**I Will Not Forget You**

**The Word**

Read together Isaiah 49:8-18

**The Big Idea**

In a season when Israel was feeling forgotten by God, God reminds them that he has a mother’s heart of tender affection and compassion for them, and he could never forget them. As God’s people, we need to be reminded of his tender compassion for us, and we need to reflect his heart of compassion for the forgotten people of our world.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. Share a time in your life when you were feeling forgotten, lonely, or troubled and when someone remembered you and came alongside you in a way that was meaningful and memorable to you.

2. On Sunday, we discussed how, even if our stated theology of God’s love and compassion is accurate, our hearts can lose touch with that reality for various reasons. Take stock of how you’ve been living your life of late. Have you been living at home in God’s tender love and affection for you, or have you been living out of some other reality (fear, anxiety, his disappointment of you, his distance from you, etc.)? How can your home group pray for you in that regard?

3. As you consider God’s call on us to embody his love and care for the forgotten or overlooked people around us, is there a specific person or circumstance you’re feeling called to pursue?

**Neighboring Question of the Week**

Consider any specific neighbors on your street or in your complex who might be feeling forgotten or overlooked. How might you engage them this month?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. The Context of Isaiah

 A. Isaiah was a prophet of Israel writing in the 8th century BC

B. There is a consistent theme of warning: Israel is disobeying God and will reap the consequences of that disobedience

C. There is a consistent theme of promise: even though he will discipline, he will never forsake his people and will restore them in the land.

II. The Passage

A. Zion portrayed as a mother

1. Her complaint: “God has forgotten us!” (v. 14)

 a. Her children have vanished and she is bereaved

b. The reality is Israel’s suffering is a result of their own disobedience, but their felt experience is of God having forsaken them

2. We can all relate to the painful feeling of being forgotten from time to time.

3. The Psalms regularly model this feeling of abandonment by God

B. God portrayed as a mothers

1. He is like a loving mother with her young children (v. 15)

a. “compassion” (v. 15) refers to a deep inward feeling of tender concern often for someone in a more helpless state

b. Mothers have a unique role in offering tender, unconditional love for their children

 c. Mothers never forget their children

1) Fathers tend to more easily forget and tend to love more based on performance

2) When the world forgets us, when we are failing and losing, mom is usually there to remember us and love us just as we are

d. God is using this wonderful image of tender affection at a time when Israel was disobeying and running from him. He would never abandon his children.

2. God had engraved his people on the palm of his hands (v. 16)

a. This is a way of saying to Israel: “you are always with me, always on my mind. You can try to push me away, but I will always hold you close to my heart.”

b. In some ways we are literally engraved on the palm of Jesus’ hands through his crucifixion scars.

3. God exhibits this kind of motherly love for the forgotten people throughout the Bible

III. Conclusion

A. Where are you feeling forgotten by God?

1. Even if our stated theology is accurate about God’s love and affection for us, oftentimes our hearts lose sight of that reality

2. We start living out of fear and anxiety rather than from his love

B. How are you being called to reflect God’s heart for the forgotten people around you? Consider Matthew 25:34-36.