

## Last Words from the Cross: Paradise

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Luke 23:39-43

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### **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)

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