

The Thief on the Cross “A Missed Opportunity”

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Scriptures:

Mark 15:32b “Those crucified with him (Jesus) also heaped insults on him.”

Matthew 27:44 “In the same way the robbers who were crucified with him (Jesus) also heaped insults on him.

Luke 23:32-33, 39 “Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him (Jesus) to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals – one on his right, the other on his left. ... One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us!”

SUMMARY:

Sometimes we don't see God at work and we become discouraged. We may even become angry at God. The thief on the cross who continued to hurl insults at Jesus, failed to recognize God was at work that very moment right beside him. If we determine to be unyielding and headstrong, we will effectively prevent God from revealing anything to us – even Himself! We say we want to encounter Jesus, yet continue to live in a fog of our own making. The way to clearly see Jesus and encounter him in a life changing way is to surrender our whole life to Him. Or, you can choose to be like the thief in our passage who “missed an amazing opportunity” . The choice is yours!

NOTES:

DISCUSSION POINTS:

Introductory Question: In what way(s) can you identify with the thief who continued to mock Jesus?

- Name two things you feel can hinder a person from encountering Jesus in a meaningful way.
- What do you feel is a major obstacle in your own life that keeps you from more intimately encountering Jesus ?
- Looking back, can you share a time this past week when you encountered Jesus?
- How can you personally help a non-believing friend to encounter Jesus?

APPLICATION:

- Pray – asking God to reveal what is hindering your encountering Him on a deeper level
- Pray - making yourself available to be used by God to help someone else encounter Jesus
- Decide – to consciously be Jesus in a tangible way to another person this week.
- Keep a 3x5 card with you during the next week and record each time YOU encounter Jesus or feel His presence. Then share this with a friend.

ON YOUR OWN...

Colossians 3:1-3
Proverbs 2:3-5
1 Corinthians 1:18
Daniel 10:12