



# The Story Behind the Door

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**Today** you will be with me in  
paradise

# Luke 23: 32-37

<sup>32</sup> Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. <sup>33</sup> When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. <sup>34</sup> Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”<sup>[c]</sup> And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

<sup>35</sup> The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.”

<sup>36</sup> The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar <sup>37</sup> and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”





# Luke 23: 38-43

<sup>38</sup> There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

<sup>39</sup> One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

<sup>40</sup> But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? <sup>41</sup> We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

<sup>42</sup> Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.<sup>[d]</sup>”

<sup>43</sup> Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

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## 2 Corinthians 3:12-18

Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

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# Context

- The conversation appears only in the Gospel of Luke. In Luke the two men are described as “criminals.”
- In Matthew 15 and Mark 27 they are described as “Brigands/robbers/thieves or rebels”
- In John’s Gospel they are simply “others.”
- In Matthew and Mark’s gospels they are both described as insulting Jesus.





# Questions?

- Why is such an interesting exchange only recorded in one Gospel?
  - Why are they described as insulting him in Matthew and Mark's Gospels?
  - Who were they? What were their crimes?
  - Did they know each other? Had they encountered Jesus before? Had they heard of Jesus before this day?
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# What we do know.

- Both men were in the same context. Both encountered Jesus at this time.
  - One of them chose to insult Jesus with his dying breathes.
  - One of them had a different perspective
    - He understood who he was.
    - He understood who Jesus was.
    - He acknowledged that he needed Jesus.
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# Conversation

Criminal:

“Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

Jesus:

“Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

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# An Outcome and More Questions.

- Jesus gave him hope. He did not physically change the man's circumstances. Just like he did not change his own circumstances. The man still endured great torment but now there was hope.
  - Jesus does not respond to the other criminal.
  - Is there more dialogue? How does the mocking criminal respond when he sees that the other criminal is given hope and a promise of paradise?
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