

WORDS FROM THE CROSS

WEEK 2

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 27:44 (NLT)

Even the revolutionaries who were crucified with him [Jesus] ridiculed him in the same way.

John 3:16 (NLT)

For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

John 15:13 (NLT)

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NLT)

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Luke 19:10 (NLT)

For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.

John 18:37 (NLT)

Pilate said, "So you are a king?" Jesus responded, "You say I am a king. Actually, I was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. All who love the truth recognize that what I say is true."

2 Peter 2:4 (NLT)

For God did not spare even the angels who sinned. He threw them into hell, in gloomy pits of darkness, where they are being held until the day of judgment.

Luke 23:41-46 (NLT)

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."⁴⁴ By this time it was about noon, and darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock.⁴⁵ The light from the sun was gone. And suddenly, the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn down the middle.⁴⁶ Then Jesus shouted, "Father, I entrust my spirit into your hands!" And with those words he breathed his last.

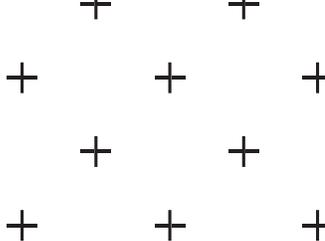
Ephesians 1:7 (NLT)

He [God] is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

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FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

1. Can you think of a time when someone you know said, “I’ll do it myself,” and it ended up costing them more time, energy, or money than if they’d asked for help?
2. Read Matthew 27:44. It’s extraordinary that Jesus would, in the midst of his own pain, speak to the criminals being crucified. What does this tell us about God’s heart? How might this inspire and encourage us as we deal with difficult people?
3. The story of George Wilson refusing a presidential pardon in 1830 is crazy but true! What thoughts come to mind when you think of people refusing God’s grace?
4. We loved it when Pastor Steve responded to those who say, “I don’t believe a loving God would send people to hell,” by saying, “I don’t either!” Who was hell actually created for, and why don’t we talk or think about it more often?
5. In Luke 23:41-42, the thief says: 1) We deserve to die; 2) This man has done nothing wrong; and 3) Remember me when you enter your kingdom. Can you remember when you made these same acknowledgements? What was that like?
6. The thief had no opportunity to get baptized, or to clean up his life, or even to pray an extensive “prayer of salvation.” Can you think of ways this might challenge your view on precisely how people come to faith?
7. Pastor Steve shared a quote by Oswald Chambers:
“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.”
Why do you think Chambers would say this? What might he have seen or heard or observed that would inspire him to make such a statement?
8. Read Luke 23:43-46. What do you find most inspiring or comforting, or perhaps even challenging, about Jesus’ statement, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise?”
9. Read Ephesians 1:7. If you were writing a thank-you note to God to express your gratitude for all he’s done, what would you be certain to include in the note?

