

## What about that Thief Jesus took to Paradise?

Primary text – Luke 23:32-45

A. All four \_\_\_\_\_ record that there were two others crucified with Jesus, and that they were on \_\_\_\_\_ of him. Matthew & Mark describe these men as “\_\_\_\_\_”. Initially, these men also \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus along with the crowd that looked on. Luke is the \_\_\_\_\_ gospel writer who records the exchange between one of the thieves and Jesus.

B. While it is clear that one of the robbers \_\_\_\_\_, no reason is given for his change of mind. Perhaps Jesus’ \_\_\_\_\_ under these extreme circumstances had something to do with it. He doubtless heard Jesus ask God to \_\_\_\_\_ those who were abusing him, but it may also be the things he \_\_\_\_\_ hear Jesus say. It is noteworthy that this thief knew about the \_\_\_\_\_ and by this point (apparently about \_\_\_\_\_ into the ordeal) he asked that Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ him when he came in it.

C. Jesus’ response to the man’s request was simply, “Truly I say to you, \_\_\_\_\_ you shall be with me in \_\_\_\_\_”.

D. The mercy Jesus extended to this man is now used to argue against the need for anyone to be baptized in connection to their soul’s salvation. Below are several reasons why this argument has no foundation in \_\_\_\_\_ or in \_\_\_\_\_.

#1) Jesus, being \_\_\_\_\_, has the power to forgive sin with a word. This was the point he made specifically in Mark 2:1-12. In this case when Jesus told the paralytic his sins were forgiven, they \_\_\_\_\_, and of course these same words were meant to \_\_\_\_\_ the man and did. It is the same with the thief. The law (under which the thief lived and died) required restitution & a sin offering for thievery, but Jesus circumvented that law (his law) with his statement to the thief that he would be with him that day in paradise. Jesus’ word \_\_\_\_\_ everything else.

#2) The thief lived and died while under the \_\_\_\_\_ covenant, not Jesus’ new covenant. Obviously the Mosaic covenant did not require baptism for salvation. The new covenant had not yet begun, as Hebrews 9:15-17 teaches that a covenant is only enforced after the \_\_\_\_\_ of the covenant maker, and Jesus was still alive when he made that promise to the thief.

#3) Perhaps the thief **was** \_\_\_\_\_ (not that it would really matter). Jesus & his apostles baptized \_\_\_\_\_ folks that even John the baptizer (John 3:22, 26 & 4:1-2). The thief knew about Jesus promise to come in his \_\_\_\_\_, so he may very well have been among those who listened to him preach & was then baptized.

#4) Consider the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus' statement to the thief. This was not given by Jesus so as to become the basis for \_\_\_\_\_ behavior. Naaman was cured from leprosy by dipping 7 times in the \_\_\_\_\_, but this did not become the means for \_\_\_\_\_ to be cured (2nd Kings 5:9-14), just Naaman. Peter got \_\_\_\_\_ from a fish, but this is not how Christians pay their taxes now (Luke 17:14), as that was only for Peter. In the same way, what Jesus said to the thief was for the thief, not for anyone else.

#5) We must conclude that if the thief's circumstance \_\_\_\_\_ our need to be baptized, it must then eliminate the need for \_\_\_\_\_ practices as well. Does it also eliminate the need for the \_\_\_\_\_ to which many who deny the need for baptism hold? Does it eliminate the need to "\_\_\_\_\_ " as some claim? Does it eliminate the need to attend \_\_\_\_\_ assemblies, observe the \_\_\_\_\_, live a life of faith, etc. Logically, if our reasoning proves too much, then it proves \_\_\_\_\_ at all.

#6) The \_\_\_\_\_ & evangelists of the gospel throughout the book of \_\_\_\_\_ did not forego the teaching and practice of baptism based on what Jesus said to the thief. In fact, the book is replete with the pattern of people \_\_\_\_\_ the gospel, \_\_\_\_\_ it & \_\_\_\_\_ being baptized. You see this in Acts 2, multiple times in Acts 8, then in Acts 9, 16 & 19. Did they \_\_\_\_\_ understand proper exegesis of the thief's circumstance, or did they completely understand it in its \_\_\_\_\_?

#7) No one to whom the gospel was preached in the book of Acts \_\_\_\_\_ the need to be baptized based on what \_\_\_\_\_ said to the thief. In fact, Acts 2:41 says that those who gladly \_\_\_\_\_ Peter's preaching were apparently baptized without \_\_\_\_\_. What of those who do not \_\_\_\_\_ it today, as they refuse baptism?