

Jesus came triumphant into Jerusalem, but he knew what faced him.

The suffering that would accompany would be searing. And the death would be terrible. And worst of all would be the pain of abandonment.

Jesus would die abandoned by everyone. His friends and his disciples would run away, and leave him to die alone. From among his very best friends, one would turn him into the authorities, and another would deny knowing him. Jesus's experience of abandonment even seemed to extend to his father: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

But in his dying a lonely death on the cross, Jesus brought salvation to all those who are abandoned by others:

The poor and homeless; the unemployed and underemployed;  
lonely, aging folks; those suffering from communicable diseases;  
political prisoners; prisoners on death row; prostitutes; the hungry;  
those experiencing humanitarian violence and genocide...

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The ultimate injustice is for a person or a group to be treated, actively, or abandoned, passively, as if they were non-members of the human race. And to treat people this way is effectively to say that they simply do not count as human beings.

St. Paul tells us, "Your attitude must be Christ's." We must empty ourselves, and take the form of slaves on behalf of those who are abandoned by the world.

Jesus died and rose that they might be liberated from their abandonment.