

Jesus, Remember Me

Introduction and Review

- Last time we considered the death of Christ as recorded in the gospel of Mark 15:33-39.
- Mark emphasizes two miracles: before/after death of Jesus; displeasure/pleasure of God; darkness at midday/temple curtain torn in two from top to bottom.
- In the midst of mocking & rejection after the death of Jesus, Mark records the confession of faith from the Roman soldier (15:39).
- Luke records a confession of faith before the death of Jesus.

I. Reviling of Christ (v. 39)

A. Two criminals crucified (v. 32-33)

In Luke “κακοῦργος” means one who commits gross misdeeds & serious crimes. In Matthew “ληστής” means one who robs by force & violence. The hearts of both men were evil & they had no love or respect for other people.

B. Two criminals revile (Mt. 27:44; Mk. 15:32b; Lk. 23:39)

From these evil hearts came evil & disrespectful words about Jesus (Mt. 15:19). There was no fear of God or respect for Christ in them.

APPL: Sinners who do not fear God or respect other people are fools & lacking in wisdom (Ps. 111:10; 14:1). Sinners who mock Christ are miserable & blind – B. Mack, B. Maher, etc.

II. Rebuking for Christ (v. 40-41)

A. One criminal is convicted

The work of the HS in regeneration is invisible, yet powerful & effective (Jn. 3:3, 5, 8; Tit. 3:5). Sometimes His work in conversion is openly radical (Paul) & other times it is subtle. While he was speaking evil about Christ, God gave this man a new heart & saving faith (Eph. 2:8); was not seeking God!

B. One criminal rebukes (v. 40-41)

*When his heart has been changed, the words from his mouth are also changed (Mt. 15:18). He had **reviled** Christ, but now **rebukes** those who revile Christ. He previously had **no fear** of God, but now sincerely **fears** Him. He previously **did not acknowledge** sin, but now he **confesses**.*

III. Requesting from Christ (v. 42-43)

A. Savior (v. 42a)

In faith with a new heart, this criminal refers to Christ directly now as His Savior – “Jesus” (Mt. 1:21). In faith & humility he can make his request of Christ – “remember me” in mercy. To forget someone or their name implies a lack of relationship & concern (Mt. 7:23). He did not ask for special favors, rewards, positions or glory, just remember me in mercy.

B. King (v. 42b)

*This regenerate criminal now sees Jesus as the true & eternal King with authority to forgive or condemn. He can now see beyond the beatings, scorn, mocking & rejection. He has been made alive spiritually & he knows the only true spiritual King. The Savior & King’s promise (v. 43)! **This humble & forgiven criminal got so much more than he asked for (Eph. 3:20). Your suffering is over; no more condemnation, shame, pain, tears... - today you go to paradise with Me!***

APPL: How is it possible to see the King of glory in a man who is humiliated, tortured & dying like an ordinary criminal? How can one criminal see this amazing truth & be saved while the other remains spiritually blind to die in his sins? How could this vulgar, violent thief & criminal be saved while so many religious people with the scriptures remain lost & dead in their sins? The answer is that salvation is from God; it begins with Him; He is the source, the one who chooses; He is the author of salvation... And He is not biased – He chooses young/old, wealthy/poor, educated/uneducated, etc. It’s not based on merit or worth, but on grace & mercy!

CONCLUSION

Therefore my beloved brothers & sisters in Christ rejoice today that God has chosen you to be saved & sanctified; chosen you to be His own; chosen to save you out of your sin and wash away the guilt & stain of your sin in the blood of Christ. Rejoice today because Jesus not only died for the thief that was hanging beside Him, but He also died for you. Rejoice because not only will the thief be with Christ in Paradise, but one day you will also be with Christ. And remember that there is hope for many other thieves, criminals & outcasts in your family, neighborhood, jail, prison & on the streets of our society. There's hope for the hopeless, so be faithful with the gospel ministry. You are an ambassador of Christ, so represent Him well in your daily life – this is a great privilege & opportunity!

If you are not a Christian, there is hope for you today too. Jesus offers you forgiveness of your sins, eternal life, joy & peace in this life, love, liberty, wisdom, grace, mercy... But like this criminal, you also must believe...

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