

## History's Most Popular Thief

... is the one who died on a cross beside Jesus. He is one of the best-known characters in the Bible, although he is mentioned in only three of its 1,189 chapters.

Picture the scene. About noon on Passover Friday, three crosses stood in silhouette along Golgotha's skyline. An agitated, gloating mob milled about, yelling insults at the lonely figure on the center cross. They looked up at His blood-stained torso, higher still to the blood-covered thorns on His brow, and then over to the blood dropping from the nails in His hands and feet.

Jesus had company in His agony. A thief hanged at His right hand; another at His left. These malefactors joined in the mockery, and "cast the same in his teeth" (Matthew 27:44). As the day waned, though, one thief changed his tune. Luke records:

One of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise (Luke 23:39-43).

That robber had a change of heart, rebuked his companion, and threw himself on Jesus' mercy. Jesus promised he would be in paradise that same day.

This is one of the most thrilling instances of forgiveness in Scripture. What a final day that man had! He started out condemned in the morning, received grace by noon, and was in glory by nightfall. Matthew Henry says of him:

This malefactor, when just ready to fall into the hands of Satan, was snatched as a brand out of the burning, and made a monument of divine mercy and grace, and Satan was left to roar as a lion disappointed of his prey.

These facts are undisputed. Some, though, appeal to this example as an argument in favor of pardon without baptism. Can people living today be saved like the thief on the cross?

Can people living today be saved like the thief on the cross?"

Consider three facts in answering this question.

**Fact #1:** The thief lived under a different law than we live under today.

**Fact #2:** While on earth, Jesus had the power to personally forgive sins.

**Facts #3:** The thief died before Jesus said, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

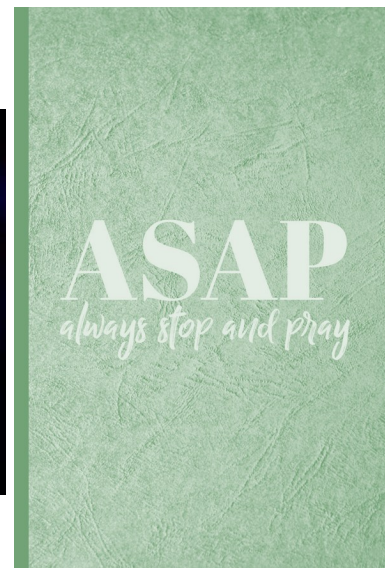
(details continuing next week)

## Prayers and Concerns

- ◆ Prayers for Larry and Dorlene as they struggle with health problems.
- ◆ Junior Sisney, Mark's step dad, fell this week and broke every bone in his face. He is in a Springfield hospital.
- ◆ Tinker is limping because of tendonitis in his ankle.
- ◆ Sympathy is extended to family and friends of Jeff Lamar. His service was yesterday.
- ◆ Many are suffering from tornadoes and flooding.
- ◆ Remember those with health issues—Barbara White, Casey Hambelton, Dorlene and Larry Butler, Aleta Collins, Ruth Strain, Steve and Diane Siebels, Bob Robbins.
- ◆ All those battling cancer—Tiffany Pleasant, Amy Myers, Don Luna, Harold Reynolds, Jim Kirkland, Donna Shipley, Elaine Hunter (Larry's sister), Dawn (Chris Lemburg's sister), Lionel Daugherty, Jana Crisp, Richard Blackburn, Nikki Smith, Jenny James, Bill McFarland, Debbie Eslinger, Sharon Fox (Dora).
- ◆ Those in GHCC: Virginia Hambelton, Bonnie Ebrite, Delphia Holmes. Bonnie Luna at Ava. Clifford Lansdown at Hiram Shaddox; Jack Moyers, Sycamore Springs. Wilbern Uchtman, Brook Haven, West Plains.

## Blessings

- ◆ Kaiya Lane, wife of Alex, was baptized Wednesday night.



Birthdays		Anniversaries	
4-4	Nichole Lane	4-7	Jim and Pat Kirkland
4-6	Barbara James	Birthdays	
4-11	Vicki Smith	4-26	Mark Lane
4-14	Sailor Anderson	4-28	Rebecca Hambelton
4-18	Lana Cockrum	4-27	Barbara Stevens
4-19	Logan Hillhouse	4-29	Harold Reynolds

Melinda's menu is a surprise, but there will be cinnamon rolls for dessert for our fellowship supper Wednesday night. Adult Bible class will be starting a study of Galatians.

Casey Hambelton is having surgery on her left foot Monday and surgery on her right foot 3-4 weeks later.

Date	Event	Details
Saturday, April 19, 11:30 a.m.	Easter Egg Hunt—need candy donated	See Barbara Stevens if you can help. They need candy donated for the plastic eggs.
Saturday, April 26 10 a.m.	Ladies' Prayer Brunch	We Host! Karin Reynolds will be the speaker. See Barbara Luna if you can help.
April 27-30	Spring Gospel Meeting—Thayer	Ben Wright from Jasper, Arkansas
Saturday, June 21 9 a.m.—2 p.m.	VBS—Magnified!	Discovering the bigness of God in the smallest of things.

### April Worship Assignments

#### Welcome & Shepherd's Prayer

4-6 John Abraham  
4-13 Mark Lane  
4-20 David Stevens  
4-27 Don Luna

#### Communion & Closing Prayer

Dana Crisp  
R. J. Moyers  
D. E. Pleasant  
John Abraham

**Song Leader: Titus Smith**  
**Greeters: Don and Barbara Luna**

## The Family News

April 6, 2025

### Gainesville Church of Christ

PO Box 7, 23550 US Hwy. 160, Gainesville, MO 65655

[www.gainesvillechurchofchrist.org](http://www.gainesvillechurchofchrist.org)

### A Place to Call Home

*We welcome you and are so glad you could worship with us today.*

### Schedule of Services

#### Sunday

9:30 a.m. Bible Classes for All Ages

10:30 a.m. Worship Service: ***The Prayer of the Victor***

#### Wednesday

6 p.m. Fellowship Supper

7 p.m. Bible Classes for All Ages Downstairs

#### Sunday Worship Outline

Welcome and Shepherd's Prayer

Kids Singing up front

#794, *Unto Thee, O Lord*; #791, *On Bended Knee*

#578, *We Will Glorify*; #325, *Boundless Love*; Communion Service

#704, *Bind Us Together*

Sermon and Invitation

#907, *Hark, the Gentle Voice*

#622; *Ring out the Message*; Closing Prayer

Offering baskets are located at the back.

*We are a community of redeemed sinners who are following Jesus Christ, proclaiming the gospel of grace, loving our Lord and one another.*

#### **Elders**

Mark Lane 417-679-4835  
Don Luna 417-712-1945  
David Stevens 417-679-4700  
John Abraham 870-421-5632

#### **Deacons**

Larry Butler 817-504-1604  
Dana Crisp 417-331-5090  
James Langston 870-315-4355

#### **Preacher**

Halbert Smith 417-257-3880

**Ministers:** Every Member—Each One of Us