

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

1201 Meeks St. Corinth, Ms. 38834

Phone – (662) 808-7777

Visit Our Website at:
MeeksstreetchurchofChrist.com

December 10, 2023

"THE THREE CROSSES"

By Joel Raulerson

The scene at Calvary is one that can produce a lot of emotion. As Christians, we tend to focus on the cross of Christ. However, there are lessons that we can learn from each cross at Golgotha that day.

A Cross of Rebellion

Hanging on the first cross is a rebellious sinner being justly punished for his sins (Luke 23:40-41). This man represents the majority of humanity. Mankind chooses to live their lives in sin and will be justly persecuted for their rebellion (Rom. 3:23; 6:26). Proudly and arrogantly, this man on the cross next to Jesus railed and blasphemed the Lord.

Luke 23:39 says, *"One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, 'Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!'"* This crucified man symbolizes humanity in general. His attitude is one of rebellion until the very end. The only words this criminal is willing to speak is blasphemy toward the Lord. He is not interested in salvation, obedience, or humbling himself before the Lord. This criminal does not view Christ as his savior. He is only thinking of a way to save his neck.

A Cross of Repentance

Hanging on another cross, we see yet another rebellious sinner being justly punished for his sins. What makes this thief on the cross different from the other criminal is his attitude. As the thief is faced with his own mortality, he confesses that he has sinned, and seeks repentance.

Luke 23:40-42 says, *"But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong. And he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.'"* The difference between this thief and the other criminal is their attitude toward Christ.

While the first criminal was rebellious and blasphemous toward God, this thief rebukes him for his attitude. Not only does the thief rebuke the other criminal, but he recognizes that he is no better than the other thief. They are both facing just punishment for the crimes that they have committed. The thief on the cross is not looking for some "quick fix" solution. He is not trying to justify or make excuses for any of the crimes that he has committed. The thief accepts the responsibility of his sin. Then, he humbly asks Jesus for mercy, and to remember him when He comes into His kingdom.

A Cross of Redemption

Finally, on the middle cross (Matt. 27:38; Mk. 15:27; Lk. 23:33; Jn. 19:18), we see Jesus. This is the sinless Son of God sent here to suffer and die for our sins (Isa. 53:5). At this cross, we see the mercy that is offered to us (Rom. 3:26).

This is the cross that offers each of us redemption if we choose to obey Christ. We are all doomed to face death because that is the consequence of our sins (Rom. 5:12; Prov. 11:19). Jesus offers us redemption. We could be like the first criminal who, rather than humbling himself before God, chooses to mock Him.

There will be no pleasant end to that attitude of rebellion. Wouldn't you rather have the attitude of the second thief, and humble yourself before the Lord and do as He says in order to gain redemption through Christ (Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:10; 1 Pet. 3:21)? Have you turned in repentance to the cross of Christ or are you standing in open rebellion?

"WHY YOU SHOULD REPENT"

By Jesse Flowers

Before we discuss why you should repent, let's first briefly explain what it means for someone to repent. Repentance means "to think differently; reconsider; a reversal of one's direction." Repent simply means to "turn away from evil and do good" (I Peter 3:11). Now here are six good reasons why you should repent.

1) Because you have sinned. I have sinned. All have sinned against God in transgressing His law (Rom. 3:23; I John 3:4). Sin brings death (Rom. 3:23), thus our need for repentance.

2) Because of God's goodness. "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" (Romans 2:4) How good has God been to each one of us? "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

3) Because God commands it. "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). We will obey God's command to repent if we love Him (I John 5:3).

4) Because it is necessary for salvation. "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19; cf. 2:38).

5) Because of the Day of Judgment. "...but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness" by Jesus Christ (Acts 17:30-31; cf. 2 Cor. 5:10).

6) Because those who refuse to will perish. Jesus warned, "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3, 5). The apostle Peter reminds us that, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

The command to repent is probably God's most difficult command. Why? Because repentance requires change in a person's life and so many refuse to change. Repentance demands that the sinner turn from his evil and then do what is good (Ezekiel 14:6; 18:30; Acts 26:18, 20).

Repentance will occur when a person humbles themselves, possesses godly sorrow, and confesses their sins to God (Ps. 51:16-17; 2 Cor. 7:10; I John 1:9). Repent to be saved, and to spend eternity in heaven!

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Meeks Street Church of Christ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgiXJxZC1oraOugO9qlfBtw?view_as=subscriber

And Our Facebook Page.

For sermon videos, articles, and announcements.



News and Notes:

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Fred Johnson, Mary Ann Holley, The Meade Family with Flu Type A.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Tim Harris Jr.
Singing Service: *Men of the Congregation Lead Singing*
Invitation: Fred Johnson

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Fred Johnson
Author: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
Starting Page & Question: Herschel Patton
Page #17, Question # 1

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Paul Johnson
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Doug George
Scripture Reading: *Romans 15:4-6*
Song Leader: Adam Harris
Lord's Supper: Paul Busby
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Paul Johnson
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

December 13, 2023

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Busby
Workbook: Preparing To Teach Our Neighbors
Author: Max Tice
Starting Page & Question: *Page #67, Question #4*
Invitation: Brian Meade
Song Leader: Adam Harris
Closing Prayer: Russell Briggs