

The Book of Luke Corrupted

A Deathbed Conversion Tale

We have shown how men have falsified or added certain accounts in Matthew (see [The Book of Matthew Corrupted](#)). Now we will show how the Book of Luke has suffered the machinations of men who would subtly persuade their fellows to believe fables that deceive and enslave.

Why would they do that instead of proclaiming God's truth, which makes their fellows free? It is because they wish to have the preeminence that belongs to God over the lives of others. They want to rule **over** men, instead of having God ruling **in** men.

Besides exposing as fraudulent the story in Luke's Gospel of the rich man and Lazarus (see [The Rich Man and Lazarus - A Pagan Parable](#)), we have found another passage to be questionable, that passage being the conversion of the thief on the cross:

Luke 23:39-43 MKJV

(39) And one of the hanged criminals blasphemed Him, saying, If you are Christ, save Yourself and us.

(40) But answering, the other rebuked him, saying, Do you not fear God, since you are in the same condemnation?

(41) And we indeed justly so, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this Man has done nothing amiss.

(42) And he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom.

(43) And Jesus said to him, Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.

Luke reports that one of the thieves believed on the Lord and was saved. However, that is not what we find in Matthew and Mark. An internet acquaintance, Walter Lane, wrote:

“[Matthew 27:37-45](#); [Luke 23:38-44](#); [Mark 15:31-32](#)

This whole deathbed conversion thing seems to come from Luke's account but it seems to me Matthew and Mark teach that both thieves cursed Jesus. Am I interpreting these scriptures correctly?”

The versions of this incident from Matthew and Mark:

Matthew 27:37-44 MKJV

(37) And they put up over His head His accusation, written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

(38) Then two thieves were crucified with Him, one off the right, one off the left.

(39) And those who passed by blasphemed Him, shaking their heads,

(40) and saying, You destroying the temple and building it in three days, save yourself. If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.

(41) And in the same way also the chief priests mocked, with the scribes and elders, saying,

(42) He saved others, but he cannot save himself. If he is the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

(43) He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him. (For He said, I am the Son of God.)

(44) **And also the thieves who were crucified with Him *reviled* Him, saying the same.**

Mark 15:31-32 MKJV

(31) And also the chief priests mocking, with the scribes, said to one another, He saved others but he cannot save himself.

(32) Let Christ the King of Israel now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe. **And they who were crucified with Him *insulted* Him.**

We say, “Yes, Walter, you are reading and interpreting the Scriptures correctly,” although many students and preachers of the Bible will differ with us, asserting that the Bible can have no error in it, so there must be a logical explanation for the discrepancy.

There are those who teach there were four men crucified with the Lord, two thieves and two malefactors, and that one of these men believed, while three railed on the Lord. Here is such an explanation:

How Many Were Crucified with Jesus?

This is supposed to account for the apparent contradiction between Luke and Matthew and Mark. We do not agree, and there are things that can be said to counter this theory, the greatest being that in none of the four Gospels is there any clear indication there were four criminals crucified, but each Gospel leaves us with the impression that only two were executed.

Another explanation of the difference, from a man no less than the famous English preacher, John Wesley:

“And one of the malefactors reviled him - St. Matthew says, the robbers: St. Mark, they that were crucified with him, reviled him. Either therefore St. Matthew and Mark put the plural for the singular (as the best authors sometimes do) or both reviled him at the first, till one of them felt the overwhelming power of saving grace.”

So John Wesley first supposes the discrepancy was possibly due to a literary technique by Matthew and Mark. We don't buy that. It is speculation, and though his suggestion is a possibility, it is not definite. That is unacceptable. And it certainly is not revelation. It does not witness with our spirits.

Mr. Wesley then presents another possibility - that the one thief may have railed at first, but then he saw the light and believed, repenting. While anything is possible, we don't buy that explanation for several reasons:

One, we have no witness of this in the Spirit;

Two, we are not commanded by God to speculate or reason things out to prove them true or false. We are commanded to have them verified by two or three witnesses:

“But if he will not hear you, take one or two more with you, so that in the mouth of **two or three witnesses** every word may be established” (Matthew 18:16 MKJV).

“I am coming to you this third time. In the mouth of **two or three witnesses** every word shall be established” (2 Corinthians 13:1 MKJV).

“Do not receive an accusation against an elder except before **two or three witnesses**” (1 Timothy 5:19 MKJV).

“He who despised Moses' Law died without mercy on the word of **two or three witnesses**” (Hebrews 10:28 MKJV).

Nowhere in the Bible is there another example of the last minute conversion of a wicked person; neither is there a statute, testimony, judgment, law, precept, commandment, or principle in Scripture defending such doctrine. Therefore, we have no other witness but that of Luke, which is not good enough.

Three, the Scriptures declare this truth:

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” (Revelation 22:11 KJV).

This man was a hardened criminal, a thief, a malefactor, the Bible says, worthy of death. Man does not change suddenly; he generally dies as he had lived. It took me years to come around to believe. I know of nobody that turned around from black to white in hours, days, weeks, or even months, whether personally or in the Scriptures or by any other source of information.

Four, there is confusion in the Lord's statement. Why would He say the thief would be with Him that day in paradise, if the Lord was about to spend three days and three nights in hell and death? Perhaps He did not mean a literal day? Can we say? It is vague, isn't it?

Unless there is indication otherwise (and there isn't), I shall take it at face value. At face value, He didn't say it. We know the Scriptures testify He would be in the belly of the earth three days and three nights. Furthermore, **He knew** He would be there for that time.

There are those like the Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, and Worldwide Church of God who suggest moving the comma in the statement (the original manuscripts had no punctuation - translators put it in much later). Instead of having the comma after “you” and before “Today,” as in:

“And Jesus said to him, Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43 MKJV).

They suggest having it this way: “And Jesus said to him, Truly I say to you today, You shall be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43 MKJV).

This takes the emphasis off the timing for when the thief would be with the Lord in Paradise, and places it upon the simple fact that the Lord was making a declaration that day. One comma moved past one word - what a difference in doctrine!

But we don't buy that argument, either. The Seventh Day Adventist doctrine is that when people die (believers included), they “sleep” or become totally unconscious. We refute that argument (see Diabolical Doctrine [33\) The dead in Christ are unconscious](#)).

Our point about this story, however, is that there is confusion, and there are no witnesses to back it up.

According to God's Word, if Luke says one thing without any support elsewhere, and it is contradicted by two witnesses, in this case Matthew and Mark, we must reject Luke's account and accept the report that has more than one witness. We conclude, then, that there was no thief converted, as wonderful as the story may sound.

Just as someone messed with Luke's record by inserting the false parable of Lazarus and the rich man, so someone (possibly the same person or persons) inserted the story of the repentant thief. For more information, read Diabolical Doctrine [41\) Deathbed conversions to Christ](#).

IMPORTANT: We must solemnly remind you that while there are spurious passages in the Scriptures, they are few and far between. Furthermore, there are many apparent inconsistencies in Scripture which have valid explanations (not rationalizations, but true, Scripturally-sound explanations). Our only assurance of understanding and discernment between true and false is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, by Whose Spirit we are given to know the Truth He is.

Victor Hafichuk
Paul Cohen

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