

EVERYTHING LED TO THE CROSS

- And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.** Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him. Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? **But for this purpose I have come to this hour.**” - John 12:23-27

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- Isaiah 53:5-6 (ESV Strong's) But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
- Psalm 22 – fulfilled in Matthew 27 – we see a psalm of anguish turn to a psalm of triumph

Ephesians 2:1-9 – the saving power of God's grace

- We were dead in our sins through disobedience to God
- God made us alive in Christ through His grace
- Not only alive, but exalted with Christ to show God's goodness
- Saved by grace, through faith, and not works
- NO ONE can boast in their own salvation
- Created in Christ for good works

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE
SAVED BY GRACE?**

UNDERSTANDING THE THIEF ON THE CROSS

Luke 23:32-43



WHAT CAUSES THE CHANGE?

- Self-reflection?
- Or was it what he saw in Jesus?
 - The beatitudes personified
 - The suffering servant of Isaiah 53
 - “You who would destroy the temple...”, Mtt. 27:39, John 2:19, 10:17-18
 - Something about Jesus was just different
- The trigger: “One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, ‘Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!’ Luke 23:39

WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO TRUST JESUS?

“But the other rebuked him, saying, ‘Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.’ And he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’”

- Do we truly appreciate the faith it took to make this statement?
 - What was the thief’s real problem?
 - What did he see that the Jews did not? (I Cor. 1:22)
 - What made him feel a spark of hope? (John 11:24-26, Luke 23:35, Matthew 27:40)

THE THIEF'S SALVATION

“And he said to him, ‘Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.’”

- “Paradise”, a garden
 - Paul saw it, II Cor. 12:3
 - The tree of life is there, Rev. 2:7
- Was it an act of faith or desperation?
 - “The Lord said to me: "Do not pray for the welfare of this people. Though they fast, I will not hear their cry, and though they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. But I will consume them by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.” - Jer 14:11-12
 - The “brood of vipers”, Mtt. 3:7-8
 - Asking isn't enough, Mtt. 25:11-12

THE THIEF'S SALVATION

- Jesus always responded to true faith
 - Mtt. 8:5-13 – the faith of the centurion
 - What was true faith? Heb. 11:17-19
- Is there a better example of true faith that Jesus could do everything that he said he would do?
 - Did this man recognize his own sin?
 - Did he believe Jesus was who he claimed to be?
 - Did this man act on his faith?
 - Had he been commanded to do anything else?
 - Why would this man believe Jesus could forgive him?
- Does true faith include action? Rom. 1:5

WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT FAITH

- Do we trust God under any circumstances?
- When are the times I can truly show Christ in my life?
 - “For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. 1Pe 2:20-24

WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT SALVATION

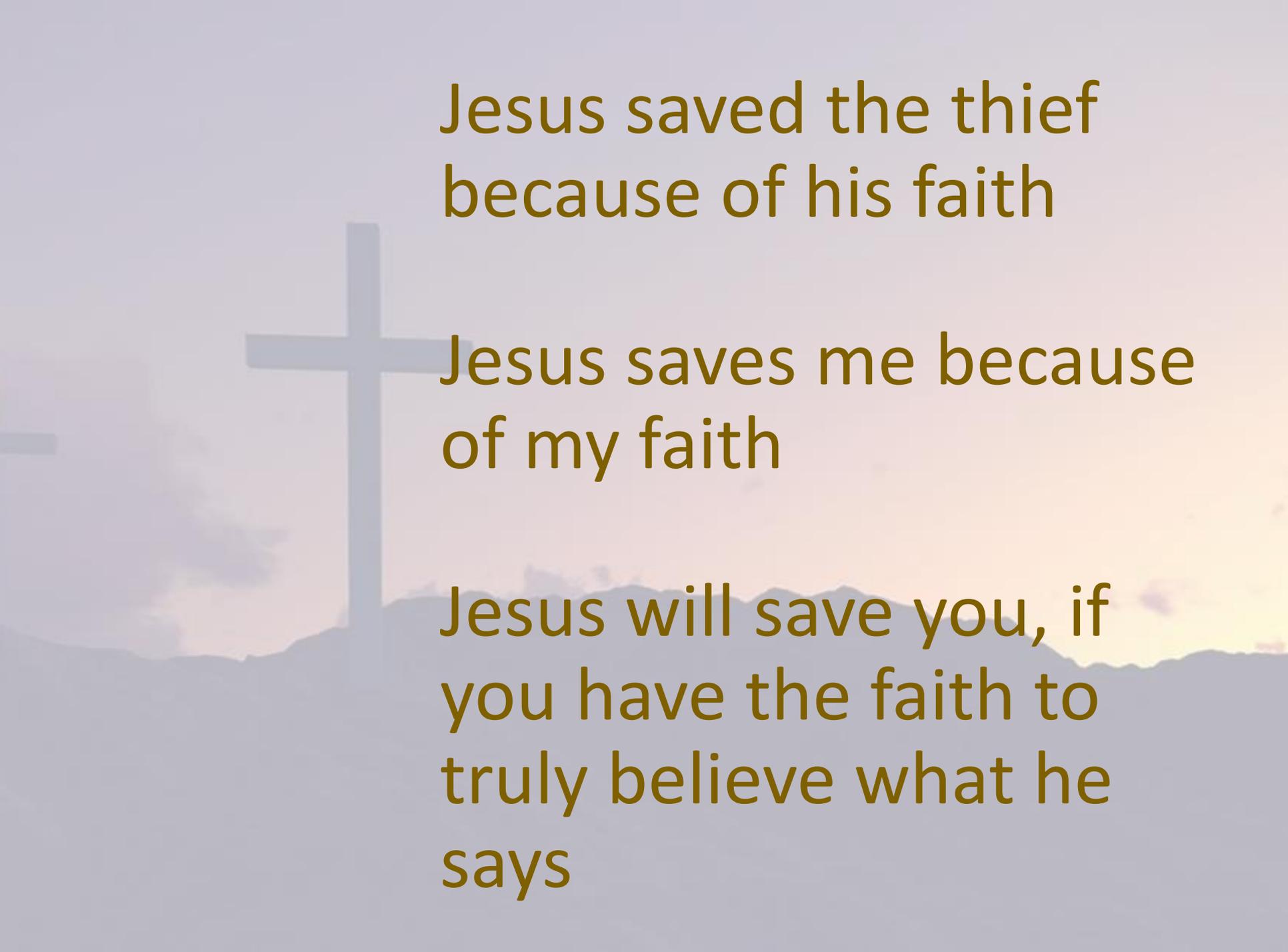
- How did Jesus save? What does that have to do with me?
 - “What is that to you?” John 21:18-22
- How did Jesus perform miracles? Did he have to do it a certain way?

Jesus decides how I will be saved. Not you. Not me.

WHAT IS OUR ATTITUDE?

- Acts 8:30-39 – “What hinders me”
- Acts 16:30-34 – “...That he had believed God!”
- Acts 22:8-16 – “What shall I do?” ... “Why do you wait?”

True faith seeks God's will, not mine, not my family's, not my church's



Jesus saved the thief
because of his faith

Jesus saves me because
of my faith

Jesus will save you, if
you have the faith to
truly believe what he
says