

THINGS JESUS NEVER SAID



THINGS JESUS NEVER SAID, PART 4: YOU GET WHAT YOU DESERVE

We live in a world that thrives on fairness—“*You get what you deserve.*” If you do good, you should be rewarded. If you mess up, you should pay the price. But when it comes to our relationship with God, that idea breaks down. Because if we truly got what we deserve, none of us could stand before Him. The message of Jesus turns this whole system upside down: the innocent died for the guilty so that the guilty could be declared innocent. Grace is not about fairness—it’s about freedom. It’s not earned; it’s given. And when guilt says, “You get what you deserve,” Jesus says, “Today, you’re Mine.”

BIG IDEA: Guilt says, “You get what you deserve.” Jesus says, “Today you’re mine.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When was a time you got exactly what you *deserved*—for better or worse? (Maybe a traffic ticket, a promotion, or something funny.)
2. How does our culture shape the way we think about “deserving” things?
3. *With your Bible or YouVersion, [read Luke 23:32-43.](#)*

³² Two others, both criminals, were led out to be executed with him. ³³ When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ Jesus said, “*Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.*” And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice. ³⁵ The crowd watched and the leaders scoffed. “He saved others,” they said, “let him save himself if he is really God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.” ³⁶ The soldiers mocked him, too, by offering him a drink of sour wine. ³⁷ They called out to him, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸ A sign was fastened above him with these words: “This is the King of the Jews.” ³⁹ One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you’re at it!” ⁴⁰ But the other criminal protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die?” ⁴¹ We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.” ⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.” ⁴³ And Jesus replied, “*I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.*”

[Luke 23:32-43 \(NLT\)](#)

4. What stands out to you about the fact that Jesus was crucified between two criminals? How does that positioning—Jesus literally between guilt and grace—reflect the story of salvation?
5. Why do you think this criminal mocked Jesus instead of asking for mercy?
6. What do you notice about the second criminal’s heart compared to the first? Why is acknowledging our guilt the first step toward experiencing God’s grace?
7. The thief couldn’t earn his way into heaven. He had no chance to make things right. What does this moment teach us about how grace works? How does it challenge the idea that we can somehow “deserve” salvation?
8. Why do you think Jesus responded so quickly and confidently to this man’s request?
9. *With your Bible or YouVersion, [read Ephesians 2:3-5, 8-9.](#)*

³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

[Ephesians 2:3-5, 8-9 \(NLT\)](#)

10. Why do we struggle to accept grace as a “gift”? What happens when we start believing salvation must be earned instead of received?
11. Jimmy said, “*Grace doesn’t wait for you to clean up. Grace meets you where you are.*” How does that truth hit you personally? Where have you been tempted to think you need to “fix yourself” before coming to God?
12. What guilt are you still carrying that Jesus has already forgiven? What would it look like to live like you truly believe you’re free?

MOVING FORWARD

Grace changes everything. The thief on the cross couldn’t fix his past—but he found a Savior who could redeem his future. You don’t have to carry guilt another day. The same Jesus who said, “Today you’ll be with Me,” still says to us, “You’re Mine.” This week, practice gratitude for grace. Speak it out loud: “*Jesus doesn’t give me what I deserve—He gives me grace.*”

CHANGING YOUR MIND

“I assure you, today you will be with Me in paradise.”

Luke 23:43 (NLT)