

God's presence? **The wonderful truth is that Jesus' work on the cross is as perfect as His person; and one who is cleansed and redeemed by His blood is as fit and welcome to enter God's presence as Jesus Himself is.** Who would ever have dreamed of such a privilege! But that was not, and is not, the end of God's wonders:

*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.* 1 Corinthians 15:1, 3-4.

Jesus rose and ascended to Heaven. And He promised to come back. **And those who trust him are assured of being with Him, forever.** He said:

*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* John 14:1-3.

But there were two malefactors—two thieves. What about the other thief who, as far as we know, never repented. If he never believed in Jesus, he is certainly not in Paradise.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* John 3:16-18.

**Look at Christ's death from God's point of view. It concerns you personally. Christ died to save sinners. Repent, and „believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.“**

**For Christ also hath once suffered for sins,  
the just for the unjust,  
that he might bring us to God**

**1 Peter 3:18**

**Who his own self bare our sins in his own  
body on the tree, that we, being dead to  
sins, should live unto righteousness:  
by whose stripes ye were healed.**

**1 Peter 2:24**

**For he hath made him to be sin for us,  
who knew no sin; that we might be made  
the righteousness of God in him**

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

**If you have any questions,  
do not hesitate to contact us.**

**We would be happy to hear from you.**



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What really happened when

Jesus

died





That Jesus Christ died on a cross almost 2000 years ago is a well-known fact. **But many people do not know the tremendous significance of that awful event**—because they do not know what really happened behind the scenes. **God’s Word, the Bible tells us not only what people saw and what people did, but also what God saw and what God did.**

*And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted His raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided Him, saying, He saved others; let Him save Himself, if He be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked Him, coming to Him, and offering Him vinegar, And saying, If Thou be the king of the Jews, save Thyself. And a superscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Luke 23:32-38*

Jesus was crucified between two “malefactors” — between two criminals. In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, they are identified as thieves. If you and I had been there and looked up the hill where the three crosses stood, we might well have assumed (as others apparently did) that three criminals were being crucified there. Because of the abuse He had already received, Jesus may have looked more like a criminal than either of the thieves on each side of Him. Consequently, we would have viewed the scene something like this:



After all, God’s Word says, “*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*” Romans 3:23. And it says, “*Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.*” 1 Samuel 16:7. This means that every person on this earth, including you and me, has been judged guilty—every ordinary man. **But Jesus was not an ordinary man. He was God’s holy sinless Son, who had never sinned because He could not sin** (“no sin”—2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:22, and 1 John 3:5).

Consequently, when God looked down on Calvary, He saw something very different—something like this:



What would you expect that God would do where His beloved sinless Son was so cruelly and unjustly crucified? Well, Jesus had asked His Father to forgive His ignorant sinful people, and because God was willing to forgive them, for Jesus’ sake and **because of His own love for sinners, He left Jesus there;** and He let the crucifixion continue.

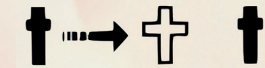
*And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise. Luke 23:39-43*

One of the thieves, after having mocked Jesus with the others, repented—he changed his mind. Now, observing Jesus, **he began to see what God saw—that Jesus was innocent—was truly the promised Messiah. Faith is seeing things God’s way.** The believing thief merely asked Jesus to remember him. In His response, Jesus promised the poor thief much more than he had asked. No doubt the thief had begun that day dreading a painful and shameful death on a cross, but now he knew he would end it in the company of his Savior—his Messiah—in paradise itself. How great a hope is that! **And it was absolutely certain to happen, because Jesus had said it would.** How could such a tremendous thing be true on such a terrible day?

*And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost. Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God,*

*saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. Luke 23:44-47*

Not only did God see what mankind could not see; but He also did, in those three hours of darkness, what nobody else could do and what nobody but Jesus Himself expected God to do. It was as if God pulled a curtain across that dreadful crucifixion scene while He did His most amazing and awesome work behind the scenes—in the three hours of darkness. What did He do? Let us see:



*But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8. Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree. 1 Peter 2:24.*

*For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Corinthians 5:21.*

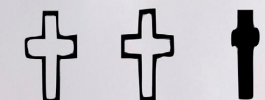
**God laid the sins of that believing thief on Jesus; and He laid my sins on Christ and punished Him instead of me.** And then He ripped open the curtain in the temple in nearby Jerusalem, to show that sin’s debt had been paid and that a way had been made for that believing malefactor, and for me, and for you to come boldly into God’s very presence! Why? How can that be?

*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. Hebrews 10:19.*

*The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1:7.*

*Redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. 1 Peter 1:18-19.*

So, after Jesus died, how did God see the crucifixion scene: God saw it something like this:



We know that the center cross represents Jesus. Which cross then represents the believing and cleansed former thief who is now in Paradise? Can you tell the difference? Which person represented is more fit for