

Station 9: Jesus Makes a Promise to the Thief

READ

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23: 39-43)

REFLECT

The first criminal wants Jesus to simply give him something and offer proof of who he is. The second, though, reproves the first and pronounces that their judgement is deserved while Jesus' is not. The second criminal doesn't just speak faith with his words but he also takes a faithful stance. He defends Jesus while acknowledging his own need for Jesus.

Who do we align ourselves with? Are we willing to be humble witnesses to Christ in the ways that we live and speak, knowing full well that we have done nothing to earn his love? Can we be honest about our brokenness and see that we are no better than anyone else? The one we are called to align ourselves with is the one who emptied himself and became obedient to death on a cross. God calls us to let go of power and strength and to align ourselves with those most in need, who, along with us, are praying, "Remember us, O Lord."

ACTION

Think of a gavel, and imagine the weight of it in your hands. Think on how God is our judge and yet in Christ we have been "remembered" and so our sentence has been forgiven. Like the thief on the cross, when we claim Christ we receive a place in Paradise. Say a prayer of thanks.