

**The cross has been a symbol of the Christian faith for centuries. Our churches use them as a reminder of the sacrifice that took place on that cross. We should also be reminded that Jesus is not on that cross!**

**For a while the Lord has been dealing with me about the redemption of Christ, and also the reception of Christ. As we look at today's scripture reference from the book of Luke we see two other men hanging on both sides of Jesus represent the actions and mindset of everyone here today and in our cities. We are going to look at the encounters at the cross.**

**1. THE ENCOUNTER AT THE CROSS OF REJECTION: Verse 39**

**I like how the King James Version describes the voice of rejection. It says that he "railed on him." Who likes to be railed on? I don't! The thief's voice of rejection was hurting, and he knew death was very near.**

**The thief and the voice of rejection was not sorry or repentant, but was focused on his own issues. He says something interesting to Jesus "If you are Christ save yourself and us!" There was some doubt declared there, but also it makes me think he had heard of Jesus before? For him to say "if you say who you are? then save yourself and us!" Sounds like doubt and rejection, but Jesus was doing exactly why he came to the earth just like Luke 19:10 to seek and save the lost!**

**Today we see a lot of rejection around us. They are seeking answers, and they want heartfelt answers to their problems...not just a quick fix. Jesus came to pay a debt we could not repay. Jesus was there, because of that man, yours, and mine. If you haven't made that decision to follow Christ, keep listening and make that decision today! He did this so that we that have made that choice to follow Jesus, and live with him forever!**

**2. THE ENCOUNTER AT THE CROSS OF RECEPTION: Verse 40**

**This is one of the most beautiful stories in the Bible. It illustrates the simplicity of salvation, and the man did not have a degree in Theology!**

**He did not have the opportunity to clean his life up, and couldn't if he tried!**

**He didn't have time to "work his way into Heaven.**

**He didn't have to offer a long and detailed "prayer of Salvation".**

**There was not a counselor at the foot of the cross telling him to "repeat after me"**

**He just simply trusted in Jesus and CRIED OUT FOR HIM TO SAVE HIM!!**

**A.W. Tozer: "The man who has met God is not looking for anything; he has found it."**

**His life was changed because of what Jesus was doing right next to him!**

**He can change your life just like the thief on the cross that reached out to Jesus!  
But before you experience this, you must come to Jesus just like this man did and see  
Jesus for who He is, and cry out to Him today!**

**If you will....HE WILL! - On that hill that day there was a Cross of Rejection, a Cross of  
Reception, and most importantly! Today is the day of salvation!**

### **3. THE ENCOUNTERS AT THE CROSS OF REDEMPTION: Verse 44-46**

**In John 19:30 we read that when Jesus cried, He cried "It Is Finished" ...What was  
finished?**

**GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION!!!**

**Redemption is Christ's atonement for human sin.**

**We were delivered from our sins by the precious blood of Jesus. - Ephesians 1:7 says we  
have**

**redemption through {Jesus} blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches.**

**When Jesus cried, "It is finished"... He used a word that meant "paid in full." - "It is  
finished" - to end, complete, conclude, to pay fully.**

**This speaks of discharging a debt.**

**This is the same word that would be stamped across bills when they were paid. Jesus  
stamped "paid in full" on our sin debt at Calvary.**

**Redemption is still possible for you today! I want us to look at the great price that Jesus  
paid for our redemption.**

**Oswald Chambers said - "All heaven is interested in the cross of Christ... all hell is  
terribly afraid of  
it... but men are the only beings who more or less ignore its true meaning."**

**Even before the cross Jesus had already endured more pain than a normal man could  
bear.**

**- He was scourged, which was enough to kill most men.**

**- It is commonly believed that the instrument used for scourging Jesus was the "cat of 9  
tails"**

**- This was a short whip with metal stones and bone tied into leather thongs**

**- As they beat Him with this instrument of torture His flesh began to tear and blood  
began to flow.**

**- They stripped Him of His clothes**

**- Then they put a scarlet robe on him.**

**- They fabricated a "Crown of thorns"**

**- They jammed this crown onto His head.**

- They put a reed in His hand to represent a Septer.
- Then they blasphemously bowed before Him and cried "Hail, King of the Jews" (they will bow again one day and they won't be mocking the will be begging for mercy!!)
- They spat on Him
- They plucked His beard
- Then grabbed the reed and hit Him on the head with it.
- Then they forced Him to carry his cross to the execution site.
- It is believed that the cross weighed near 150 pounds.
- Some experts believe that Jesus carried His cross the distance of over two football fields. In a weak and tormented state,
- Once at Calvary the cross was put on the ground and Jesus was thrown onto the cross.

- The spikes were approximately 7 inches long and 3/8 of an inch in diameter.
- These spikes were driven into His wrists and through His feet.
- They took that cross and lifted it up and dropped it into the hole
- As the cross fell down into the hole, no doubt His flesh tore.
- The position of the nailed body held His rib cage in a fixed position
- This would have made it extremely difficult to exhale
- It would have been impossible to take a full breath.
- He had suffered from the: scourging, the beatings, the walk with the Cross
- Jesus was extremely weak and dehydrated.
- He was losing significant amounts of blood.
- He suffered for several hours and after all things were complete... John 19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and died.

He did all of that so that you could be redeemed!

You will never make it to heaven without Jesus Christ... HE IS GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION!

Jesus paid the price for your sins! He came to die so that you can live! But you have a choice to make...

A. Will you be like the man on the Cross of Rejection and turn away the Christ?

B. Will you be like the man on the Cross of Reception and trust Jesus to save you from your sins?

Just like these men you and I are guilty

Just like these men you will die

Just like these men you have a choice to make

I do not want anyone to be in hell, and I want to make sure there are opportunities for people to find Jesus!

**When you stand before God, and we will stand before God! I want to hear “WELL DONE GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT!”**

**John 3:18 He that believes in him (Reception) is not condemned: but he who doesn't believe is condemned already (Rejection) Because he has not believed in the only begotten Son of God.**

**Evangelism Explosion-2 questions**

**CHALLENGE:**

**A few weeks ago on the Promise Keepers podcast. There was a section about marketplace ministry, and that it just isn't left for the inside of the church, but to the world we reach outside the church. What is your marketplace talents, passion, mission to further the Kingdom of God!**