

## INTRODUCTION 引言

Let me begin by defining the sermon title. Cross-examination is a legal term. In a court proceeding, a witnesses will be asked to testify. A lawyer will ask each person questions related to the case. After that, the attorney of the opposing side will ask the same witness other questions. This step is known as cross-examination. The purpose is to cast doubts on the person's knowledge of the matter and his credibility. The lawyer may request proofs that the witness actually saw what had happened. The lawyer may also reveal signs that show the witness is not a reliable person. There is a different cross examination based on our Bible passage today: the cross examines what kind of person we are. All four gospels record that two criminals were nailed to the cross beside Jesus. We will call them criminal 1 and 2. Of the four writers, only Luke includes the conversation between the three men. In our study, we will examine in what ways we can identify with each person. The two criminals were sentenced to death; only Jesus volunteered to die. The Lord chose not to save Himself, because He was determined to save us.

## EXPLANATION 解釋

### 1. Convicted 定罪

All three persons were convicted. But only the two criminals deserved to die. In verse 41, criminal 2 admits that they were guilty: **“And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds...”** The man honestly accepted the punishment. In comparison, criminal 1 mocked Jesus. Hear his insult in verse 39: **...“Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!”** It was a mockery instead of a challenge. He did not believe that Jesus could save anyone. That reminds me of an incident in my teenage years. The front doorknob at home was loosened. I took it down and tried to fix it. Just then my dad said: “Are you sure you can repair it?” I jiggled it a little and put it back on the door. Done! My father was speechless. I learned a valuable parenting lesson: always appreciate your kids for their courage to try. Criminal 1 denied Jesus' power. On that day, most people said the same thing to Jesus: “Save yourself!” That included some Roman officials (v. 35), soldiers (v. 37) and the crowd (Matthew 27:40). The Jewish religious leaders criticize in Matthew 27:42 – **“He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.”** Would they believe if Jesus did what they asked for? Probably not. My former pastor in Hong Kong said it well: “If I were Jesus, I would have slapped their faces, I then climbed back up to the cross.” Their common problem was disbelief. Nowadays, some people say: “I'll believe if Jesus appears before me.” Or: “I'll believe if I see Jesus perform a miracle.” At that time, many people saw Jesus perform miracles. Most of them still did not believe. It is a heart issue and not an eye issue. My encouragement to seeker friends is to read the Bible with an objective mind. Do not jump to a conclusion so soon because Jesus did or did not do something. Go deeper and ask why He acted that way. For example, why did He not save Himself when He had supernatural power? The answer will lead you to the truth. We should not believe in anything superstitiously. We should not reject the truth stubbornly either. As for our brothers and sisters: do you identify with the two criminals that you deserve God's judgment? There will be little thankfulness to the Lord if you

do not recognize your sinfulness. You may even reason that you are good enough to go to heaven without Jesus. God loved us and Jesus died for us when we were still lost in sins. Do not take His grace lightly. We must always remember God's love. Some people like to look at photo albums every now and then. Those pictures remind them of their relationship with family members. Christians should read the suffering of Jesus in the Bible often too. Play a movie in your mind as you walk through the details. It will cause you to thank the Lord for what He did for you.

## 2. Confessed 認罪

Both criminals were convicted for their crimes. But only the second man verbally confessed his wrongdoings. In verse 40, he rebukes criminal 1 for insulting Jesus: **"Do you not fear God?"** They both suffered punishment from the government. But criminal 2 knew that he would receive eternal condemnation from God too. His judgment will always be fair. To confess to God is more than saying sorry. The Greek word for "confess" means to say the same thing. It means we agree with God's standard for sin. We take full responsibility for the offense. In doing so, we submit to God's judgment. We can only plea for His mercy. We dare not fight for justice because we only deserve hell. It is up to God to decide whether to punish or pardon us. The parable of the prodigal son is a good illustration. The young man squandered his father's money. He asked his dad to treat him as a servant. He would rather work for his father the rest of his life. In the end, the father accepted his son back home. That is how God forgives us. It is immediate, complete and unconditional. Besides admitting his sins, criminal 2 made another confession. The same Greek word "confess" can also mean to acknowledge. Criminal 2 had a correct understanding of Jesus. He says in verse 41: **"...but this man has done nothing wrong."** People had different opinions why Jesus was put on the cross. Some thought that He was a victim of a conspiracy or He died as a martyr of a new religion. Most Jews rejected Jesus because He did not fulfill their expectation to start a revolution to overthrow the Romans. Criminal 2 had a different perspective. He says in verse 42: **..."Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."** The man reasoned that if Jesus was truly the Messiah, then one day He would become a king. Criminal 2 might not see Jesus as God. At least he wished to be with Jesus in the future kingdom no matter how it looked like. We must realize the identity of ourselves and Jesus' before we will receive Him. We must confess that we are sinners, and Jesus is the Savior. It takes courage to owe up to our sins. There is no excuse that "I was born that way" or "Satan made me do it." It also takes humility to admit that we cannot save ourselves. Jesus did not only die with the two men. He died for them. Criminal 2 got the penalty for his crimes. However, he was saved from the judgment of God. Jesus is the only way to salvation God prepares for us.

## 3. Confirmed 恕罪

In the story, two persons were convicted but only one of them confessed to Jesus. As a result, Jesus confirmed that the man was forgiven. The Lord assures in verse 43: **..."Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."** The Greek word for "paradise" was adopted from the Persian language. It means a garden. When a Persian king wanted to treat a guest with honor, he would take the person for a tour in his garden. Now Jesus told the man that he would be in His paradise together. The word "paradise" appears in two other passages. In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul recalls a vision where he was taken up to the paradise. Revelation 2:7 gives us a better idea of where paradise is: **..."To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is**

in the paradise of God.” Paradise is heaven, where the tree of life will be. Jesus confirmed with the man that they would both go to heaven. It was redundant for Him to add “truly, I say to you” because He never lied. What He foretold would definitely happen like yesterday’s news. Jesus told criminal 2 that TODAY He would arrive in paradise. Torture on the cross would soon turn into an everlasting peace. Such words gave comfort to criminal 2. Contrary to what most people at the scene thought, Jesus was able to save people even when He was on the cross. His words alone had forgiving power. The experience of criminal 2 is consistent with Paul’s teaching in Ephesians 2:8-9 – **8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.** The man on the cross could not do anything. He could not even find water and receive baptism. All that he could say was “Jesus, remember me.” The Lord granted salvation to the man out of his simple faith. We must show the same helplessness before Jesus. What is written on your school report card, your resume or business card cannot exchange for God’s grace. Salvation is a gift, not a wage. It is received but not earned. My dad passed away in 2022. Due to the pandemic, I was not able to go back to see him the last time. I told my younger sister to whisper a simple prayer to his ear: “I am a sinner. Jesus Christ save me.” My dad was unconscious at that time. I did not know if he heard it and if he pleaded to the Lord accordingly. It is God’s blessing that you hear the gospel. God’s grace is available to you. Do not wait. Confess your sins and accepts Jesus by faith today.

## CONCLUSION 結論

The Lord chose not to save Himself, because He was determined to save us. He showed compassion on the cross. The word “compassion” can be broken down into “com” which means together, and “passion” which refers to suffering. Jesus endured pain and shame for us by suffering with us. The following story illustrates such quality. Dr. Samuel Weinstein is the chief heart surgeon of a children’s hospital in New York. In 2006, he traveled to El Salvador with a medical team. Their goal was to help poor people with life-threatening conditions. One patient was 8-year-old Francisco. The team performed a surgery on him. Everything went well for twelve hours. Then the team ran into a difficult situation. They had a hard time to stop the bleeding. Soon they realized that there was no more matching blood to give to Francisco. He is B-negative. According to the Red Cross, only 2% of the population has it. The only person in the room with the correct blood type was Dr. Weinstein. He knew exactly what to do. He took off his gloves and washed his forearm. While his colleagues carried on the operation, Dr. Weinstein sat at a corner and donated his blood. He took a short break while his blood was circulating into Francisco’s body. Dr. Weinstein then resumed the procedure. Francisco fully recovered later. The doctor saved the boy’s life by giving him blood. Jesus did more than that. He gave up His life so that He can give a new life to those who believe Him. It is an eternal life. The cross examines what kind of person we are. Do you identify yourself with criminal 1, who mocked at Jesus and rejected Him? Or do you identify yourself with criminal 2, who begged Jesus for mercy and accepted Him?

## INTRODUCTION 引言

讓我先來定義一下講道的標題。交叉審查是一個法律用語。在法庭審訊中，證人需要作證。律師會問他與案件有關的問題。然後，另一方的律師便會問同一證人其他問題。這個程序稱為交叉審查。目的是讓人懷疑證人對事情的了解以及他的可信度。律師會要求證人證明他所看到的事情。律師也可能揭露出一些跡象，表明那個人並不可靠。根據今天的經文，我們有一個不同的交叉審查：我們審查自己是什麼樣的人。四本福音書都記載了有兩個罪犯被釘在耶穌旁邊的十字架上。我們稱他們為罪犯 1 和 2。在四位作者中，只有路加記載了那三個人之間的對話。我們將會看看在哪些方面我們能夠和那三個人認同。兩名罪犯是被判死刑的；但唯有耶穌是自願去受死的。主選擇不救自己，因為祂定意要拯救我們。

## EXPLANATION 解釋

### 1. Convicted 定罪

三個人都被定罪，但只有那兩個罪犯該死。在第 41 節中，罪犯 2 坦白承認他們都有罪：「我們是應該的，因我們所受的與我們所做的相稱…。」這個人甘心接受懲罰。相比之下，罪犯 1 嘲笑耶穌。聽聽第 39 節中他的侮辱：...「你不是基督嗎？可以救自己和我們吧！」這句話並非是挑戰，而是諷刺。他不相信耶穌能拯救任何人。這讓我想起了我少年時的一件事。家裡大門的鎖鬆了。我把它拆下來並嘗試修理。就在這時，我爸爸說：「你確定你能把它修好嗎？」我用工具弄了幾下，然後把它裝回去。搞定！我父親無言以對。我學到了一個教導小孩的寶貴功課：一定要讚賞孩子嘗試的勇氣。罪犯 1 否定耶穌的能力。那一天，大多數人都對耶穌說了同一句話：「救救你自己吧！」其中包括一些羅馬官員（第 35 節）、士兵（第 37 節）和群眾（馬太福音 27:40）。猶太宗教領袖在馬太福音 27:42 中批評：「他救了別人，不能救自己。他是以色列的王，現在可以從十字架上下來，我們就信他。」如果耶穌按照他們的要求去做，他們會相信嗎？可能不會。我以前在香港的牧師說得很好：「如果我是耶穌，我會打他們幾個耳光，然後再跳回十字架上面。」他們共通的問題是不相信。今天有些人會說：「如果耶穌出現在我面前我就會相信。」或是：「如果我看到耶穌行神蹟，我就願意相信。」當時，許多人看見耶穌行奇蹟，但是大部份人依然不相信。這是心靈的問題，不是眼睛的問題。我鼓勵福音朋友以客觀的心態閱讀聖經。不要因為耶穌做了或沒做某些事情而馬上下定論。要更深入地問祂為什麼有那些表現。例如：耶穌有超自然能力，祂為什麼不救自己？答案會把你引到真理。我們不應該迷信，我們也不應該迷不信 (拒絕真理)。至於弟兄姐妹



們，你們能否認同這兩個罪犯，明白你也應該受到神的審判呢？如果你不承認自己的罪，你就不會對主感恩。你甚至可能認為，你不用靠耶穌也有資格上天堂。神愛我們，當我們還在罪中迷失時，耶穌就為我們而死。不要輕看祂的恩典。我們必須常常記住神的愛。有些人喜歡偶爾看看相簿。那些照片讓他們回想與家人的關係。基督徒也應該經常閱讀聖經中耶穌的受苦。當你回顧細節時，可以彷彿在腦海中播放電影。它會讓你感謝主為你所做的一切。

## 2. Confessed 認罪

兩名罪犯都因著他們的行為被定罪，但只有第二個人承認自己的錯誤。在第 40 節中，他責備罪犯 1 侮辱耶穌：「(你) 還不怕神嗎？」他們兩人都受到政府的制裁。但是罪犯 2 知道將來他也會得到神永遠的懲罰。神的審判從來是公正的。向神認罪不只是說對不起。希臘文「認罪」這個字的意思是說同樣的話。這表示我們同意神對罪的標準。我們願意承擔過錯的全部責任。如此，我們也順服神的審判。我們只能懇求祂的憐憫。我們不敢爭取公義，因為我們只配得下地獄。唯有神有權利決定要懲罰或是寬恕我們。浪子的比喻就是一個很好的例子。那個年輕人揮霍了父親的錢。他請求父親把他當成僕人對待。他寧願用餘生為爸爸工作。結果，父親接納兒子回家。這就是神饒恕我們的方式。它是即時的、完全的、無條件的。罪犯 2 除了認罪之外，他還有另一個承認。希臘文「認罪」這個字也可以解釋為承認。罪犯 2 對耶穌有正確的認識。他在第 41 節說：「...但這個人沒有作過一件不好的事。」人們對於耶穌為何被釘上十字架有不同的看法。有些人認為他是陰謀的受害者，或是一個新宗教的殉道者。大多數猶太人拒絕耶穌，因為祂沒有達到他們的期望，發起革命來推翻羅馬政權。罪犯 2 有不同的看法。他在第 42 節說：...「耶穌啊，你得國降臨的時候，求你記念我！」這個人推斷，如果耶穌真的是彌賽亞，那麼有一天祂會成為君王。罪犯 2 可能不認為耶穌是神。至少他希望在未來的國度裡與耶穌在一起，無論那是什麼樣的國。我們必須了解自己和耶穌的身份，然後我們才會接受祂。我們必須承認自己是罪人，耶穌是救主。承認自己的罪需要勇氣。我們不能藉口說：「我生來就是這個樣子」或是：「是撒旦強迫我做的」。承認我們無法救自己也需要謙卑。耶穌不只是陪同這兩個人一起死去，祂是為他們而死。罪犯 2 因為他的罪行受到了懲罰。然而，他卻從神的審判中被拯救出來。耶穌是神為我們預備的唯一救贖之路。

## 3. Confirmed 恕罪

在故事中，有兩個人被定罪，但只有其中一人向耶穌認罪。結果，耶穌確認那個人被饒恕了。主在第 43 節保證：...「我實在告訴你，今日你要同我在樂園裡了。」希臘文「樂園」這個字是源自波斯語，意思是花園。當波斯國王想要以榮譽的方式招待他的客人時，他會帶客人參觀他的花園。現在耶穌告訴這個人，他們二人會一

起進入樂園。「樂園」這個字也出現在另外兩段經文中。在哥林多後書第 12 章中，保羅回憶起他被帶到樂園的景象。啟示錄 2:7 讓我們更了解樂園的所在：...「**得勝的，我必將神樂園中生命樹的果子賜給他吃。**」樂園就是天堂，生命樹就生長在那裡。耶穌向那人確認，他們都會進入天堂。耶穌補充說「我實在告訴你」是多餘的，因為祂從不說謊。祂所預言的事情一定會像昨天的新聞一樣發生。耶穌告訴罪犯 2，今天他將到達天堂。十字架上的受苦很快就會變成永遠的平安。這句話讓罪犯 2 心裡得到安慰。與現場大多數人的想法相反，耶穌被釘在十字架上的確還能救人。祂的話語本身就具有赦罪的能力。罪犯 2 的經歷與保羅在以弗所書 2:8-9 的教導是一致的：**8 你們得救是本乎恩，也因著信；這並不是出於自己，乃是神所賜的；9 也不是出於行為，免得有人自誇。**十字架上的那個人甚麼也做不了。他甚至找不到水並接受浸禮。他只能說：「耶穌，求你記念我。」主因著那個人單純的信心而拯救他。我們必須在耶穌面前表示同樣的無助。你的學校成績單、履歷或名片上所寫的內容無法換取神的恩典。救恩是一份禮物，而不是一份薪水。它是接收的，而不是賺來的。我的父親於 2022 年去世。由於疫情的原因，我無法回去看他最後一面。我請妹妹在他耳邊低聲說一句禱告：「我是罪人。耶穌救我。」我爸爸當時已經昏迷不醒。我不知道他是否聽到了，並且有沒有向主懇求。你能聽到福音是神的祝福。神的也樂意賜給你恩典。不要等待。今天就承認自己的罪並憑信心接受耶穌。

## CONCLUSION 結論

主選擇不救自己，因為祂定意要拯救我們。祂在十字架上表現出同情。「同情」這個字可以拆開成兩部份。「com」是指共同，而「passion」表示受苦。耶穌與我們一同受苦，為我們承擔痛苦和羞辱。下面的故事就體現了這種特質。塞繆爾·溫斯坦 (Samuel Weinstein) 是紐約一家兒童醫院的首席心臟外科醫生。在 2006 年，他跟隨醫療隊伍前往薩爾瓦多。他們的目標是幫助那些患有嚴重疾病的貧窮人。其中一名病人是 8 歲的男孩弗朗西斯科 (Francisco)。團隊為他進行手術。開始的十二個小時都很順利。然後他們陷入困境。他們無法止血。他們發現沒有適合血型的血液可以提供給弗朗西斯科。他的血型是 B 陰性。根據紅十字會統計，只有 2% 的人口有這種血液。現場唯一有正確血型的人是溫斯坦醫生。他很清楚該做什麼。他脫下手套並清洗了前臂。當其他人繼續進行手術時，溫斯坦醫生坐在角落捐血。當他的血液被輸入弗朗西斯科的身體時，他短暫休息了一下。隨後，溫斯坦醫生繼續做手術。弗朗西斯科後來完全康復了。這名醫生捐贈血液，挽救了男孩的生命。耶穌所做的遠超過這一點。祂獻上自己的生命，讓那些相信祂的人得到新生命。那是永恆的生命。十字架檢視我們是怎樣的人。你是否與罪犯 1 認同，嘲笑並拒絕耶穌？還是你與罪犯 2 認同，向耶穌懇求憐憫並接受祂？