t want to return to the situation of total mistrust. They live in love.

The fifth reason for the crisis is an illusion of predictability.

A man thinks he can control all processes, life itself, and his personal schedule. So, we plan, we predict, and we are confident. Everything is in our hands, everything depends on us, and everything is under control. But that’s not true. There is nothing further from the truth. “It is not as the result of a mechanism, which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God, we live and move and have our being. Every breath, every throb of the heart, is continual evidence of the power of an ever-present God” (Ellen G. White, 8T, 260.2). Understanding that my life is in His hands, my past, my present, and my future are but a reason for humility, trust, gratitude, and adoration. A self-sufficient and proud orphan must accept and understand that he is fully dependent on the Loving and All-Wise Creator.

The sixth reason for the crisis is illusions and distorted concepts of God. The world is full of humans who are sick of their wild fear of God; humans negating God, and agnostics who neither acknowledge nor reject Him. Unfortunately, this only means that billions of people just can’t avail themselves of this Great Resource, the Spring, to fill their spiritual emptiness. And so, dear Brethren and Sisters, it is our job to help these spiritual orphans and share with them our joy of being adopted according to the Apostle Paul, “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father’. The Spirit Himself bears witness without spirit that we are children of God” (Romans 8:15-16).

How can we, Christians, inspire this world in crisis? Well, how can we inspire ourselves, to begin with? What shall we do to pacify our mistrusting, offended, depraved, proud, and needy human heart that perceives itself as an orphan? And how can we help other self-sufficient spiritual orphans who are far away from God, thinking that they are “rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing”?

Here are three simple, proven, and effective counsels.

The first one is to learn to calm down, calm others down, and stay calm. How? The five steps to rest can be found in the words of Jesus, “Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

Step 1 – come to Him. This is mandatory. It is not enough, but without this step, you can’t move at all.

Step 2 – take His yoke of lowliness. It means you will have to reject your un-lowliness, mistrust, etc., and especially your anxiety. You will have to reject it and give it to Him. The most important thing here is to give Him the right of anxiety and give Him the right to the last word. He knows better. Therefore, let your “Thy will be done” sound conscious day by day. Abba Father knows better.

Step 3 – learn His humility on an everyday basis. Learning humility does not mean being humiliated every day. Humility is not humiliation. Humility is the satisfaction of trust. Yes, you continue to do your planned activities, but you also allow your wise Master to correct and fine-tune your plans, your ministry, your life, character, family, and children – correct them according to His will. You let Him have a say, and the last say. He will bear this responsibility with pleasure. So, trust Him every day. And enjoy learning from your Father every day.

Step 4 – check if the “yoke is easy and the burden is light”. If they are not, it means you took too heavy a burden upon your shoulders, you took something He did not ask you to take; or you took the burden that belongs to somebody else. And then, you have to give this burden to Him again. It’s easier to share this burden between you two. Remember, we are never alone. Never, ever alone!

Step 5 – ask Him to live in your brain, ask Him to cleanse it and manage it. Ask Him every day. The greatest blessing is to walk in Him knowing that He is in you.

Well, if you have read up to this point, here’s a bonus for you. Two personal counsels from a psychiatrist to prevent feelings of orphanhood.

1. Hug people (both those you know and those you don’t know) on a daily basis for at least 15 seconds. This will provide you with a precious share of oxytocin, a hormone of calmness and peace. This is what little children do, so you “be like little children”.
2. Love your Lord with an unconditional love. He loves you unconditionally. For instance, when you are sad, blue, or bitter, or even lonely, just tell Him, “Lord, I still love You!” Say exactly this – and you will see that the result will come soon.

My second big proven counsel is to keep a Gratitude Diary, a personal prayer diary. It is highly recommended to have it in a written form. Thank God for the things that you had and that you have now. But that’s not enough. Thank God for a specific future – thankfully anticipate things that are yet to come. To be more correct, we want to thank Jesus for the things that already exist, but we just do not see them.

This means to see the unseen things. It is exactly what Paul calls “faith” –confidence in the things yet unseen. This brings us to living as the heroes of faith lived – living and seeing the unseen and the Unseen. This is like seeing beyond the horizon and seeing something that the eye could not see, the ear could not hear, and the heart could not imagine.

It means seeing that there is something that is more than we ask for and think about.

It is seeing the great and unapproachable, something you do not know.

It means understanding the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge.

It means looking into eternity and seeing it.

It means focusing on the Heavenly Kingdom and keeping our lifetime context in the eternal life.

It is so good to anticipate this.

I have a friend. He is a wonderful man and a wonderful Christian. He lives in Germany. He is a doctor like me. He lives in a big spacious house overlooking a lake and mountains. There is a lot of space in his house. My friend and his wife have even bigger hearts and there is even more space in their hearts. He and his wife let me know their secret and dream. They can anticipate, very soon, adopting a child from Ukraine as soon as the war is over. And, you know, exactly in these minutes a child from an orphanage in Ukraine may be praying for his or her future parents. But the parents are already there! They are full of expectations and dream of meeting the child that is already there, too. The war is the only obstacle to their happiness.

My friends! The Lord is waiting for us eagerly! As soon as we are ready, He enters our lives. He just waits for our decision and invitation. And He whispers straight to our hearts, “Wait for Me! Even if there’s war. I will come soon. I am just one prayer away from you, my son. Just call out to Me, my daughter. Don’t be afraid. Don’t be in a hurry. I have a big spacious house and all I have is yours. The entire Universe, for all eternity. I have something to tell you and we will hug each other very often!”

And finally, the third counsel.

My friends! Continue to live with God consciously, continue to walk in awe before the Lord and abide in Him with pleasure. In His turn, He will abide in you – in the DNA of your neutrons, in your memory which includes His Words – the Holy Scriptures – your experiences with Him, your visits with Him out in nature, your tears.

Commit to your memory, remind yourself of the simple truth – there are no orphans of God.

We are not lost or thrown away. We are not alone. The Holy Spirit, our Divine Comforter, is always with us. Humanity is not forgotten. Even if we leave Him, by His mercies we still have a spirit of life in us – our hearts continue to beat, our lungs breathe, and we still have a chance to come back. We just have to learn to call upon Him, build our relations with Him, and have conversations with Him. “Call to Me, and I will answer you”, “I will never leave you nor forsake you”, “I am with you always, even to the end of the age” forever and ever!

Never, ever believe anyone who may tell you that you are an orphan. Never believe anyone who says you are alone. And even though the great controversy is still on-going, He is near you forever.

He is just a prayer away. Talk to Him right now. You know what to talk about.