

## SAVED LIKE THE THIEF

### INTRODUCTION

**A. Matthew 27:38, 44; Mark 15:27, 32**

In more than one account of the crucifixion, readers are informed that Jesus died between a pair of robbers, both of whom ridiculed Him.

**B. Luke 23:32-33, 39-43**

In one record, though, further detail is afforded, showing that one of the criminals had a change of heart.

### I. THE THIEF WAS CONVICTED OF HIS OWN GUILT

**A. Luke 23:41<sub>a</sub>**

He told his fellow criminal, *"We indeed justly,"* meaning *"We deserve this."*

**B. Romans 3:23; 6:23**

Sin is a problem common to all men and sin merits death!

**C. Psalm 51:1-4**

It is necessary to acknowledge one's transgressions and go to the Lord for mercy.

**D. Acts 2:36-37**

When Peter preached on Pentecost and told his audience they were guilty of Christ's blood, they were *"cut to the heart"* – convicted, and that led to them asking what they needed to do.

### II. THE THIEF CONFESSED CHRIST'S INNOCENCE

**A. Luke 23:41<sub>b</sub>**

This robber told the other that Jesus of Nazareth had done no wrong and he was absolutely correct.

**B. Luke 23:13-15, 47**

Neither King Herod who had examined Jesus, nor the governor Pontius Pilate who both interrogated Him and sentenced Him to death, found any fault at all in Jesus. When it was all over that day at Calvary, the centurion who was overseeing the crucifixion concluded the same: *“this was a righteous man!”*

**C. 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:21; 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:5**

Not only was there never any sin in Jesus, but that was the reason He came to earth and suffered on the cross – because we have sinned and have no hope otherwise!

**III. THE THIEF SHARED PARADISE WITH JESUS**

**A. Luke 23:42-43**

He asked to be remembered by Jesus in the hereafter and was assured he would enter the garden of rest that very day.

**B. Psalm 25:7**

David knew it took mercy from God for a sinful man to be remembered well.

**C. Matthew 21:28-32**

It is not how one starts, but how one finishes that matters. And this thief – he finished well.

**IV. THE THIEF’S EXAMPLE DOES NOT PRECLUDE BAPTISM**

**A. Matthew 3:4-5**

The majority of his neighbors had been baptized into John’s baptism and he may very well have been among them, but was backsliding when he was caught stealing. We really don’t know if he was baptized or not, so to assume he wasn’t is error.

**B. Acts 19:1-5**

Regardless of whether this thief was baptized of John, those who were baptized into John’s baptism later needed to be baptized into Christ because John’s was an intentionally temporary arrangement.

**C. Mark 16:14-16**

It was not until after He had risen from the dead that Jesus Christ began commanding this baptism.

**D. Romans 6:3-6**

Baptism into Christ is baptism into His death, which wasn't yet accomplished when the Lord conversed with the criminal as they both hang from their crosses. Obviously, it could not have been a requirement of the thief that day.

**E. Hebrews 9:15-16; Romans 3:25**

Those who lived and died before the New Covenant of Christ was ratified through His shed blood were still redeemed with that blood, in prospect, if they were obedient to whatever God commanded them at that time. Now, though, Christ's Covenant is in force and we cannot afford to disobey it.