

DEATH ROW CONVERSION

Request: “Suppose a man who has lived a terrible life believes the gospel on his death bed, will he go to heaven in spite of doing nothing good in his life?”

We will study six death row experiences that should answer this question doctrinally.

The first three death row experiences come from our lesson text, (Lk.23:32-43).

1. **Jesus:**

He was on death row in spite of doing divine good all of His life. He was charged with a capital crime against Rome as a non-citizen (crucifixion) (Luke 23:32-38, 41).

- Public opinion (John 7:25-28; 8:48-54; 10:24-59; 12:42-46; 19:15-16).
- Fulfill prophesy (Isa.53:12; Lk. 22:37; 23:22).
- Fulfill the curse of the Law (Gal.3:10-14; Deut.21:21-23; Lk.23:50-54)
- Savior of the world (2 Cor.5:21; 1 John 2:2; 3:5; Heb.2:9; 4:15; John 4:42; 2 Tim.1:9-10)

2. **The first criminal on death row with Jesus:**

He was an unbeliever who refused to believe (Lk.23:39).

- He was charged with a capital crime against Rome as a non-citizen.
- He was a member of the Barabbas gang (Lk.23:18-19, 22).
- He would not believe unless he saw (2 Cor.5:7) [Rationalism and Empiricism] (1 Cor.2:9-10).

3. **The second criminal on death row with Jesus:**

He was an unbeliever who believed (Lk.23:40-43).

- He was charged with a capital crime against Rome.
- He said: “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom”.
- Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise” (Lk.23:42-43).
- He called Jesus by his birth name (Matt.1:21-23).

4. **Paul:**

He was on death row as a spiritually mature believer.

- He was charged with a capital crime against Rome as a citizen for preaching the gospel (sword not crucifixion) (2 Tim.4:6-8, Lev.23:10-14; Mark 10:38-39; Lk.22:20-22) [bread and cup].
- He was beheaded on the Ostian Way, west of Rome as the result of the persecution of Nero (2 Tim.1:8; 2:3).

5. Jonah

He was on death row inside a sea monster's belly as a carnal believer (Jonah 1:17-2:2; Heb.12:5-11; 1 John 5:16).

- Jonah's carnality was different than typical lusts of the flesh (OSN) (Rom.13:13; Gal.5:19-21).
- It was secondary Negative Volition, disobedience and defiance towards the Directive Will of God (Jonah 1:1-2; 3:1-2).

6. The Rich Young Ruler:

He was on a different kind of death row – Adam's Original Sin (AOS) (Rom.5:12).

- Every member of the human race is born on spiritual death row (Matt.19:16-26).
- It is important that he not go to the second spiritual death row (Rev.20:14-15).
- Yet the Rich Young Ruler sadly believed that his good life was all that was necessary to get him to heaven (Rom.3:10, 23-24; 4:5; 1 Cor.15:3-4; Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9).