

DENAIR FRIENDS CHURCH

Devotions with Matt

April 3, 2020

This devotion was written by a group of fellow students and me a few years back as we reflected on the 7 Statements of Christ on the Cross. May they be an encouragement to you as we approach Good Friday.

REDEMPTION

Prayer of Preparation

Heavenly Father,

I offer you my life today. Help me to slow down and listen to You. Please speak into my very being whatever you want me to hear today and transform me more into your likeness from our time spent together. Help me to be obedient to follow through with whatever you ask of me. Amen.

Statement from the Cross #2

Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43

Thoughts of a Fellow Sojourner

I remember as a little boy scouring through back alleys and ditches with my friends in search of aluminum cans, but we were less concerned with recycling than we were with the thought of redemption. We knew that the grocery store would give us money for our cans. As an adult, another group of friends taught me that the business of "scrapping" discarded items could be quite lucrative and rewarding. The key is finding the items that people are looking for. There are scrap metal plants and vintage clothing stores that offer "scrappers" pretty fair return for their finds. However, the real reward comes through finding a unique item that someone is specifically looking for. The people who "scrap" for these items are usually found combing through yard sales or thrift stores. They tend to keep a list of items that people are searching for. One of the most common of these tends to be someone who owned something earlier in life and is now looking to reacquire it. They have either lost it, had it stolen, or perhaps it was thrown out or given away by mistake. No matter the case, these "collectors" are the ones who are willing to pay whatever it takes to buy back that which they previously owned.

On the Cross, Jesus hung between two criminals. Most of us would have seen them as two men who were simply getting what they deserved. We really don't know a lot about their story, but Jesus did. He knew all about them, for he had been searching for them for a very long time. You see, Jesus is the ultimate "collector." Since Adam and Eve's disobedience in the Garden of Eden, a plan was set in motion that would redeem or "buy back" God's most treasured creation...humanity. Little did the criminals know that while Jesus was being crucified there between the two of them, He was actually paying the price to redeem all of humanity, even the two of them. When Jesus heard the words, "Remember me when you come into your kingdom," his heart must have just about burst. More than any "collector" who had ever been reunited with a lost treasure that had cost him so much to regain, Jesus looked into the man's eyes and saw the very reason he was paying such high a price. With eyes on his precious treasure, he answered him, "Today you will be with me in Paradise." The man had been redeemed.

Moment of Reflection

Take some time in silence for reflection and listen to what God wants to speak into you today.

In Christ ~ Fellow Sojourners

