

The Messenger

COLDWATER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Jan. 30, 2011



THE OTHER THIEF ON THE CROSS

by Clifton Angel

In a sermon preached by the late brother Wendell Winkler, he posed a most interesting question: “How many times have you heard a sermon on the OTHER thief on the cross?” Most definitely we have heard sermons concerning the cross on which our Lord was crucified, and we must! Most definitely we have heard sermons on “the thief on the cross,” but what about the OTHER thief on the cross?

Last Sunday, I mentioned in a sermon the beautiful statement made by a late brother in Christ: “Every time I approach the Bible for study, it is as if I were approaching the ocean with a teaspoon to dip it dry.” Is it not true that the more we study God’s Word, the more this becomes a reality? I am continuously amazed at the power and depth in every word used in God’s revelation to man! It is because all Scripture is “God-breathed” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). Therefore when we *study or give diligence* (2 Tim. 2:15) to *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ* (2 Pet. 3:18), we are able to mine from Holy Writ things of which we had never thought before. In this article, we will briefly note interesting details of the more frequented “thief on the cross” and then move on to discuss what can be found in the Scriptures concerning the OTHER.

THE THIEF ON THE CROSS

At least we think we know him well because so often he is brought up in our conversations with friends, co-workers, neighbors, family, children, and Bible students. Why is he more popular than the **other**? It is because it is he who can be found at the center of many discussions concerning the

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you... (1 John 1:5).

**VISITORS,
WELCOME!**

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Class

10:30 a.m. WORSHIP

5:00 p.m. WORSHIP

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Class

We have Bible classes for all ages & Pew Packers on 1st & 3rd Sundays at 4:15 p.m.

P.O. Box 321

2008 Hwy. 306

(1.2 miles east of I-55)

Coldwater, MS 38618

(662) 622-7951

emailus@coldwatercofc.com

ELDERS

Billy Bland

W. Timothy Wilkes, Sr.

Jim Jackson

DEACONS

Jason Bayless Jared Brown

Jerry Davis Jeffrey Ferrell

Ron Johnson Andy Ratliff

PREACHER

Clifton Angel

matter of baptism for salvation. Many in the denominational world stand firm and boldly teach that because “the thief on the cross” was not baptized, then no one today has to be baptized to have their sins washed away. The first mistake they make is to assume that he has NEVER been baptized. I cannot boldly proclaim something on which God is silent. However, it is interesting the characteristics that God did provide concerning this one on a cross to whom Jesus said, *Today shalt thou be with me in paradise* (Lk. 23:43).

It is most needful to study carefully the text of Luke 23:32-43. First, we notice that this thief believed in God and His power to punish (v. 40). Next, we can see that this *malefactor* knew that he deserved the death he was dying (v. 41). Third, he also knew that Jesus DID NOT deserve the death He was dying (v. 41). How did he know that? Next, it is noteworthy that this thief called Jesus, “Lord” (v. 42). In the fifth place, let us all note that he knew that Jesus had a kingdom yet future (v. 42) How astonishing is that? He knew that Jesus’ death would not hinder the establishment of His kingdom (vv. 41, 42)! And therefore, “the thief on the cross” knew a lot more about Jesus than many understand. The Scriptures do not provide explicit evidence that this *malefactor* was immersed; however, I would contend that there is more evidence for him being a baptized man than not. Furthermore, the Scriptures do clearly teach that this thief did not have to be immersed in order to go to Paradise. *Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross* (Col. 2:14). These thieves died under the old law. Under the new law, the Scriptures are clear and explicit concerning one’s salvation by baptism (c.f. Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; John 3:3-5; Acts 2:37-47; 8:26-39; 10:47; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 12:13; 1 Pet. 3:21; and so many more).

THE **OTHER** THIEF ON THE CROSS

It is very possible that the **other** is less popular because of the negativity associated with him. No one wants to think about the one who blasphemed our Lord at the brink of the cruel death He suffered. Furthermore, no one wants to meditate upon the reality that must be realized in the circumstances of the **other** thief on the cross. When we really consider the state of the one who *railed on* (blasphemed, CA) *him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us* (Lk. 23:39), it is a horrifying realization.

First, we must note that because he was on the Roman cross as was our Lord, this **other malefactor** had to have been in excruciating pain. It is pain beyond our imagination because we have not experience such torture involved in the Roman execution. Next, it is worthy of noting that he called the Lord “Christ” (v. 39). Whether he knew of His authority and Sonship, I know...

...not; however, brother Winkler did say that he knew He was the Son of God. Even if he did not know, he the opportunity to know, considering the rebuke given by “the thief on the cross” thereafter this **other** thief made his blasphemous remark. Yet, what is most astounding is that in his last breaths, in the face of the Savior of the world, he wholly blasphemed His title, ability, and authority: *If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.* Brother Winkler pointed out we CAN so render ourselves incapable of responding to God! How sobering and saddening of a thought it is to know that one’s heart can reach a level of hardness where he will never repent no matter the circumstances. In Romans 1, contextually concerning the Gentiles before the cross, Paul mentioned several times how that God *gave them up* or *gave them over*. Why? It was because of their *reprobate mind* (Rom. 1:28). It was not God’s choice that they blatantly and continuously disobeyed Him all the while that they had *no excuse* because God provided them with special revelation and general revelation and (Rom. 1:18-20). Therefore, Paul’s words to the Gentiles in Ephesus should be noted:

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:17-24).

May the sobering realization of the possibility of hardening our hearts to the condition of that of the **OTHER** thief on the cross keep us ever faithful to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Sermon Review

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK

(Matthew 5:5)

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

- I. WHO ARE THE MEEK?
- II. WHAT SHALL THEY INHERIT?

WHAT THINK YE?

- I. THINK BEFORE LEAPING.
- II. THINK BEFORE SPEAKING.
- III. THINK BEFORE WEEPING.

NEWS & NOTES

Please Pray

Jayce Brown was sick yesterday.
Elizabeth Baker is at home and recovering well thus far.
Wiley Tuggle was in pain from waist down this past Wed.
Aubrey Ratliff was experiencing some cold symptoms Wednesday.

Tim II, Rachel, & Titus Wilkes--Tim, Rachel & Titus need our prayers as they get started and seek support for their full-time mission work, which is overseen by Coldwater.

For the Bible studies and correspondence courses that are on-going, and the students & administrators of the studies.

Tim & Lynn Wilkes are safe in Hawaii and the Fishers of Men classes are going well. Let us pray for their safety and the success of this great work.

Family & Friends

Doyce "Doc" Hunt--Jared Browns grandfather, was recently admitted back into the hospital.

Brianna Edwards had a tumor removed from her brain stem. She is recovering well, having to re-learn many things. She is the 12-year daughter of a co-worker of Ginger Bayless.

Joe Culbreath--several serious health issues.

James Angel--His cancer is in remission. He may still have a tumor.

Ann Embrey; Dunn Family; Steve Angel;; Dave Leonard, Sr.

Let us not forget to pray for the works being done through Fishers of Men, Far East Missions, and the Open Door Ministry.

January Birthdays

1/5 Cash Jackson	1/10 Elizabeth Baker
1/6 Mindy Moore	1/25 Jeffrey Ferrell
1/7 Tucker Johnson	1/30 Stephanie Bayless
1/9 Claire Easley	

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10).

Get Involved!

Sunday Night for the Savior
February 6 after PM Services.
Bring Contacts and Finger Foods!

Young Adults Valentine's Party
February 11 at the Ratliff's house.

Bible Bowl--February 12
10:30AM at the Looxahoma building.
STUDY Matthew 13-15!

Grief Seminar @ Independence
February 19 & 20 - Keith Mosher, Sr.

Privileged to Serve

Sunday, January 30

Morning

Prayer Before Class	Caleb Baker
Announcements	Andy Ratliff
Song Leader	Jared Brown
Lord's Supper:	
Preside	Johnny Bayless
	Jeffrey Ferrell
	Jim Jackson
	Payton Jackson
	Jason Bayless
Opening Prayer	Clifton Angel
Sermon	Jeremy Moore
Closing Prayer	

Evening

Song Leader	T
Opening Prayer	B
Sermon	A
Lord's Supper	Jeffrey Ferrell
	Johnny Bayless
	Wiley Tuggle
Closing Prayer	

Wednesday, February 2

Song Leader	Jared Brown
Prayer	Ron Johnson
Invitation	Clifton Angel
Prayer	Jerry Davis