

=BIBLE DOCTRINES=

Lesson 18

Assurance of Salvation

Objects to have:

A completely drawn picture of the three crosses on a hill

A Wordless Book—A page each of black, red, white, green and gold construction paper, either rectangular or heart-shaped

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Hold up the drawing of the three crosses.) Crucified! What a horrible word! Do you know why people were crucified? People who had been very bad criminals were hung on a cross until they died. Instead of shooting people with guns or putting them into an electric chair or a gas chamber, they were crucified on a cross if they had been very bad criminals.

Telling the story:

(Lay down your picture and pantomime the following, acting as if the “crosses” are very heavy, which they were.) “Pound, pound, pound. There! That cross is finished. These two rough logs have been nailed together to form a cross. Only two more crosses to make. Pound, pound, pound. Now, these two rough logs have been nailed together. There is only one more cross to make. Pound, pound, pound. All three crosses now are finished. These crosses are to be used tomorrow. Let me see, do I have enough spikes—long, big around, heavy nails? Yes, I do have enough spikes—ready now for the crucifixion which is to be held tomorrow. I’ll just deliver the crosses to the right place so that they can be used when they are needed.”

That’s what a man would have been saying on the day before Jesus was crucified. The man who made the crosses was busy in his workshop. Jesus was sentenced to die. Two other men were sentenced to die, also. They were to die on crosses. Jesus was not a criminal! The other two men were criminals! God the Father allowed Jesus, God the Son, to get ready to die on a cross. Jesus had never done anything wrong in His life on earth. Jesus was God’s Son, Who came to earth from Heaven. He made Himself into the form of a baby and lived on earth until He had grown to be a man. Jesus was to die on a cross! He was perfect! The other two men were bad men!

Many people around Jerusalem knew that Jesus had been treated badly for many days. Many people saw Him stand trial in the court. Many people had heard the judge say that Jesus should be put to death because the people—most of the people—wanted Him to be killed. Most of the people wanted to see Him killed because He was teaching that leaders in the temple were doing wrong. Jesus also taught people how to be saved. Most of the people did not like that. They wanted Jesus killed so He couldn’t teach and preach anymore. God the Father was allowing Jesus to be killed because it was His plan. God the Father had planned that Jesus would die on the cross so that everybody who would trust Him as Saviour could be saved.

The day came. (Hold up your picture of the crosses again.) Jesus was led to the place of crucifixion. There was a hill outside the city wall. The side of that hill was stony. It looked like the face of a skull. On the way to that hill, Jesus was being made to carry His own cross. Then He stumbled and fell. A kind man offered to carry Jesus’ cross for Him. Jesus was led to the hill outside the city. If we could have looked at this hill on the day that Jesus was crucified, we would see that instead of there being one big hole on top, there were three big holes on top of the hill. Two other men were going to be crucified at the same time that Jesus was.

Jesus was a perfect Man. These other two men were not perfectly good men. The Bible tells us that these two men had been thieves. Evidently they had stolen a great deal of money and had done it many times. These two men were very bad men. They deserved to die on the cross. They deserved to be put to death as punishment for their wrongdoing.

Such a noisy time it must have been. A big crowd of people followed to see this terrible thing happen! Jesus and the two thieves were led by soldiers to the top of the hill. When they got to the top of the hill, Jesus and the two thieves were laid on the crosses. Soldiers nailed their hands and their feet to them. The crosses then were let down into the holes in the ground. The holes were just big enough so that the bottom part of the crosses could go into them. The crosses could stand by themselves. The crosses were let down with a thud into the holes in the ground. The crosses stood straight up. As they were let down, the hands and feet that were nailed to the crosses no doubt moved so that the nails ripped them more. The pain was terrible. The people stood and made fun of those who were on the cross. The sun no doubt was very, very hot. Jesus' back was torn and bleeding. Perhaps the other two men had been beaten also. That was the usual thing to do to criminals.

People who stood and watched Jesus and the two thieves hanging on the crosses started to shout mean things at Jesus. They were saying, "If You are the Son of God, Jesus, come down off that cross. The Son of God should be able to do anything He wants to do. Come off that cross and prove that You are the Son of God." The thieves also turned and started to talk that way to Jesus. They turned their heads and said, "If You are the Son of God, save Yourself and us." One thief, however, began to think. He thought of his own life. He knew that he had done wrong. He knew that he deserved the punishment that he was taking there on the cross. He knew that according to the law he deserved to die. He turned his head to the other criminal and called across to him, "You should hush. Aren't you afraid of God? You have done wrong, and I have done wrong. We deserve to be punished and to die here on our crosses. After we die, however, we'll have to face God. Suddenly, I'm afraid to face God. The part of me that will live on forever has to go somewhere when my body dies."

The Bible tells us that this thief looked at Jesus. He said, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." See. He believed that Jesus would rise from the dead. He believed that Jesus someday would be the King of kings over all of Heaven and earth. He believed that after death the person who has not been saved by Jesus would be punished forever and ever for his sins. He believed that if he asked Jesus to be his Saviour, Jesus would save him from that punishment. The thief, therefore, said to Jesus, "*Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*"

Jesus said to the thief, "Today—this very day—you will be with me in Paradise." How wonderful! Jesus can save anybody at any time.

(Hold up your Wordless Book.) Look at this black page. This makes us think of sin—sin is black and ugly. Everybody has sin in him—everybody is a sinner. Look at this red page. This makes us think of the blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus is the only thing that can wash away our sin. Look at this white page. This makes us think of clean hearts, hearts that have been washed in Jesus' blood. Let's think of how our hearts look. Are they black or white?

Have you told Jesus that you know you are a sinner? Have you asked Him to be your Saviour? You have everlasting life if you have. (Pick up your Bible. Teach John 3:36, "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life...*" Pick up your Wordless Book again.) Now look at the green page. If you have trusted Jesus as your Saviour, He wants you to grow to be a good Christian. The gold page reminds us that we will be in Heaven with Jesus when we die, if we have trusted Him as our Saviour. (Review John 3:36.)

Isn't it wonderful that Jesus died on the cross! Now, we don't have to be punished for our sins. All we have to do is ask Jesus to be our Saviour; then we'll know that we will see Him in Heaven when we die. The thief said, "*Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*" Let's all learn those words so we can remember what the thief on the cross said. (Work on memorizing Luke 23:42.) In order to know that he was going to Heaven, did the thief have to go to church? No. We want to go to church so that we can learn more of the Bible and be with God's people. In order to be saved, did the thief on the cross have to be baptized? No. He died before he could be baptized. We want to be baptized after we're saved in order to show people what we have done. To be saved, all anybody has to do is ask Jesus to be his Saviour. Are you saved?

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: John 3:36, "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.*"