

PARADISE WON
LUKE 23:43 / OCTOBER 22, 2017 / WED.

I. “IN PARADISE”.

- A. We’ve all wondered what heaven is like.
- B. Jesus used the word “paradise” to describe what heaven is like.
 - 1. It’s a Persian word meaning, “enclosure”, “park” or “garden”.
 - 2. Paul used the same word—2 Cor. 12:3-4.
 - 3. John used this same word the only other time it’s found in the Bible—Rev. 2:7.
- C. In John’s passage he mentions “the tree of life”.
 - 1. This is an important clue about heaven.
 - 2. Paradise isn’t just any garden.
 - 3. Paradise is “The Garden of Eden”—Gen. 2:9.
 - 4. So heaven or paradise will be like The Garden of Eden “before” the Fall of Man and the introduction of sin into the world.

II. “YOU WILL BE WITH ME.”

- A. We can imagine there were no family members or friends there at Golgotha to mourn either of the two thieves.
- B. Jesus, however, shocked the penitent thief when he told him he was not alone, that Jesus would be with him not only on the cross but more importantly after the cross and after death.
- C. This is the profound truth prophesied at Christmas—Matt. 1:23.
- D. It’s also the truth following the death of a Christian—John 14:1-3.

III. “TODAY”.

- A. Skeptics challenge the truth of this word due to the Bible telling us that Jesus was in the grave for three days prior to his resurrection.
- B. Remember, though, that time is a human limitation that God is not subject to and neither is eternity—2 Peter 3:8.

IV. "I TELL YOU THE TRUTH."

- A. Henry Blackaby in his book, "**Experiencing God**" asks, "What is truth?" His answer is that "Truth is a Person".
- B. This is the Bible's answer too—John 14:6.
- C. Jesus gave this revelation to his disciples early in his public ministry—John 8:31-32.
- D. Henry Blackaby is right. Truth is a person and Jesus sets us free not only from sin but also from death, as the penitent thief discovered.