

Max'e FAK'ter

legs had been broken. But he had (joined a new band) not a band of robbers but a band of the redeemed. He has joined Paul, Calvin, Knox--.

The Lord himself --Speaks! Not a priest, not a council, not a creed, not a church, but the Lord!

IV. THIS MAN'S THEOLOGY APPLIED TODAY

Just a young Nian, but his theology valuable.

1. Discovered Jesus to be Personal.

Jesus was real--there he was--the Son of God. The Center Place--No impersonal thing to Him.

An impersonal Christ draws us unmoved and cold. Your religion may be vague--abstract--truth--an institution--a system.

But this man's religion was Personal. His gospel was Jesus--moral principals do not save.

2. Discovered Jesus to be Life Changing.

Realized (Jesus loved him) not because he was good, not because he deserved it, but in spite of his sin.

He (felt the change come over his life) You can experience the same. (Bishop Co. Selwyn, Miss. New Zealand) wrote in 1840, "I am in the midst of sinful people, who have been accustomed to sin uncontrolled from youth. If I speak to a native on murders, vandalism, adultery, he laughs in my face and

"THE PENITENT MALEFACTOR"

Luke 23:42; Matt. 27:38-44; Mark 15:27-28; Luke 23:32-33;39-43

it, evil, Embitter, Calprit, Criminal ---
Introduction: Bible gives us human (personal details) a name is mentioned, a family described--human interest--tender love--friendship--Supreme interest.

Focus your eyes on Jesus and see what he does for a man.

I. NOTE THE CIRCUMSTANCES

We may cringe from the Cross--but central to the Christian faith.

(A Trial) has been completed--Jesus and 2 other men are led away to be crucified--the common means of (execution) for rebels and criminals in those days. On the way Jesus fell under the weight of the crossbar of the cross, which was customary for the condemned man to carry. Soon the body of Jesus was lifted into the air on the cross. The two thieves were also nailed to crosses and erected one on the right and other on the left. Those two were set in the light and love of the dying Lord for a few hours.

II. WHO WAS THIS MAN? (THE PENITENT MALEFACTOR)

Belonged to one of the (bands of Jewish rebels) They cherished freedom for Isreal. They banded together for and by stong oath to break the Roman yoke.

But a zeal based on hate is largley carnal pride. Their

zeal gave way to outrage and lawlessness. Plunder became their trade--murder.

Roman justice (seized them) and made them suffer the penalty of the cross.

The penitent malifactor was one of the two--this man had a good mind, good understanding, great courage.

He came to the cross reckless, defiant, a wasted soul, a lost soul ripe for hell.

III. WHAT HAPPENED TO THIS MAN ON THE CROSS? (Penitent Malifactor)

1. Saw the Beauty of Holiness--hanging on the cross thinking of the (catalogue of his crimes)--he fixed his eyes upon his fellow sufferer. He saw a sight he had never seen before. There in holiness--He heard the voice of the Priest or ruler. He listened to those who passed by--he witnessed the soldiers gambling. From his cross he saw Jesus--like sweet music, above the rumble of the storm. "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

2. His Conscience was Active.

A. (Began to Fear God) This man's conscience no longer frozen but warms up. The first thing that comes alive is fear of God. His fellow malifactor has added to the sneers of the Priest.

His heart softened. Luke 23:39-40. In the Presence of Jesus Fear took hold of him.

B. Knew He was Guilty. Luke 23:41

We are getting what is due. God and conscience cannot be escaped. Sooner or later every man must face them. Some feel that a man may so waste his life in sin that he is content with it. It is not so. There is always God and conscience--that man was troubled by his thoughts, like ("Belshazzar") watching the handwirting on the wall and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another."

Do you listen to God? To your conscience?

The (court had condemned Jesus)--the mob had brought him to Calvary. His friends had deserted him. Yet here is a man with his mind and soul open declaring "I am the sinner, this man is innocent." (done nothing. ^{41.})

3. He pleads for mercy. 42

When a man sees the holiness of Jesus, and his conscience becomes active he is (not far from the kingdom.) He leans out towards Jesus, though he is suffering from pierced hands and feet and pleads for mercy. Luke 23:42

Here is a man who truly saw his Lord on the cross--the way we must look.

4. He was Saved. Luke 23:43. Today! Think of it--His old body of clay to be taken down from the cross after his

John Biegelisen: Faculty-Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis--Born Russian Jew. A colporteur visited his town and sold man- N. T.'s-Rabbi collected and publicity burned them in town square. Young John passed by the charred ruins noticed these words--"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain--traditions from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." This led to the young man's conversion and a life of service.

You say, the "sweet mercies of God are for others," not for me.

(It is not so!) I preach x crucified for you. Look at Him. (Look until God and his holiness) become clear, look until your (conscience speaks) with a demand that you have never known before.

Look at Him as one (who knows the worst about you) as one who died to reconcile you to God.

Man did (not have lot of time to decide)--death coming on.

declares these things are good for us. But when I tell them that these and other (sins brought the son of God to the cross to die)--they open their eyes and care and wish to hear more and presently they acknowledge themselves sinners and say they will leave off their sins.

Many of us (know of Jesus and the cross) but make no commitment to him. WHY? Usually there is something in our life we do not want to surrender.

E. V. Moorman cultured--ed.--wealthy American--conflict psychiatrist--reported 1200 dreams--spent 12,000 in fees. Voice spoke "Look this way." Felt it was the voice of x and later heard gospel story and said this is it. "My quest is over." Accepted x as personal Saviour, happy, useful, (left a Layman's trust) for Evangelism to share with others.

Man on Cross heard voice "Look this way." Know his quest was over.

(John Wesley) "Knock the props from under people that they try to hang onto to keep from trusting God." Christ can take over --what did the theif have left to hold to--church--baptism--etc., Jesus changed his life.

(3. Discoverd Jesus had power to Save anywhere and without Delay.

This man had been nailed to his Cross some time before

30. Nov. - March 16, 58 P.M. -
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noon. He walked to Galgotha with cursing in his heart and despair looking into the face of death. He faced not only death on the cross, but second death.

He is chilled by conviction. On lonely hill--nailed to a cross--the (last place on earth a man would have thought of to be saved.) He was saved with out delay. In an instance he passed into the realm of an endless life with Jesus.

The great spiritual change is always in a moment. Many may struggle--with conviction--may not be conscious of the moment.

(Sudden conversion--ebbing tide?) retreating water leaves behind the ribbed and sifted sand. You can not tell when it began to turn--but then in a moment of time it had turned. This man could tell you the moment, the hour, the place, when the forgiveness of God flooded his soul.

You may have been under deep conviction for years and today in a moment your destiny can be decided.

Now, if never before Look on Jesus--Look on him as he hangs on the cross--lean out and commit yourself to him.

(4.) DISCOVERED Jesus saved simply by faith.

He was justified by (faith alone.) He was snatched as a brand from the burning.

Complete dependence on God--vivid sense of the unseen

world. Humble trust in Jesus.

(By this single experience) Faith in the unseen. He passed into the realm with the saints of God. Like Abraham by faith when tried offered up Issac, like those through faith subdued kingdoms.

(Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Surely if this sin burdened Malefactor could so swiftly pass into such spiritual beauty (what might you become?) Yield yourself to God by faith.

(5) Discovered Jesus was anxious to save even the Worst of sinners

Here is the (most unlikely man on earth saved)--here is a man among undesirable circumstances saved--here is a man who had wasted his youth and had joined a band of rebels and is on the very edge of doom. Here is one of the worst sinners saved!

(What a message for you here in this service!)

Grace has such possibilities.' Men and women listen to the promises of forgiveness and cleansing.

(You say, if you knew my youth.)

You say, if you knew my (manhood), sin, dark passages of my life--you would not appeal to me to accept the Gospel. I know my sin. Sinned against you and grace--I feel my transgression.