

Church of Christ

3361 West State Street, Fremont, OH 43420

Worship Services

Sunday Bible Study	10:00 am
Sunday Worship	10:45 am
Sunday Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 pm

Classes for all ages

Preachers: Ted Bowen and Sean Rizor

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

1. Learn the truth (Hear) (John 8:32; 17:17; Rom 10:14-18)
2. Believe in Christ (John 8:24; 20:31; Heb 11:6)
3. Repent of all sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; Rom 2:4; 2 Cor 7:9,10)
4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom 10:10; Acts 17:30; Matt 16:16)
5. Be baptized into Christ for remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)
6. Live faithfully (Revelation 2:10)

7 THINGS TO REMEMBER DURING THE LORD'S SUPPER!

- 1 LORD. "There is one Lord." (Ephesians 4:5)
- 2 THIEVES. "There were also 2 others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death."
(Luke 23:32)
- 3 CROSSES. (Luke 23:39-43; Ephesians 1:7)
- 4 PARTS of HIS GARMENTS. "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier, a part, and also the tunic." (John 19:23)
- 5 WOUNDS. His head was crowned with thorns. His back was scourged.
His side was cut open. His hands were pierced. His feet were pierced. (John 19-20)
- 6 HOURS of AGONY. Christ was crucified at the 3rd hour and died at the 9th hour.
(Mark 15:25-37)
- 7 SAYINGS of The CROSS. (Matthew 27:46; Luke 23:34, 43-46; John 19:26-30)

Jesus Crucified Between Two Thieves

By Hoyt H. Houchen

And when they came unto the place which is called the Skull, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left" (Lk. 23:33).

Picture this event which took place almost two thousand years ago. Many scenes of the crucifixion have been portrayed by artists. We can imagine ourselves just outside the gate of old Jerusalem. On the hill of "Calvary" (Latin), also known as The Skull, were three crosses. Jesus was hanging on the middle cross and on each side of him was a cross upon which a malefactor was hanging. While we usually focus our attention upon the middle cross, there are valuable lessons to be learned from all three. On the center cross we behold "the Lamb of God," but on the other two were sinners who were being executed for the crimes which they had committed. As we view these three crosses we see three different characters; though all were dying by crucifixion as the means of Roman execution, the circumstances surrounding their deaths were different.

April 7, 2019

Order of Worship

AM

Song Leader : Melvin Monroe

Lord's Supper : Chris Frantz

Speaker : Sean Rizor

PM

Song Leader : Chris Frantz

Speaker : Ted Bowen

Wednesday

Song Leader : Greg Monroe

Invitation : Melvin Monroe

Woman's Bible Study

April 9th @ 5:30 pm

Overview of the Bible - 3 John

Prayer List

Kaitlin Baker

Russell Pannell

Gen Stanley

Nora Wiseman

Charlotte Williams

Mary Feasel

Nick Hall

Zephan Monroe

Isaac Advey

Jean Adkins

Sean Rizor

Jean Hatfield

The Cross of Rejection

On one side of Jesus our Lord was a victim who was scoffing at him. "And one of the malefactors railed on him saying, Art not thou the Christ? Save thyself and us" (Lk. 23:39). Jesus had only done good throughout his sojourn upon this earth (Acts 10:38). He had done nothing to deserve the venom that was being spewed from the mouth of this hostile malefactor. The sarcasm in the words of this dying impenitent man depicts the enmity of many toward Jesus today. It reflects the impudence of infidelity. This ingrate did not plead for mercy, but rather he chose to blaspheme the precious Son of God in his dying breath. For one to die in this condition is a tragedy indescribable of human lips. It is difficult to imagine a creature of God Almighty denying deity at any time, but to express his rejection in the moments of death is incredible. It is on this cross that many others have perished and are perishing today.

The Cross of Repentance

On the other side of Jesus was another dying thief. In writhing pain he looks to the center cross, but with an entirely different attitude than that of his fellow malefactor. He did not scoff at Jesus, but rather he turned to him in penitence. He had a contrite spirit and a humble heart. This law violator rebuked the other criminal when he said, "Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" (Lk. 23:40) Both men may have at first joined in with the rulers and the people in hurling reproaches at Jesus, but we see a different man now. He is penitent as he looks to Jesus. He gave his crime partner a scathing rebuke for not fearing God.

A very valuable lesson is learned from this dying man which is very needful today in a society in which criminals seek to blame others for their misdeeds. He realized that he and the other wrong doer deserved to die. We are sickened today by a society which seeks to exonerate every criminal on the basis of emotional frustrations, inhibitions, being misunderstood, and mental disturbances. As one faithful gospel preacher expressed it so well: "It is hard to find an old fashioned sinner anymore!" Sin is labeled by about everything but what it is - sin. The Bible does not "white wash" or cover up sin. It is the violation of God's law (1 Jn. 3:4). It cannot be minimized by such labels as "a mistake," "a slip," and other identities which contribute to wiping out any consciousness of it. This thief did not try to side-step or excuse his crime. He said: "for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss" (Lk. 23:41). He came to the defense of Jesus, declaring his innocence before those present in those crucial moments. He refused to blame anyone but himself for his punishment. He acknowledged that he and the other man were getting what they deserved, but the one on the middle cross did nothing to deserve such treatment. It is significant that men recognize sin for what it is and acknowledge it. This is a prerequisite in coming to Christ. When man realizes and acknowledges that he is a sinner, he has taken the first step to recovery.

One cannot refrain from being emotionally moved by this dying robber. Actually, he brings tears to the eyes of this writer upon hearing the words. After confessing that he was dying for his unlawful deeds, he then said to Jesus: "Remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom" (Lk. 23:42). He had some knowledge, at least, of Christ's kingdom. Now we hear him as he speaks to Christ, "Remember me." He did not ask to be saved, but only to be remembered. "When you come into your kingdom, just have a thought for me; remember that thief who was crucified on one side of you." These words may well have expressed the feeling of this penitent man. But Jesus did more than this for him. He said to him: "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Lk. 23:43). Paradise is a state of bliss where the righteous rest after death. It is separate from torments where the wicked are by a great gulf (Lk. 16:23,26). There is nothing to be gained by arguing that the thief was not saved.

Needless to say, the thief on the cross is frequently referred to as an example of one who was saved without baptism. It is amazing what people will do in their efforts to deny the necessity of baptism in order to be saved. Whether or not the thief had been baptized, we do not know. But the issue is not whether or not he was baptized, nor whether or not he was saved. In the first place, it is a mystery why people always refer to the thief on the cross and not other similar examples. They exclaim: "What about the thief on the cross? He was saved and he was not baptized." There are other instances in the ministry of Christ, of people whose sins Jesus forgave and without their being baptized. There is the case of the man who was sick of the palsy. Jesus spoke to him, "Son, thy sins are forgiven" (Mk. 2:5). Also, Jesus told the woman in Luke 7:48, "Thy sins are forgiven."

Much preaching has been done on the thief on the cross, but let us for a moment observe this summary. We cannot be saved today like the thief on the cross was saved. This is the issue. (1) He was not saved in the name of Christ. It was not until after the death of Christ that repentance and remission of sins in his name were preached (Lk. 24:46,47). This is one reason that those men at

Ephesus who had been baptized into John's baptism were "baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5). Apollos had continued to preach John's baptism after baptism in the name of Christ because it had not yet been established. It came into existence on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) after Christ's death. The new birth puts us into the kingdom (Jn. 3:5). (3) He did not obey the gospel of Christ. For the gospel was in preparation, but its facts were not yet proclaimed until after Jesus died (1 Cor. 15:1-4). The gospel is to be believed and obeyed (Mk. 16:16). (4) He was not saved under the covenant of Christ other side of Jesus was a penitent man. Here was a man (Heb. 8:7). His covenant became operative after his death (Heb. 9:16,17). Jesus exerted his power as he willed upon earth, but now we must submit to the conditions of salvation as prescribed in the New Testament (Rom 10:17; Heb. 11:6; Acts 17:30,31; Acts 8:37; Rom. 6:3,4; Gal. 3:27; etc.).

The Middle Cross

Here we see the cross of redemption. It was the cross of suffering upon which the redeemer of the world was dying. He was dying for the sins of the world, and while he had never committed a sin, he suffered the penalty for sin in all of its aspects - he paid the full price! "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin" ("or, as an offering for sin," footnote in ASV; Rom. 8:4). Sin separates (Isa. 59:1,2) and Jesus even paid this penalty when with a dry throat and parched lips he broke the silence of the darkest hour and cried out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46) He was our lamb and perfect sacrifice. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:4,5). Thus we behold the vicarious suffering and death of our Lord. It is one thing for one to die for those he loves, but it is another matter for one to die for his enemies. This Jesus did. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:7,8) The middle cross was the cross of suffering but it represents redemption - it is the cross of hope. The Jewish leaders said in derision: "He saved others; himself he cannot save . . . let him now come down from the cross" (Matt. 27:41, 42). We can be thankful to God that he did not come down from the cross, else we would be groping about in darkness, hopeless and helpless sinners. The death of our Lord upon that cross was God's plan from eternity. ". . . the Lamb slain from the foundations of the world" (Rev. 18:8).

"Upon the cross of Jesus mine can see
The very dying form of One who suffered there for me;
And from my smitten heart with tears two wonders I confess,
The wonders of His glorious love and my unworthiness."

Conclusion

In this study we see a man on one side of Jesus who was rebellious and derogatory. Hence was a man dying in sin. On the other side of Jesus was a penitent man. Here was a man dying to sin. As we look to the middle cross we see our Redeemer who was dying for sin.

It has been well stated that the first malefactor was Jesus only as a man, while the other saw him as Lord. The first saw him as a mock king, but the second saw him as "King of Kings." The first saw Jesus as a sinner, but the other saw him as a Savior.

The two men, one on each side of Jesus, represent the reactions of the world to our Savior's life and teaching. Truth divides. Jesus said, "I came not to bring peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). When Paul concluded his eloquent address on Mars Hill in the city of Athens, the response was divided. "Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, We will hear thee concerning this yet again . . . But certain men clave unto him and believed" (Acts 17:32, 34). The testimony of Jesus today produces acceptance on one side and rejection on the other.

While we focus our eyes upon the middle cross and the significance of what it means to us, may we not forget the lessons which are also to be learned from the other two. There were three crosses on Calvary.

Have Ye Not Read?

Hoyt H. Houchen Aurora, Colorado

Question: In Matthew 27:36 we read: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Did God actually forsake Jesus while he was dying on the cross?

Reply: This statement of Jesus is one of the seven recorded sayings of Jesus on the cross. Jesus said that God had forsaken him and we see no reason for believing otherwise. This utterance of Jesus is taken from Psalm 22:1, and while these words were partly verified in David, they were more fully applied to Christ. Christ applied the word to himself.

Did God actually forsake Jesus while he was on the cross? Some say that Jesus learned the 22nd Psalm while a child and now he was delirious and merely babbled these words. But we deny this; we have every reason to believe that Jesus was lucid every minute. And, if these words of Jesus were spoken in a state of delirium, why could not his other sayings also be attributed to this state? Who would determine when he was rational and when he was not? Some say Jesus was in such pain that these words were forced from his lips. This, however, is contrary to his attitude toward his own suffering and death. Jesus voluntarily laid down his life and gladly endured all the pain for us. He was a perfect example, even while dying (1 Pet. 2:21-24). Others say that Jesus just "felt" that God had forsaken him. No, Jesus knew what it was all about. There is no evidence that Jesus was at anytime self-deceived while he was upon the earth, and there is certainly no evidence that he was in this specific instance on the cross. Then there are some who offer the objection that if God actually forsook Jesus, why did not God turn away the whole six hours that he was on the cross instead of the last three? We do not know how long God forsook his Son. "Hast forsaken" (Gr. egkatelipes) is second aorist, therefore it is past tense. But supposing that God forsook his Son for the last three hours, at least one commentator has suggested that Jesus suffered at the hands of men and Satan for the first three hours and at the hands of God during the last three hours. Anyway, the length of time that God forsook Jesus is not germane to the issue. The fact is that God forsook him. Then it is asked, since Jesus as priest, presented himself before God as our substitute for sin, why did not God turn away then too (Heb. 7:26-28; 8:3; 9:7-9,23-25)? God did not turn away from his Son in his priestly function, but rather in his function as a sacrifice. As we shall see, he became a sin offering on our behalf, and paying the penalty for our sins is why God forsook Jesus, not because he was a priest. Neither did God turn away from Jesus because he was deity, or because he was a man, but because he was a sin offering. No one could ever truthfully say that Jesus our Lord ever did anything wrong (1 Pet. 2:21-23). After almost twenty centuries have passed, we still look upon him as a sinless. He was indeed God-man. We believe that he spoke the truth while he was on the cross, and that he was actually forsaken by God for a period of time.

Why did God forsake his Son? Jesus himself had no sin but he died in our behalf, taking upon himself our sins. We have this beautiful prophetic utterance about Christ in Isaiah 53:6: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." He died as if he were a criminal; he took the place of the sinner; therefore, God withdrew his presence from him. Paul wrote: "For he hath made him to be sin, who knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21). Jesus paid the full penalty of sin and this is why God forsook him. Sin separates man from God (Isa. 59:1,2). The word "forsaken" is one of the most tragic in human speech. We picture a wife forsaken by her husband, a child forsaken by his parents; but the most tragic of all is for man to be forsaken by God. By paying the full price or penalty for sin, Jesus experienced what man suffers when he commits sin and is separated from God. Jesus endured it all, and he paid it all - the full price. This made the sacrifice for our sins complete. Paul wrote in Romans 8:3, ". . . God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin. . . ." The marginal rendering is: "Or, as an offering for sin." He took away the sins of the world by being a sin offering.

Jesus, on the cross, was burdened by all the sins of the world; thus, the pure eyes of God could not look upon the scene. For a period of time he turned away from it. It is stated: "Thou that art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that canst not look upon perverseness" (Hab. 1:13). God's laws had been broken (1 Jn. 3:4) and someone had to pay the penalty. Jesus was qualified to do this because he had no sin. As we sing, "He bore it all." All the sins of the world were on Jesus - murder, adultery, dishonesty, jealousy, and the list is ad infinitum. As we also sing, "He carried my sins with Him there." Jesus was actually forsaken by God, and the Bible tells us why.