

"The Three Crosses"

Text: Luke 23:39-43

Intro:

*This morning we want to notice the three crosses that were represented at the crucifixion of Christ.

*John 19:17-18 - Read.

*vs. 18, "They crucified him and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst."

I. The Cross of Rejection - Luke 23:39, Read.

*Things want to notice:

1) Notice - No admission of his guilt

-He is not interested in admitting he is wrong.

-He is just mad that he has gotten caught.

-He has worldly sorrow.

-He is not sorrow that he has offended God, sinned against God.

-No, he is sorry that he got caught.

-The Bible tells us about the end result of worldly sorrow.

-II Cor. 7:10 - "the sorrow of the world worketh death"

-James 1:15 - "sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

-Romans 6:23 - "For the wages of sin is death"

-Here is a man who is reaping what he has sown and he doesn't like it.

-You see all his life this man sowed to his flesh.

-Gal. 6:8 - "he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption."

2) Notice his skepticism or unbelief- vs. 39, "If thou be Christ..."

-Devil talk, Matthew 4:3, the devil said to Jesus when he tempted him the wilderness, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."

-In the garden, the devil said to Eve, regarding what God said to her and Adam, Ge. 3, "Yea, hath God said"

-Wherever, you find skepticism and doubt about what God has said, you find the devil behind it.

-In this case it is salvation.

-The devil is the author of confusion.

-He wants people to doubt what the Word of God says especially about salvation.

-So, they will end up in the lake of fire.

-He rather have people believe in some nonsense that will send them to hell, like the people who committed suicide this week and though they were going to heaven.

-They believed a lie.

-The Bible says about people who will not receive the truth "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie." II Thess. 2:11

-These people had to be deluded to do what they did.

-The Bible tells us who the father of lies is, Satan, "there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." Jn. 8:44

-The Bible tells us in Hebrews 11:6 how we are to come to God,

-Read Hebrew 11:6 - "for he that cometh to God must believe that he is,"

-One must come believing not with unbelief or doubt, or with skepticism.

-Bible tells us of the eternal destiny of the unbeliever.

-Read Rev. 21:8, "unbelieving"

On the Cross of Rejection we want to notice

3) The lack of humility.

-Instead of being humble and looking for mercy, we are told this thief in Luke 23:39, "railed" on Jesus.

-Defined "railed": To utter reproaches; to scoff; to use insolent and reproachful language."

-Isn't this what happens sometimes when you try to witness to someone about being saved.

-The thief still had some pride in him to act this way towards the only one who could save him.

-The Bible says, "Pride goeth before destruction..."

-This man needed the saving grace of God.

-The Bible tells us James 4:6, "...God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

-Pride is what sends people to hell -"I don't need God, I can save myself.

-He needed to turn to the Lord for mercy because the Bible tells us in Psalm 103:8, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy"

-Psalm 103:17 - "But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him"

-Titus 3:5, tells us that God saves us "according to his mercy"

-Instead on this cross of rejection hanged the unrepentent thief.

-He had no guilt or shame for what he did

-He had no belief in the Son of God

-He had no humility because of his predicament.

-Ever since he breathed his last breath, he has been burning in hell, along with all the other skeptics.

-But the only difference now is that he is a believer.

II. The Cross of Reception. - Luke 23:40-42

*Thing we want to notice.

1) He feared God - vs. 40, "Dost not thou fear God"

-The Bible says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom"

-He knew that God controlled his destiny.

-He knew that God was judge of things.

2) He realized that he was a condemned man with no earthly way out. -vs. 40, "seeing thou art in the same condemnation?"

3) He acknowledges his sin. vs. 41, - "...we indeed justly"

-The Bible tells us that "all have sin and come short of the glory of God."

- "As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one"

-This is the first step in someone getting saved.

-They must first admit that they are sinner.

-If don't see self as a sinner, then no need to get saved.

-Why, Pharisees during Jesus day didn't repent and submit to baptism of repentance under the ministry of John the Baptist.

-They were self-righteous, trusting in being physical seed of Abraham to save them.

-We still have the religion of Pharisees around today.

4) He acknowledged he deserved his sentence.

-vs. 41, "we receive the due reward of our deeds"

-He knew clearly, that he reaped what he had sown.

-He said "I am guilt for what I have done and deserve to be in the predicament that I am in"

-He acknowledged that he deserved his death sentence.

-He was sorry for his sin, not that he got caught but because he sinned against god.

-The Bible tells us about godly sorry, "godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of:"

5) He acknowledged that Jesus did not deserve this death sentence.

-vs. 41, "but this man hath done nothing amiss."

-He realized and acknowledged the sinless of the man next to him.

*Concerning himself:

-He knew and admitted that he was a sinner.

-He acknowledged and admitted that he deserved his sentence of death.

-He acknowledged and realized sinlessness of man next to him.

- We see here the steps of someone getting saved.
- There was only one last thing for this man to do.
- Praise God, that he did it.
- He turned to center cross, the third cross, the cross of redemption.
- vs. 42 - "And he said unto Jesus, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."
- The thief calling Jesus, "Lord" very important.
- "Lord" is a title of deity.
- What is interesting all the modern version remove "Lord".
- In essence removing the dying thief saving confession from him.
- Instead of going to paradise these new Bibles have this man going to hell.
- The thief realized that only the Lord Jesus Christ could save him from his situation.
- The Bible tells, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

-Unlike the other thief on the cross of rejection, the thief on the cross of reception had no doubt who Jesus was.

- He came to Jesus humbly, admitting his sin, accepting his sentence of death, and crying out to the God for his mercy.
- This thief believed on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to save him.
- See John 1:12.

*Finally, let's look at the third cross:

III. The Cross of Redemption.

*Redeem means to "buy back"

*Jesus buys back from the devil all those who call upon Him to save them.

*The Bible tells us concerning Jesus's redeeming work on the cross.

1) Rom. 3:24, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"

2) Gal. 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law."

-The law was given to show you and I that we were sinners.

-That we like that thief all deserved the sentence of death, not just physical death but more important spiritual death in a lake of fire.

3) Col. 1:14, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:"

4) 1 Pe 1:18 tells us clearly how we are redeemed, "...with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

*Let's look at Jesus's response in Luke 23:43 - Read.

-You talk about Good News!!!

-Where could you find any religion in the world that could tell you, "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise"

-Show me one religion in this big wide world, that will tell you for sure "You are going to paradise" and all you had do was ask to go there.

-There isn't any

-Only Bible Christianity can make that promise, because it is based on the man on that third cross, the cross of redemption.

-As I close this morning let me ask you, which side of that cross of redemption are you on?

-Your eternity is counting on it.

-Rejection or Reception

-Rejection will end you up in the lake of fire for eternity.

-Reception will end up in paradise for eternity.

-If you have never ask the Lord to remember you.

-Won't you ask him right now.

-Paradise is awaiting for you, all you have to do is ask to go through the shed blood of the man on the cross of redemption.