

The Crucified One

Scripture Reading — Luke 23:26-43

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. — Luke 23:33

Thank God if you were surrounded by love as you grew up, nurtured and trained to know right from wrong and to resist sin. There's a rough world out there, where Jesus fell into the hands of wicked people.

There came a day when I had to go out into the world to find a job. For two years I drove a cab in New York City. Early each morning I sat in the dispatching room of the fleet, waiting with other men to be assigned a taxi, to beat the streets all day and earn a meager living. The room was thick with cigar smoke. Men discussed the horses from the betting sheets. Smutty magazines circulated freely; coarse language sprinkled the conversations. By and large, it was a rough crew.

But that was nothing compared to the setting at Jesus' crucifixion: he was stripped naked, beaten, mocked, and spat on; soldiers gambled for his clothes; he was nailed to a cross, crucified between criminals, and his dead body was mutilated with a spear thrust to the heart.

Crucifixion was a cursed death reserved for the worst of criminals. In awesome humility and love, the Son of God descended to the lowest depths, was treated like the scum of the earth, carried the punishment of our sin, and took our place to save us. Do you know that he died for you too?

Prayer

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for humbling yourself to be handed over to wicked people and crucified. Save us and lead us to eternal life, we pray. Amen.

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Printed on October 13, 2019