

Between Two Thieves 05/21/01

Mark 15:27-28 “And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, and he was numbered with the transgressors.”

Matthew 27:46 “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Surrounded by thieves and numbered with transgressors, how he humbled himself there in that forsaken place. He stood condemned of God and forsaken, condemned and forsaken for me! What a savior!

And what a place of blessing he took there at Calvary. A place where none have ever been. A place we need yet to visit often and remember. I think there were many more he was numbered with, **the many** of Romans chapter 5. These articulated ones are the scores of the redeemed, where each one of us took our place with him. This is the sure place of blessing. A place that is ever open to those who seek refuge from a cruel and unforgiving world. A place we need to collectively congregate at every worship service. This safeguards our oneness in Christ, and alleviates certain ones from ascending to heights unknown for the body. **1Co 12:12** “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.”

Young’s literal translation of Romans 5:15-19, “But, not as the offence so also is the free gift; for if by the offence of the one **the many** did die, much more did the grace of God, and the free gift in grace of the one man Jesus Christ, abound to **the many**; and not as through one who did sin is the free gift, for the judgment indeed is of one to condemnation, but the gift is of many offences to a declaration of ‘Righteous,’ for if by the offence of the one the death did reign through the one, much more those, who the abundance of the grace and of the free gift of the righteousness are receiving, in life shall reign through the one--Jesus Christ. So, then, as

through one offence to all men it is to condemnation, so also through one declaration of 'Righteous' it is to all men to justification of life; for as through the disobedience of the one man, **the many** were constituted sinners: so also through the obedience of the one, shall **the many** be constituted righteous.

How many? All of the redeemed of course, and not a single one more, no matter how many times he walks the church isle to an altar call! Is there uncertainty as to which ones are justified? Absolutely not. He justifies as many as he died for, those whom he paid for during those three hours, and not a soul more.

“Numbered with the transgressors” what an account of such a one “without spot”! The word numbered is “#3049 in Strong’s Concordance. It is *logizomai*, middle voice. It is also translated in the AV - think 9, impute 8, reckon 6, count 5, account 4, suppose 2, reason 1, number 1, misc 5; for a total of 41 occurrences.

It means, 1) to reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over 1a) to take into account, to make an account of . 1a1) metaph. to pass to one's account, to impute 1a2) a thing is reckoned as or to be something, i.e. as availing for or equivalent to something, as having the like force and weight 1b) to number among, reckon with 1c) to reckon or account

2) to reckon inward, count up or weigh the reasons, to deliberate 3) by reckoning up all the reasons, to gather or infer 3a) to consider, take into account, weigh, meditate on 3b) to suppose, deem, judge 3c) to determine, purpose, decide.

This word deals with reality. If I "logizomai" or reckon that my bank book has \$25 in it, it has \$25 in it. Otherwise I am deceiving myself. This word refers to facts not suppositions.” [online bible quote].

There are many ways to count things. The ancient Chinese used a bead board. Thus the saying, “oh, he is a bead counter” referring to a job as an

accountant.

We also of late have gotten quite sophisticated in our tallying using computers. But human fingers still push the buttons, so buyer beware!

Luke 2:12 “And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”

The children of kings throughout history are brought into this life with much grandeur and opulence. Great preparations are made and much wealth normally spent to celebrate the birth of royalty in the line of earthly kingly secession.

Also the way these same children die after their rich lives are brought to fruition are as well succored in kingly and pompous honor. But, **Isaiah 55:8** says, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.” Also **Isaiah 55:9** “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

These two verses Mark and Luke, which attest to the manner in which our Lord entered and exited this world, are perfectly amazing considering who he was.

Luke 2:12 Speaks of a sign. This sign was given to annunciate the validity of the Messiah being born. Such a marked contrast to how man operates. It is almost as if the Lord looks for the most extreme opposite of the way men conduct themselves and then sets in motion his plans so they may not look as though man had anything to do with it.

Why is this done one might ask? **1Corinthians 1:27** “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;” **1 Corinthians 1:28** “And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to

nought things that are:”

The testimony of scripture are very clear with regard to these concepts. There can be no mistake. When the Lord undertakes something, he usually underscores it with action completely unlike that which man would do. These are the marvelous ways of God. Numbers 23:19 “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”

Our problem is we compare ourselves to God when in actuality he stands alone in his majestic grandeur.

The thieves speak to me of our ancestors Adam and Eve. They took something they should not have taken in the Garden of Eden. Christ being our substitute took our place at death, with the criminals. We descended from their theft as well. Usually there is no instruction needed on how to teach a child how to steal; it comes naturally.

Taking our place at Calvary, the Lord put back what our ancestors stole. He replaced our debt with his own righteousness. He stood condemned in our place before the righteous tribunal of God and suffered hell for us.

Spiritually, many believers are guilty of larceny and misrepresent the original claim made by others. This is usually done with the intent to discredit or invalidate the innocent. The history of religious writings, are full of misrepresentations. Many have been falsely accused of saying one thing when in reality, if their words are closely scrutinized, said something else all together. Then again, we show our true evil natures over and over again, even with a new nature alongside to guide us!

2 Corinthians 2:14 “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.”

Left to our own, we would inevitably fail most consistently. It is only by

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the rich measure of his Grace that we succeed at all. Praise God for his mercy endures forever!