

Speaker : Associate Pastor Richard Yun
Title : Saved by the Cross
Text : Luke 23:42-43

Introduction

God had declared through Isaiah that His Son was to be "numbered with the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12). We, not Christ, are the transgressors. He hung there in our place, as our Substitute. He took our place.

Jesus hung between the two thieves. God used those two men to dramatize the only two possible responses to the Christ: belief and unbelief, acceptance and rejection, repentance and impenitence, godless and a godly response.

1. Listen to the penitent's prayer:

"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

- **The Sovereign Grace of God**

The two criminals were crucified together. They were equally near to Christ. Both were wicked, both were ungodly, both were dying, both urgently needed forgiveness.

Yet, one of them died in his sins; he died as he had lived — hardened and impenitent. While the other, he repented of his wickedness, believed in Jesus, called on Him for mercy, and went to Paradise.

Only the sovereign grace of God can account for this difference in response. Salvation by grace — sovereign, irresistible, free grace — is illustrated in Scripture in the case of the forgiven thief on the cross.

- **A Penitent Sinner**

We see that the thief repents of his sin and evil. He acknowledges his guilt and the judgment of God upon his sin.

We also see him turning in faith toward Christ: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

2. Listen to the Lord's gracious and sovereign response:

"I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

- **The Saviour's Word of Salvation**

Jesus gives the thief far more than he asks for. The thief asked for a place in the Kingdom; Jesus tells him he will enter paradise. The thief was asking about the future; Jesus speaks of the present — "today." The thief asks Jesus to remember him; Jesus says, "you will be with me."

- **The Saviour's Power to Save**

When the thief cried out, "Jesus, remember me," the Saviour was in agony upon the cross. Yet even then, even there, He had the power to redeem from death and to open the gates of Paradise.

Jesus always has time for a penitent sinner. Do you remember the promise of Christ: "whoever comes to me I will never drive away" (John 6:37)?

This tells us to never doubt the ability of our Saviour to save. If a dying Saviour could save how much more a Saviour Who rose in triumph from the tomb, never more to die!

Conclusion

No sinner who comes to Jesus will ever be turned away. There never is a time that we can come to the Lord and He will turn us away. No time is inopportune for Him. No day is unacceptable to Him.

The impact of the cross...

It has the power to save...

Are you willing to embrace it and be impacted today?