

- Order of Service -

Call to Worship

Welcoming Prayer

- **John 19:31-37**
- 166, *The power of the Cross*
 - **Luke 24:1-11**
- 184, *Christ the Lord is risen today*
 - **Matthew 27:62-28:6**
- 182, *Christ Arose*
 - **John 20:19-29**
- 192, *Because He lives*
- Special music: *Where O grave, is your victory?*
 - **Revelation 5**
- Special music: *Is he worthy?*

Announcements and Prayer requests

Greeting

Message in the Word -

Which kind of thief would you be?

Three crosses, three men, one hill

Luke 23:33-43

Doxology - please stand

Sending prayer

You may notice we don't pass an offering plate

We invite you to participate in the ministry, and the offering box in the foyer is for your gifts and offerings for the Lord's work.

- 2 Corinthians 9:7-8, Galatians 6:6 -

Grace Bible Fellowship

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GRACE
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love. truth. grace.

“We are identified with Jesus Christ in his crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and heavenly seating”



Teaching -
Eric Peterman
Which kind of thief would you be?
Three crosses, three men, one hill
Luke 23:33-43
- April 17th, 2022 -

Which kind of thief would you be?

Three crosses, three men, one hill

Luke 23:33-43

*Our Spirit-inspired scripture this Easter morning is well known and it's basic teaching comes readily to the lips of most Christians, it is so stark and simple. It's an incident recorded only by Luke the historian, among the 4 gospel accounts, and reflects Luke's heart for the spiritually needy who find resolution and salvation from Jesus. One commentator said that this conversation is the core of Luke's crucifixion narrative. **Here Jesus carries out the very last act of His public ministry.** So with that in mind, let's sit at the foot of the cross and let the scene unfold before us.*

The attitudes of the two criminals crucified with Jesus stand in for the two attitudes of every person that comes in contact with the good news of the gospel. One's attitude leads either to condemnation or salvation. It also serves as another testimony to Jesus' total innocence, presenting Him as the pure Lamb of God, our substitute sacrifice even as He was dying.

V39, The first criminal/thief, (Matt. 27:38; Mark 15:27) joined in mockery with others (and perversely he joined the side of those that crucified him too. Matthew and Mark point out that initially both men joined in, but something changed in one of them as the scene unfolds.) His mockery implied Jesus' impotence and inability to save Himself and His fellow sufferers. He saw Jesus as powerless, he was venomously sarcastic, blasphemous and slanderous (Gr. *eblasphemei*). Obviously this man did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah. Luke here warns his readers not to do the same thing. **Refusing to take Jesus' claims seriously constitutes blasphemy of Him and of the Father and of the Spirit!**

V40, When the two thieves were hanged beside the Lord, the one was no better than the other. ... It is only the grace of God in the cross of Christ that can instantly transform a reviling sinner into an attitude of saving faith and confession.

The repentant thief, by the power of God's redeeming grace, began to see:

- (1) the **justice** of his own punishment (v41);
- (2) the **sinless character** of Christ (v41);
- (3) The **full humanity** of Christ dying next to him. (v41)
- (4) the **Deity of Christ** (v42);
- (5) a **living/resurrected Christ** beyond the grave (v42); and
- (6) the **coming millennial kingdom** beyond the cross at some future point, with **Jesus ruling as its coming, Davidic King** (v42).

V43, The response of Jesus the Messiah!

The repentant thief **received much more** from Jesus than he asked or expected, as is always true in salvation! Jesus prefaced His solemn promise (truly, Gr, *amen*) with a guarantee of its validity. The thief would not have to wait for the earthly kingdom to be with Jesus. He would be with Him instantly in paradise, the place of righteous departed spirits (also called Abraham's bosom in Luke 16:19 etc), *that very day* when they both died (Jesus acting as prophet here, since most crucified lasted for a few days). **The mockers had challenged Jesus to save them (v. 39), and now Jesus was doing just that for this thief.**

The promise proves the continuance of spirit and soul consciousness after death. If the dead are unconscious, the assurance to the robber that he will be with Christ after death would be empty of consolation.

So, which kind of thief will you be? *Your forever depends on your answer.* We all owe a debt that is too large to repay.

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