

Am I really saved?
Week 3

Luke 23:32-43

32 Two others, both criminals, were led out to be executed with him. 33 When they came to a place called The Skull,^[a] they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left.

39 One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you’re at it!”

40 But the other criminal protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? 41 We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.” 42 Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.”

43 And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Title: Welcome to Paradise

Prayer

Intro: Anyone gotten lost before

- Leah is brilliant, but her sense of direction is not the best.
-
- Our second date.
-
- We just got done having coffee and we were gonna head to dinner.
-
- I know where to go, Ill tell you. Ok sounds good. Sure you dont want to use maps. Nah it is ok.
- This doesnt look familiar - pull up the maps. We were goin in the wrong direction.
- Haha that is fine. I need to be nice.
-
- I love being lost.
-
- Maps:
- Ope there is your turn. As we pass it.
-
- Are you serious. Sorry. It’s ok, don’t get mad. You like this girl. This isn’t a deal breaker, might be a red flag, but I gotta look past it.

Eventually, we got to our destination and it was a great dinner. We survived our first potential frustration.

Everyone likes to know where they are going.

You want to know where you are going.

In life, you want to know where you are going. But most importantly, after this life, you want to know where you are going.

Transition: Story

Jesus

The 2 men.

One was going to paradise. One was not.

Application:

A lot of you might wonder. What is after this life. Some of you have thought about it more than others. There has to be more. Is this it?

I had those same experiences when i was your age.

Story of me. I woke up terrified.

Main Point: Where do I go after this life?

What is next? There must be more.

First Criminal

39 One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you’re at it!”

He chose to deny Jesus and separate himself from Jesus.

Where do we go after this life?

If you do not choose to follow Jesus...

1. You will be separated from God for eternity.

Some say use hell as the description.

But what I want us to focus on is the separation from God.

What does it mean to be separated from God.

- There will be darkness
- Continued sadness
- Continued pain
- And Regret

Application: Some of you are experiencing that right now. And you are wondering if you can get past it and if you don't have to feel the way you are feeling.

We have tried this life long enough separated from God and we are looking for more.

Tonight, you could connect with the one you are looking for.

If we do not want to be separated from God for eternity, we must desire a relationship with Him.

Second Criminal

40 But the other criminal protested, "Don't you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? **41** We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn't done anything wrong." **42** Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom."

43 And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise."

He chose to defend Jesus. Desired to be connected to him. Even in his dying last words.

And Jesus said, you will be in paradise with me.

Paradise: means - The Holy Garden, refer to the Garden of Eden. More relatable. The place of true happiness and restfulness.

Side Note: We won't be in heaven for eternity. Heaven is just a waiting place and then God will make a new heaven and new earth for us to dwell in.

Where do we go when we die?

If we choose to follow Jesus....

2. You will go to the place of restfulness and true happiness.

Some describe that as heaven.

The most important part about this is we will be forever connected to God.

What does that mean?

- You will be in light for eternity. No darkness.
- No more pain or suffering.
- No more crying or tears.
- Most importantly - there will be restoration and wholeness. Our bodies, hearts, and minds will be whole.

For some who follow Jesus....

This is important to remember. Because you have been going through so much, have been struggling so much, have been in pain for so long, but just know this pain and suffering is just temporary,

**Darkness may endure for the night, but Joy comes in the morning.
And to hold onto this promise even when life is hard.
Keep in mind the future you have with Christ.**

For some of you who do not follow Jesus, this may be the hope and eternity you have been looking for.

- That if you choose to follow Jesus with all your heart, you could have hope in knowing there is an after this.
- There is a future for you. There is a place where the things you experience here will eventually fade away.
-
- Some of you right now are wondering if there is anything out there or anything more and the answer is yes.

There is and you can experience the eternity you have been so desiring.

The criminal even in his deepest darkest moment had found the everlasting life he was looking for.

Conclusion

Where do we go after this life.
Separated from God
Or we are connected to God forever.

**Death is so far away. What is this talk on death. Why now I am so young.
Eternity isn't as far away as we think.**

But truthfully we should have our minds on eternity a little more than we think we do because this life goes quicker than you think.

Psalm 103:15

New Living Translation

Our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die.

James 4:14

New International Version

14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

Mist Defention: Not like a lingering fog, but he more accurate definition would be a quick rain or blowing of wind with water in it. Like a water coming off a water fall. Mist goes out and then disappears.

Visual: Mist.

Mist Illustration

What am I going to do with my life.
I just broke up.
Im so young.
They didnt invite me to the party.
Im so sad.
I lost my friend.

Eternity is closer than we think.
Forever with God or not with him is closer than you think.

Question is: Will Jesus see you in Paradise?

- Will your friends.
- Will your family.
- Will your leaders.
- Will i
- Will God see you.

My hope for all your lives is Jesus will be waiting at the gates after you go from this life to the next and he will smile and say, welcome to paradise.