

sermon

SNAPSHOTS



The thief *on the*
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Many religious people appeal to Luke 23:39-43 to "prove" that baptism is not essential. We are told that the thief on the cross was saved (v.43, "Paradise"), yet he was not baptized. But is that really what is taught here? Let us analyze this text carefully to determine:

1.) Whether or not the thief was baptized; then, 2.) If this really teaches that baptism is not essential to salvation. Therefore, those who say, "What about the thief on the cross?" in order to get around their obligation to be baptized are like Peter, who said of John, "What about this man?" (John 21:20-22). And I'd like to suggest that the Lord's answer would be the same: "What is that to you? You follow Me!" So, where do you stand? Are you willing to follow Jesus into the waters of baptism? If so, then come to Him right now!

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The Thief on the Cross

What Baptism Symbolizes

The Purpose of Water Baptism

The Personal Teaching of Jesus on Water Baptism

How do we *know* that the thief was not baptized?

- This is often ASSUMED – *however, it should be **PROVEN**, not thoughtlessly granted!*
- Consider this: "*and were ALL [i.e., virtually all] **BAPTIZED** by him [i.e., John]" (Mark 1:1-5)*
- Also, note that ONLY "the Pharisees and lawyers" rejected John's baptism (Luke 7:29-30)
- Finally, consider: Jesus Himself "made and baptized more disciples than John" (John 4:1-2)

Consider evidence that the thief **WAS** baptized!

- He feared God (v.39-40), and said things of Jesus that only a disciple would say!
- For instance, he knew and acknowledged that Jesus was a sinless man (v.41)
- He also knew that Jesus was "Lord" (master/king), and had a "kingdom" (v.42)
- He knew that Jesus could "remember" him – *even though both were dying* (v.42)

Also note: *When* was the thief forgiven of sins?

- It is VERY important to note that he was forgiven BEFORE the death of Jesus (v.43-46)
- *Why is that important? Because His N.T. will had not yet gone into effect!* (Hebrews 9:15-17)
- Not identical, but comparable to "wills" of the dead (alterable till death; then the will rules!)
- Example: traffic cops can, and often do, override stop lights; but when he's gone the light rules!

Why cite the thief? Why not be saved like others?

- No one asks to be saved like the woman "caught in adultery" (John 8:1-11, go and sin no more)
- No one asks to be saved like the rich young ruler (Matthew 19:16-22, go, sell all, and give away)
- No one asks to be saved like the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16, GO TO WORK)
- *And, in truth, no one could be "saved like the thief," unless they were crucified with Jesus!*

The real issue is: *What is the will of Jesus today?*

- The will of Jesus is clear: Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; John 3:5
- The apostles preached it, too: Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:4; 1 Peter 3:21
- All of these "apostolic approved examples" are **AFTER** the cross!
- There's no exception to this, since Jesus death (the traffic cop is gone!)

-Lanny Smith



Times of Service

Sunday Worship: 10 am
Sunday Bible Study: 5 pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7 pm

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