

Weekly Sermon Discussion Guide

November 20, 2022

Christ the King

Living the Liturgical Year

Luke 23:33-43

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- * What did you hear?
- * What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- * What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

³³ When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus^[a] there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."^[b] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵ And the people stood by watching, but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah^[c] of God, his chosen one!" ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him,^[d] "This is the King of the Jews." ³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding^[e] him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah^[f]? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?" ⁴¹ And he indeed had been condemned justly, for he was getting what he deserved for his deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in^[g] your kingdom." ⁴³ He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

REFLECTION

We recognize this last text in our 52-week journey through the liturgical year as more typical of scripture on Good Friday. On this Christ the King Sunday, we contemplate the crucifixion of Jesus as king of the Jews. We typically focus on the action and images within this passage rather than the spoken words. Read the entire text, focusing on the "plain speaking" of the characters: the leaders, the soldiers, the two criminals, and Jesus. **How do you feel when you hear them speak?**

We've all experienced the power of words when spoken by one with authority. Pay special attention to the exchange between Jesus and the repentant thief. Jesus' declaration to the man that he "will be with him in paradise" makes it clear that Jesus did not come into the world to establish another religion, but rather a kingdom. Religion has become a way to shape our lives so we can bridge the gap between the way things are and the way things should be. The thief has done nor can do anything to bridge this gap. **How does this change your perspective on Jesus' love for you and how you try to follow rules as a Christian?**

Picture yourself as the thief asking Jesus, "Lord, remember me." **In what parts of your life or relationships do you need Jesus to remember you right now?** *May you feel Jesus' presence as your king, who will never leave your side, who welcomes you exactly as you are.*