

In the Barn!

Barneys Newsletter



No. 36 – 25th July 2021



Consider the Crucifixion

extreme opposite. Was it while he had these thoughts in his mind the other thief railed Jesus saying, “if you are the Christ save yourself and us”

This was too much for the other thief who made it very clear why they were being crucified. They deserved the crimes they had committed and if able to escape the crucifixion his thief companion would continue in his criminal behaviour. But for him to see such an innocent man on a cross beside him, who only did goof, this was the last thing Jesus deserved. Did the comparison between their lives props the thief to say to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when you come into your Kingdom”?

What was he thinking of when he used the words, “remember”? Simply being in a crowd and attracting the attention of Jesus, would he then realise Jesus had remembered him? It must have

Let us imagine the Crucifixion through the eyes of the pertinent thief and through the eye of Jesus when he hears the request from the thief alongside of Him.

By being crucified the penitent thief had much to think about as he experienced the pain and cruelty he was going through. He realised the vast difference between himself and Jesus. He knew why he was on the cross but Jesus had not done anything like he had. It was the

**by John
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Cockatoos



Yesterday I needed strength and comfort to get through the day. I felt weak and overburdened in the face of all I had to do, of people who relied on me. I flipped through the bible half-heartedly, looking for magic words, an instant fix, but that is not how the bible works. I did not want to read it the way it works best in us; drinking it in, day after day, growing me slowly, seeing its truth as I live through each day. I sighed. I did not want to pray either. I did not know what to say. I felt empty. But if I don't read the bible, if I don't pray, what hope

is there? I would truly be lost and struggling. So I prayed; the kind of exhausted, incoherent prayer we pray when we are totally spent, and we only have the very depths of ourselves to call from. Psalm 42:7 describes it thus.

“Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me”.

Then I saw Psalm 91, where I had left my bible open. It is a crystal clear image of the love, comfort and protection we have in God, through Jesus.

Psalm 91:4

“He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart” and;

Psalm 91:14-16

“Because he loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation”.

Long ago, before he created the world, God knew that yesterday, I would be feeling the way I felt, and would read those words. That is the kind of care he takes of us, how he has planned for us, in intricate detail so we have what we need in every breath of our lives.

I had faith, right then, that though there were no magic words that would make me power through my day; that I could trust God to bring me through to the other end. I could lean on him, he was there at my shoulder, even if I couldn't feel the effects of his arm around me, right then.

My phone beeped. A text message from a Christian friend, 'Cooee'. It was unexpected and I smiled. I knew he was reaching out to cheer me, to give my low mood a nudge upwards. Outside, I saw cockatoos going from bin to bin looking for food. I remembered Matthew 6:26

“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?”

I especially remembered walking round the block looking up at the birds in the trees, one sunny Sunday afternoon, after Joe preached a sermon on it. He suggested we do that to remind ourselves of the Lord's infinite love for us.

I laughed. The cockatoos were trying to lift up the bin lid. They reminded me that we need each other; the cockatoos were helping each other, and my friend was reaching out to shake me out of my doldrums.

I would not have expected God to have answered my prayer that way. If you had asked me what I needed to get through the day, it would not have been a cooee from a friend, and a couple of cockatoos going

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through the garbage. I thought I needed internal fortitude alone. God knew better. We can't do this alone. We need to depend on God, to remember that as Christians, we support each other. That's why God sent me a friend's cooee, and cockatoos. I felt stronger and brighter. I knew I was being held up by God.

by **Kathy Hansen**

been much more, for he called Jesus "Lord implying he knew Jesus had a kingdom and could give him Eternal life. To which Jesus replied, "Truly I say to you, this day you will be with me in Paradise", that is where Jesus is.

What a stunning and magnificent reply of glorious assurance contained in these words. Can it be recalled anywhere in Scripture that such an assurance of Eternity was given to anyone else?

What did this mean to Jesus to hear this request in those last hours of His life? Did Jesus recall the rejection He

had suffered? His own people crying out, "to crucify Him". His own town turned on him and wanted to kill Him. When He wept over Jerusalem and now as he dies on the cross where are His disciples?

Yet, at the very last Jesus hears a response that must have thrilled Him even as he suffers in pain and agony. "Lord, remember me when you come into your Kingdom", this being his last encounter with another human being as he dies upon the cross being a positive one. Someone snatched from the jaws of Satan and everlasting damnation is now in the Kingdom of God. What a final climax to His ministry before He dies. One can only ponder whether this was

also in the mind of Jesus when he uttered the very last words, "it is finished".

Was this stark difference between the two lives that brought the thief to be known as the penitent thief. I think so. It is in the Scripture where God says, "to be holy for I am holy". As we allow God to work in our lives, people will make one of two reactions as that came from the two thieves. When people see others different from themselves they can either criticise and ridicule, or they can ask why are you so different from me? As we consider the crucifixion, let us be prepared for either response as people respond to us as Christians.

Find-A-Word

Acknowledge	Crystal	Infinite	Sent
Afternoon	Damnation	Jerusalem	Sermon
Assurance	Disciples	Kingdom	Stronger
Cockatoos	Eternity	Laugh	Support
Cooe	Everlasting	Love	
Crime	Garbage	Remind	
Cross	Hold	Roar	

P R Q L R Y T I N R E T E Y N
A J L C E E A B D N I M E R Y
V F M Q G T M S E G A B R A G
S S T N N W N I S J C R O S S
E U C E O D J E R U S A L E M
R P O O R K L C S C R W I N H
M P O M T N P A M D U A S M K
O O E Z S H O D T O H Y N N Z
N R E R O A R O Y S D G G C N
E T I N I F N I N W Y G U F E
S O O T A K C O C P H R N A T
H G N I T S A L R E V E C I L
Z S E L P I C S I D J V L O K
G R L M B N O I T A N M A D B
Q A C K N O W L E D G E V O L

PRAYER POINTS



- Pray for church, that we will be placing our hope in Christ. Pray for the talk this week on Hebrews. gie thanks for the Jesus as the eternal high priest who intercedes for us.
- Pray for the Premier as she continues to think through the risks. Pray for wisdom as she seeks to balance the various community interests.