

Last Words from the Cross: Paradise

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Luke 23:39-43

February 28th, 2021

Reflection & Discussion Questions

One of the most obvious truths in life is that you are going to die

Real life is actually found in embracing that truth.

*Why does death make us uncomfortable, even if we are Christians?

*What does it look like to actually embrace this truth?

There has never been anyone who died with greater intentionality and purpose than our Savior

Read and discuss Luke 23:39-43(ESV)

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?" ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." ⁴³ And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

*Contrast the ways the two criminals responded to their imminent death.

*What does this conversation between two dying men teach us about death and what comes next?

*How do Jesus's words here resonate with you? How are these words good news for you?

Jesus's teaching was primarily focused on living in the Kingdom of God

Getting into heaven doesn't seem to be his greatest concern.

*What does it look like to embrace the Kingdom every day of your life?

*How can we miss out on the point of this life if we are only concerned about heaven?

*How does fully embracing the Kingdom change our feelings about death?

Jesus isn't picky about our faith

It has never been about the worthiness of our faith. It is about the worthiness and eagerness of our savior to dispense mercy.

*How is this picture of an eager, mercy-dispensing Jesus different than the one we sometimes carry in our minds?

*What does it mean that his response to our faith is greater than our faith?

Focus on Jesus not on your faith

The more you make it about Jesus and his mercy, the more you will grow.

*How does a shift from obsessing about the quality and quantity of our faith to focusing on the person of Jesus actually help faith grow?

*When is a time you tried to 'will-power' faith?

*Where has focusing on Jesus grown your faith?

*In light of his words to the sinner on the cross, what would you like to do with your today?

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Visual reflection (Visio Divina)* [St. Dismas](#) by Jen Norton

Song for reflection [Jesus Remember Me](#) by Taizé