



HELP OTHERS IN THE SAME STRUGGLE AS YOU

This week, we learned another way to live through a bad day by observing how Jesus handled His worst day. As He hung on the cross between two criminals after being brutally beaten and mocked, Jesus could have focused on His own problems. Instead, by using His experience with crucifixion to minister to the criminal who hung next to Him, Jesus taught us that we can take what we're going through and help others who are experiencing similar struggles. We are called to use our gifts and passions to serve others, and we minister best from the place we have struggled the most. Ministering to others shifts our focus from our own needs but also helps us see the solution to the problems we face. Helping others through their struggles puts our problems in perspective and reminds us that there is purpose in our pain. When we use our challenges help others, God steps in to offer them stability, support, and salvation. We can keep an eternal perspective when times are difficult by remembering that Jesus offers us more than a better now; He offers a better place. One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom. Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." !

Main Lesson: We are not on the same boat we are in the same storm. By God's grace pulled us into His ark, He calls us to throw out the rope and pull others in.

Read **Luke 23:35-43**

Discussion Questions

- Discuss the real reason why Jesus was on the cross in the first place. Read 1 Peter 3:18, Ephesians 2:1-10.
- Think of a time when you were struggling and someone was there for you. How did this person help you get through your difficult situation?
- Discuss why it is important to have close friends who support you when you struggle and why being involved in a DGroup is essential. Why do you think it is difficult for people to admit they are hurting or struggling? How can you make sure you don't disqualify yourself from helping others when you face your own struggles?
- Discuss the ways God can teach you as you help someone else through a difficult situation. We are called to serve others by using our gifts, passions, and our difficult experiences.
- Discuss how serving others is not enough without the Gospel is important. Why is helping someone without sharing the Gospel futile?

Prayer Focus

- Pray for God to connect you with people with similar life experiences, and ask for the opportunity to help them by sharing what God has taught you. Pray for courage, strength, and the right words to show them compassion.
- Pray for Pastor Jon as he prepares for his sabbatical (provision, planning, protection).

Next Steps Identify someone you can help through a difficult situation. Serve them by using your personal experience to encourage them this week. Invite them for coffee or lunch, and pray for them.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Baptism Bash (April 24th).