

## Truths from Two Thieves – March 24, 2021

### Jesus is crucified at 9 a.m. – Mark 15:25

Matt. 27:44 & Mark 15:32 - “those crucified with Him also heaped insults on Him.”

**Only Luke records a specific conversation Jesus has with them. Luke 23:33-46.**

### 7 Truths we can Learn:

1. Was it a thief or not? Does it matter? No degree of sin.
  - a. **James 2:10** - “For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.”
  - b. “Mortal vs. Venial Sins” - divides Protestants & Roman Catholics; venial are “minor sins” & mortal sin is rejection of God
  - c. But the Bible says – “the wages of sin is death.” Same penalty. Stop comparing & know we’ve all committed felonies.
2. At some point we all must make a choice about Jesus. Don’t wait/delay.
  - a. We all have a turning point – accept or reject.
  - b. There’s a moment when Jesus touches us... where He is most real. It’s in the midst of agony, thief is open to Jesus. Walls down. No defenses.
  - c. While the disciples abandoned Jesus, this thief aligned with Him.
  - d. Both thieves initially mocked Jesus, but there was a turning point for one – it’s when Jesus said, “**Father forgive them...**” Jesus asks God to forgive those who were putting Him to death... He could look at the people responsible for His suffering and still pray for their forgiveness.
3. Forgiveness changes things. Forgiveness were the words this man needed.
  - a. Jesus shows that forgiveness is possible, even before we have asked.
  - b. Changes in hearts can happen. Don’t give up... and notice this order – forgiveness before asked. That’s powerful.
4. One thief doesn’t ask to come down from the cross. He just wants to know that when his suffering is over, it will be worth it. That Jesus remembers him.
  - a. That’s a difference in people – some want all pain & difficulty wiped away; others just want reassurance that there’s a reason...
  - b. As for the end of life, we want reassurance that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us and He’ll bring us to be with Him. Jesus gives it.

5. This conversation shows what it takes for eternal life.
  - a. Thief demonstrates repentant heart & belief in Jesus – “We are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”
  - b. Repentance & Forgiveness are all that is required for eternal life.
    - Baptism is an outward, public sign of a changed heart. But not being baptized doesn’t keep you from heaven.
    - **1 John 1:9** – “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
  - c. Thief’s conversion illustrates last week’s topic – **by grace we are saved and not works**. This man was dying; could do nothing to earn heaven.
    - God loves humble hearts (sinners).
    - First person saved by the cross isn’t a priest, king, or leader. It’s a thief, who was repentant. Standing in life doesn’t matter, it’s a humble, repentant heart.
6. Jesus **is our mediator** – He mediated between God & those crucifying Him.
  - a. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus. - 1 Timothy 2:5
  - b. We can have confidence when we stand before God.
7. Salvation is instantaneous, and Heaven is immediate – one moment he is drinking vinegar & gall, the next he is drinking from the fountain of life.
  1. We are one minute on earth, the next, with Jesus.
  2. It’s never too late to accept Jesus. No matter how old. No matter our past.

One thief rejects Jesus, and one embraces Him. Which are you?

Song: