

## **GOOD FRIDAY HANDOUT: Three Crosses On Calvary's Hill Luke 23:32-43**

The Cross is the Symbol of the Christian faith....The Cross is so Prominent in Daily Life that All too Often Many Don't Even Pay Any Attention to it. And Some have Forgotten What the Cross Really Represents.

- **My Concern is that we have so "Glamorized the Cross" that we Fail to Remember the Pain, Agony and Cruelty that Jesus Endured on the Cross For You and Me.**

**READ LUKE 23:32-43: As We Stand Before Calvary, We See 3 Crosses on that Hill and On Each Cross We See a Man Sentenced to Death by the Roman Government.**

**But as we Look Closely We see 3 Different Kinds of Crosses:** There Was A Cross of Rejection...There Was A Cross of Reception...There was a Cross of Redemption.

**These 2 men hanging beside Jesus Represent the Actions & Mindset of All Mankind. Because All Mankind Has Either Rejected OR...Received Redemption of Sin through Jesus Christ.**

**When We Examine "The Three Crosses on Calvary's Hill"...First We Will See that...**

**There Was a Cross Of Rejection--VS-39** 39 "One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: **"Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"**

- Think About It... This man Knew that Death was Imminent. **Yet, He was Not Sorry or Repentant of his Sins, he was Focused On the Temporary.**
- While Jesus is Hanging Between the Heavens and the Earth Fulfilling God's Redemptive Plan for Mankind this Man Chooses to Blaspheme and Mock Him! **This man had Every Opportunity to be Saved...But he had a Major Problem... Just As Many Possess Today...AN IMPROPER FOCUS!!**
- He is a picture of a man with a **"What's in it for Me Mindset" "Save Yourself & Us"**

**This Man Could Have Been Saved But he Rejected Christ!**

- He is a Picture of Someone who is Dying Without Hope!
- Matthew said he was a thief...He was facing the Consequences of his earthly Sins. **Before the day was Over he Would Face the "Eternal" Consequences of His Sin!**
- This man was Guilty and deserved to die. The Roman government wasn't going to give him a pardon **But...Jesus would have Given him an "Eternal Pardon" Right there!**

**Pardon Rejected - In 1830 George Wilson was convicted of robbing the U.S. Mail and was sentenced to death. President Jackson issued a pardon for Wilson, but he Refused it. The matter went to Chief Justice, who concluded that Wilson would have to be executed. He wrote, "A pardon is a slip of paper, the value of which is determined by the Acceptance of the Person to be Pardoned. If it is Refused, it is No Pardon. George Wilson Must Be Hanged.**

- **On Calvary, Jesus Provided Every Person a Pardon...But it Must Be Accepted!**

**On Calvary's Hill, There was also a Cross Of Reception-VS-40** "But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, Today You Will Be With Me in Paradise."

**This is one of the Most Beautiful Stories in the Bible. It Illustrates the Simplicity of Salvation. This man did Not have a Degree in Theology.**

- He did Not have the Opportunity to Clean his Life Up (he couldn't if he tried).
- He didn't have time to "Work his Way into Heaven" (he couldn't even if he had time).
- **He Simply Trusted in Jesus and CRIED OUT FOR JESUS TO SAVE HIM!!**

**The Gospel gives us extra detail in Matt 27: 42-44** The Chief priests, the scribes and the elders said - "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. 43 He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" 44 In the same way the rebels {Thieves} who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

- **Do You See that? "Thieves" is Plural...**In the beginning this man was Against Jesus as well. There is an Apparent Change in this Man. **So What Led to this Change?**
- **The Answer-Luke 23:34** "Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots".

**POINT: I believe that this man saw Jesus' Heart as He Spoke to His Father about those Crucifying Him...and it Led to a Conversion in his Life.**

**Listen to what he said to the man who rejected Jesus: VS-40-43** *But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, Today You Will Be With Me In Paradise."*

- **This man still Paid for his Earthly Sins. Notice he said" We Receive the due Reward of Our Deeds" he still Suffered ...he Still Experienced Physical Death...But he Did So with the "PROMISE" Of ETERNAL LIFE!**
- He Began with an "Hopeless" Earthly Perspective But Before he Died he had the New Found "HOPE" of an Eternal Perspective.
- **Here We see that Every Person's Life Can be Changed Because of Christ's Work of Redemption on Calvary's Hill!**

**But First...** Each Person Must come to Jesus just like this man did and see Jesus for who He is "Redeemer" and **CRY OUT TO HIM TO SAVE YOU!!**

**There was a Cross of Rejection, a Cross of Reception...BUT...Most Importantly: ON CALVARY'S HILL, THERE WAS A CROSS OF REDEMPTION!**

**Vs: 44-49** *It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, 45 for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last. 47 The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, "Surely this was a righteous man." 48 When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. 49 But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.*

- John 19:30 Jesus cried, "**It Is Finished" Man's Redemption Was Now Complete!**
- *When Jesus cried, "It Is Finished"... He used a Greek word (teleō - tel-eh'-o) that meant "Paid in Full..."...To End, Complete, Concluded, to Pay Fully.*
- This speaks of "**discharging a debt**". The same word stamped across bills when paid.
- **Jesus stamped "Paid in Full" on the Debt of My Sin and Your Sin at Calvary. And it is Available to ALL who come to Christ and Repent of their Sins!**

**John 3:18 says,** "He that believeth on him (**Reception**) is not condemned: but he that believeth not (**Rejection**) is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil".

**Today...It is my prayer that every one of you have Personally Asked Jesus to Forgive Your Sins & Received His Free Gift...God's Salvation through what Jesus Christ did at the Cross.**