

Gospel On the Cross Sunday: 11/19/2023 – Elder Al Walton – Luke 23:26-43

“Why should God let you into heaven? If your answer starts with “I” you are missing the mark.”

Overview:

This week Al lead us through the story of the crucifixion, specifically focused on the people involved. Al pointed out four groups; those on the way, those at the cross, the thieves, and Jesus on the Cross. There are things to learn as each of these people appear in the narrative.

We learned that Simon of Cyrene, a passerby, had his life changed. He had the privilege to serve the creator of the universe. We saw that he was possibly known to the early church evidenced by the naming of his Sons (Mark 15:21).

We saw the scene around the cross with soldiers dividing up Jesus’ clothing while the people stood by and the rulers of the people and even the thieves mocked him with taunts to “save himself.” Ironically Jesus was the only one who could save them. The people did not understand that Jesus was willingly laying his life down.

Al then showed us an amazing change, a Gospel change. A criminal, slowly dying on the cross, who comes to faith in Jesus. We hear some of the most encouraging words in the Bible: “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.” The thief came to the cross with nothing and left with everything.

We then see Jesus on the cross. The Gospel on the cross displays Jesus’ sacrifice, the laying down of his life, the weight of sin, and the Father forsaking the son. The words of Jesus from the cross in John 19, “It is Finished.” Fellowship was restored, the price of sin was paid and we can rest in the all of the truths of the Gospel. We can all stand in confidence in what Jesus has done, we have the promise that we will be with him in paradise. We can also remember that like Simon the passerby and the Repentant Thief, we come with nothing and in Jesus we have everything.

Corroborating Texts:

Matthew 27:39-50, John 10:17-18, 19:30

Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of time when you have had to justify or defend yourself?
 - a. Why do those justification not work when it relates to being justified before God?
2. What is significant about the idea that the repentant thief came to the cross with nothing?
3. Al asked us to respond to this text. What keeps you from coming Jesus?
 - a. As believers, we can take this question deeper:
 - i. How does this message provide peace to you?
 - ii. How does this passage help us grow? (Ephesians 4:22-24)
4. Was there anything else that stood out in the passage?