

“Getting What We Deserve...”

Luke 23:39-43

Introduction: *Now I lay me down to sleep...*

Billy Graham's 'last' suit

Setting: the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, two criminals crucified on either side of Him...all receiving a death sentence

Five short verses give us incredible insight into the amazing grace of God!

I. What the thief 'did'

A. Assessed his Situation (v.32, 39) -

- Negative reaction – Matthew 27:44; Mark 15:32
- Positive response – v. 40 “don't you fear God even at the end?”

B. Agreed with the Spirit –

- Romans 3:10 - no one seeks God on their own
- John 6:44 – You can't come to Christ unless you are drawn by the Father
- John 10:14-18; 27 – all who come to Christ are called by Christ
- Ephesians 2:4;8-9 – a free gift of grace to the spiritually dead
- (ref. John 11:17-44 – Lazarus' tomb was empty at one point too!)

C. Admitted his Guilt (v. 41) – no shifting of blame Psalm 51:4 “Against You, You only have I sinned...”

D. Acknowledged what he deserved (v.41) – Ever pray for justice?

- *Justice* is **getting** what you deserve
- *Mercy* is **not** getting what you deserve
- *Grace* is getting what you **don't** deserve

E. **Admonished his 'partner'** (v.40) – outward action revealed the change within - even at the last hour he took up the cause of Christ

F. **Asked the King for mercy** (v. 42) –
Ref. 2 Samuel 9 *Mephibosheth*

G. **Accompanied His Savior to Paradise** (v. 43) –
Christ's Faithfulness our only hope

II. What the thief did not/could not do

A. Establish a record of 'good' deeds to outweigh his 'bad' deeds

Perhaps the most difficult task for us to perform is to rely on God's grace and God's grace alone for our salvation. it is difficult for our pride to rest on grace. Grace is for other people – for beggars. We don't want to live by a heavenly welfare system. We want to earn our own way and atone for our own sins. We like to think that we will go to heaven because we deserve to be there. ~ R.C. Sproul

B. Get baptized and join the church (doesn't mean he wouldn't have...)

C. Gave regular financial gift\$ to the local church

III. What do you need to do?