

Why can't I be saved like the Thief on the Cross. If Jesus said that he could be saved without baptism, then so can I.

He wasn't baptized! Jesus just forgave him of his sins. That's how I want to be saved!

Let's see what the Scriptures have to say about that desire.

Luke 23:36 And the soldiers also
mocked Him, coming up to Him,
offering Him sour wine, 37 and saying,
"If You are the King of the Jews, save
Yourself!" 38 Now there was also an
inscription above Him, "THIS IS THE
KING OF THE JEWS."

Luke 23:39 And one of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" 40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 "And we indeed justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."

Lk 23.42 And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" 43 And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.'

Truly this man was saved by his
belief in Jesus, the Son of God.
But this thief knew a lot about
Jesus of Nazareth.

The thief knew that Jesus was
sinless. *but this man has done nothing
wrong. (23.41)*

1 Peter 2:22 who committed no sin, nor
was any deceit found in His mouth; 23
and while being reviled, He did not
revile in return; while suffering, He
uttered no threats, but kept entrusting
Himself to Him who judges righteously;
24 and He Himself bore our sins in His
body on the cross, that we might die to
sin and live to righteousness; for by His
wounds you were healed.

The thief knew that Jesus expected to have a kingdom, even though both the thief and Jesus were dying on crosses and Jesus' disciples had all run off.

23.42 And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!"

As Jesus is taken in the garden –

Matt 26:56 "But all this has
taken place that the Scriptures of
the prophets may be fulfilled."
Then all the disciples left Him
and fled.

John alone attends the crucifixion

John 19:25 ... But there were standing by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26

When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" 27

Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her into his own household.

After His death, his disciples still misunderstood
the kingdom!

Luke 24:19 ... The things about Jesus the
Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and
word in the sight of God and all the people, 20 and
how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him
up to the sentence of death, and crucified Him. 21

"But we were hoping that it was He who was
going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it
is the third day since these things happened.

It is only after Jesus' resurrection
that the disciples understand the
things He has been telling them
concerning His kingdom!

And then only dimly, but the
light grew brighter as time went
on.

Luke 24:45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 "You are witnesses of these things. 49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

Not only did the thief have a
greater understanding of Jesus'
coming kingdom, he had faith
that Jesus would have His eternal
kingdom!

The disciples had no such faith at
this time!

Lk 23.42 And he was saying,
"Jesus, remember me when You
come in Your kingdom!" 43 And
He said to him, "Truly I say to
you, today you shall be with Me
in Paradise."

The thief recognized that Jesus had greater power than any man and recognized Jesus' kingdom as spiritual and not of this world.

Mark 2:10 "But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — He said to the paralytic — 11 "I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home."

Jesus' kingdom did not yet exist
and none yet had come into it,
but this thief believed that it
would come.

Mark 9:1 And He was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power."

There had been no preaching of
the way to get into the kingdom,
but they all knew the kingdom
was coming!

But the disciples, unlike this
thief, didn't know it was a
spiritual kingdom!

When would this kingdom finally come? The thief knew it was not during his lifetime!

It is spoken of as coming until the Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection and then it is spoken of as being in existence!

Even when Jesus had risen, the disciples were still looking for the wrong kind of kingdom!

Acts 1:6 And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; 8 but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. "

While the thief lived, he was in a covenant relation with God, his father.

Gen 17:7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

Gen 17:11 You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you.

The thief on the cross didn't reach the kingdom in this life – it had not yet been established.

The thief didn't have to be baptized – he lived and died under the Law of Moses – not the law of Christ! Christ had not yet died for the sins of mankind when he forgave this man's sin on the cross!

The words of Jesus on the cross do not apply to you. You are not on the cross under the Law of Moses!

Heb 9:15 And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. 16 For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. 17 For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives.

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified." 37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

38 And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ...
41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls. ... 47 praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike. 13 And even Simon himself believed; and after being baptized, he continued on with Philip; and as he observed signs and great miracles taking place, he was constantly amazed.

In baptism, you are added to the kingdom of God – transferred from your life of sin to a new life in Christ.

Col 1:13 For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son

We have to pay attention to whom Jesus is speaking, because not everything he said applies to all men!

Some today will say that they want to be saved like the thief on the cross without ever realizing that they have an entrance into the kingdom waiting for them which the Savior of all men commands them to follow.

Gal 3:23 But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. 24

Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Will you be baptized this day?

You must remove your sins before you
are granted entrance into that eternal
kingdom.

Act 22:16 And now why do you wait?
Rise and be baptized and wash away
your sins, calling on his name.'