

When Jesus was crucified he was killed in between two criminals. While he hung on the cross, soldiers taunted him yelling, “save yourself.” One of the criminals joined in the mocking and said, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you’re at it!”

But the other criminal responded saying, ““Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.””

And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

The word used here for paradise is παραδεισῶ, and it is a word that had a few different meanings during Jesus’ time. Most commonly, it was used in Greek

translations of the Old Testament when referring to a garden; specifically, the Garden of Eden. It meant a return to the way things were meant to be.

Christians believe that there is a day coming when thing will be made new once and for all. Revelation talks about the time when Jesus will return and the garden, paradise, will be restored. That is the Easter hope, salvation, restoration, and resurrection. Jesus promises a new heaven and new earth; life as it was meant to be.

“Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. — Revelation 22:1-2

## Tuesday: Salvation

“Today you will be with me in paradise.” — Luke 23:43

### Questions for Reflection

1. When you picture paradise, what do you see?
2. How have you experienced Jesus’ forgiveness and new life in your life?
3. What is one way you can live into your new identity as a child of God today?

