

“At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left. And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads and saying, ‘You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.’ In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying, ‘He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him. He trusts in God; let God rescue Him now, if He delights in Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words.”

- **Matthew 27:38-44**

“They crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left. [And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘And He was numbered with transgressors.’] Those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, ‘Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself, and come down from the cross!’ In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying, ‘He saved others; He cannot save Himself. Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!’ Those who were crucified with Him were also insulting Him.”

- **Mark 15:27-32**

“One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, ‘Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!’ But the other answered, and rebuking him said, ‘Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.’ And he was saying, ‘Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!’ And He said to him, ‘Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.’”

- **Luke 23:39-43**

**Key Point:** One thief changed and embraced Jesus Christ while the other did not.  
What happened? (Luke 23:39-43)

**Lesson #1** – The thief on the cross who embraced Jesus Christ recognized Jesus Christ both as God and as a man. (v40-v41) / The other thief did not care to give respect or reverence to the person and position of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Son of Man. (v39)

**Lesson #2** – The thief on the cross who embraced Jesus Christ reverenced Jesus Christ as God. (v40) / The other thief reviled Jesus Christ with insults and interrogation while demanding deliverance. (v39)

**Lesson #3** – The thief on the cross who embraced Jesus Christ communicated that Jesus was sinless and implied that Jesus was suffering for the sake of others. (v41-v42) / The other thief did not consider Jesus Christ's agenda for the cross. (v39)

**Lesson #4** – The thief on the cross who embraced Jesus Christ acknowledged the fact the he himself was guilty of sin and deserved condemnation for his sin. (v41) / The other thief did not accept the fact he was a sinner that deserved judgment for his sins. (v39)

**Lesson #5** – The thief on the cross who embraced Jesus Christ was certain of death and life after death. (v42) / The other thief was consumed with staying alive. (v39)

**Lesson #6** – The thief on the cross who embraced Jesus Christ received the fact that he could not save himself from the judgment for his sin and was convinced that Jesus Christ was the only one that could save him. (v42) / The other thief was not reasoning in reference to his sin condition but centered on deliverance from his situation. (v39)

**Lesson #7** – The thief on the cross who embraced Jesus Christ trusted the fact that Jesus Christ was King and had a Kingdom that transcended this temporal life, and he called on Jesus Christ to take notice of His faith to save him from his sin condition and to take him into that eternal Kingdom. (v42) / The other thief treated Jesus Christ as a means to his personal temporal deliverance, not as a King. (v39)

(Portions of the above insights were adapted from Dr. Andrew Woods,  
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## True Faith in the Gospel vs Intellectual Awareness of the Gospel

The Gospel is:

The Outcome Will be:

Long term Effects are:



Trusted, Relied upon, Depended upon to save from the Penalty, Power and Presence of Sin unto a Right Standing with God

Transformation with intent to know, love and serve God and others

- Love for God and Others
- Standing Firm in the Faith
- Confidence (before God/man)
- Dependence (on God not man)
- Reliance (on God not self)
- Hope in the Return of Jesus Christ

Agreed with Intellectually but not depended upon to save from the Penalty, Power, and Presence of sin unto a Right Standing with God

Intellectual Awareness with no intent to know, love and serve God and others



- Belief that has no action
- Proudful
- Dependence on self
- Reliance on self
- Hopelessness



## The Gospel

### 1. The Detriment

Romans 3:23 – “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

We all have failed to live up to the standards of God and demonstrate His character. This is what we call sin.

### 2. The Devastation

Romans 6:23 – “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Revelation 20:15 – “And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

The punishment and payment for sin is that mankind is separated from God in life and in relationship and will be placed in the eternal lake of fire to burn in hell for all eternity, apart from receiving the gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

### 3. The Deliverance

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 – “Now I make known to you brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”

Philippians 2:5-8 - “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who although existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

2 Corinthians 5:21- “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Jesus Christ who is God the Son came to earth, took on manhood, lived a perfect life, and was crucified, buried, and resurrected in order to take the punishment and pay the penalty for our sins. This was done to deliver us from having to pay for our sin through burning in hell forever and to reconcile us back into right relation with God forever.

#### **4. The Directions**

John 3:16 – “God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

John 17:3 – “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

Acts 3:19 – “Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”

Put your trust & confidence in the person of Jesus Christ and the work Jesus Christ completed to save you from the consequences of your sin, and you will be delivered from the penalty, the power, and soon the presence of sin unto a new and right relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

#### **5. The Downfall**

John 3:18 – “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

Ephesians 2:1-3 – “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lust of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”

Ephesians 5:5-6 – “For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”

If you refuse to follow the directions to place your trust and confidence in the person of Jesus Christ and the work of Jesus Christ to save you from the consequences of sin and to reconcile you to a new and right relationship with God the Father through the Son, Jesus Christ, you will spend the rest of your life separated from God, living a life of sin, and spend eternity burning in the lake of fire as payment for your sin, which is the judgment for unbelief in Jesus Christ.

#### **6. The Difference**

John 1:12 – “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in the name.”

2 Corinthians 5:18 – “Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.”

If you put your trust & confidence in the person and work of Jesus Christ, you will be placed in the family of God, you will become a Child of God, you will be reconciled to a right relationship with God the Father, and you will be able to share this good news with others so that they may receive the gift too.

## **7. The Delight**

Philippians 3:8-11 – “More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

As a result of becoming a child of God and being reconciled to a right relationship with God the Father through His Son, Jesus Christ, there will be a desire: to know His Son Jesus Christ, to be like His Son Jesus Christ, and to be useful to His Son Jesus Christ.

## **8. The Director**

Ephesians 1:13-14 – “In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.”

Romans 8:14 – “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.”

Galatians 5:16 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”

Romans 8:3-4 – “For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

As a result of becoming a child of God and being reconciled to a right relationship with God the Father through His Son, Jesus Christ, you will be given God the Holy Spirit to dwell within your soul. God the Holy Spirit will be given to you to assure you that salvation in Jesus Christ is

secure and all that comes with that salvation will happen. God the Holy Spirit will be given to guide you in the right direction in your relationship with God and to empower you to obey God as you walk by His power.

## **9. The Dialogue**

If you would like to receive this gift and be reconciled to a new and right relationship with God, you may use these words as a means to express to God your sincere desire to be saved from the penalty, power and presence of sin unto a new and right relationship with Him. Remember, the power to save you is not in these words but in God to whom you are using these words to pray. If these words reflect your desire to be saved from sin and to be reconciled unto a new and right relationship with God then they will be a means of dialogue with God, who will save you as a result of your sincere faith, not by merely repeating these words:

*“Father God I understand that I am a sinner and need to be forgiven and delivered from my sin condition and have a restored relationship with You. I understand that You, Lord Jesus Christ, are God the Son, and that you took on manhood, and was crucified, buried, and resurrected to pay the penalty for my sin in order to deliver me from the penalty, the power and soon the presence of sin unto a new and right relationship with You and God the Father that starts now and will continue in heaven. I understand, believe and trust in this fact and now entrust myself to You, Jesus Christ, as my savior from sin, the Lord of my life and reconciler of me unto a new and right relationship with You and God the Father. Thank you Jesus Christ for saving me so that I may know You and God the Father. Thank you God the Holy Spirit as you now take residence in my soul and will guide me into this new and right relationship and empower me to obey accordingly. May you now lead me, oh God, to the Church that will teach me how to live in this new life I have with you.”*

## **10. The Discipleship**

If you have been sincere in your dialogue with God to deliver you from sin unto a new and right relationship with Him- congratulations, you are now in the family of God and have a new and right relationship with Him! Now, find a church that will help you move in the direction of knowing Jesus Christ, becoming like Jesus Christ and being useful to Jesus Christ.

Remember: God did not save us just to go to Heaven but that we may be delivered from the penalty, power, and soon the presence of sin unto a new and right relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ, which involves intimate fellowship with God, character development into the image of Jesus Christ and service for Jesus Christ while connecting intimately with other fellow believers in a local church – heaven comes along with the relationship!

John 17:3 – “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

2 Corinthians 3:18 – “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”

Ephesians 2:8-10 – “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

Hebrews 10:23-25 – “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”

John 14:2-3 – “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”