

THE SALVATION OF THE THIEF

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WHAT IS
NECESSARY FOR
SALVATION??

INTRODUCTION

- Many Christian denominations believe that salvation is not reliant on any human works and cannot be affected by our sin
- This “understanding” of salvation was taken out of context from the passage John 3:16, although it is not the only verse in the Bible speaking on salvation
- A lot of this argument ends up surrounding the saving of the thief



NON-ORTHODOX

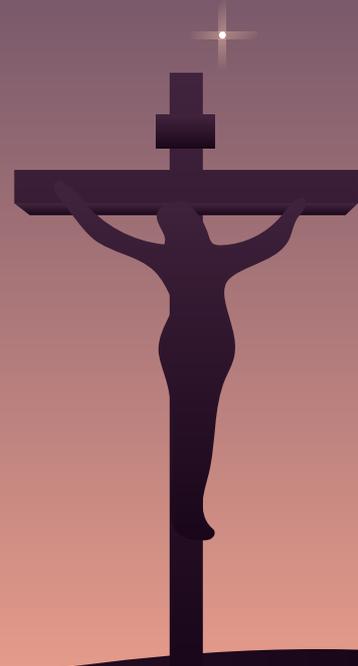
- Believe that salvation is not due to human merit
- Evil works will not affect salvation of any believer
- The thief on the right hand of Jesus did no good works
- The thief on the cross wasn't baptized

ORTHODOX

- Believe that good works are important to salvation alongside faith
- The thief on the right hand of Jesus had done good works before his death
- The thief on the cross was baptized

THE TEN GOOD WORKS OF THE THIEF

1. Believing in the Lord Jesus Christ John 6:29, Mark 14:27, and Rev 2:7
2. Repentance Luke 13:3,5 and Proverbs 28:13
3. Confession of sins Luke 23:40-42
4. Hope 1 John 3:18
5. Defending the Lord Luke 23:41



THE TEN GOOD WORKS OF THE THIEF

6. Comforting the Virgin Mary - Luke 2:35
7. Declaring a complete confession of faith - Luke 23:42
8. Endure persecution - Matthew 5:11-12
9. Quenched the thirst of the Lord through his faith - John 4:32
10. Enduring and persevering until the end - John 19:32

THE BAPTISM OF THE THIEF

- ★ **The Essence of Baptism**
 - Death with Jesus Christ
- ★ **The Thief's Death as Baptism**
 - The literal version of baptism
- ★ **Baptism of Blood**
- ★ **Christ's Own Words About Baptism**



BUT, WAS THE THIEF SAVED INSTANTLY?

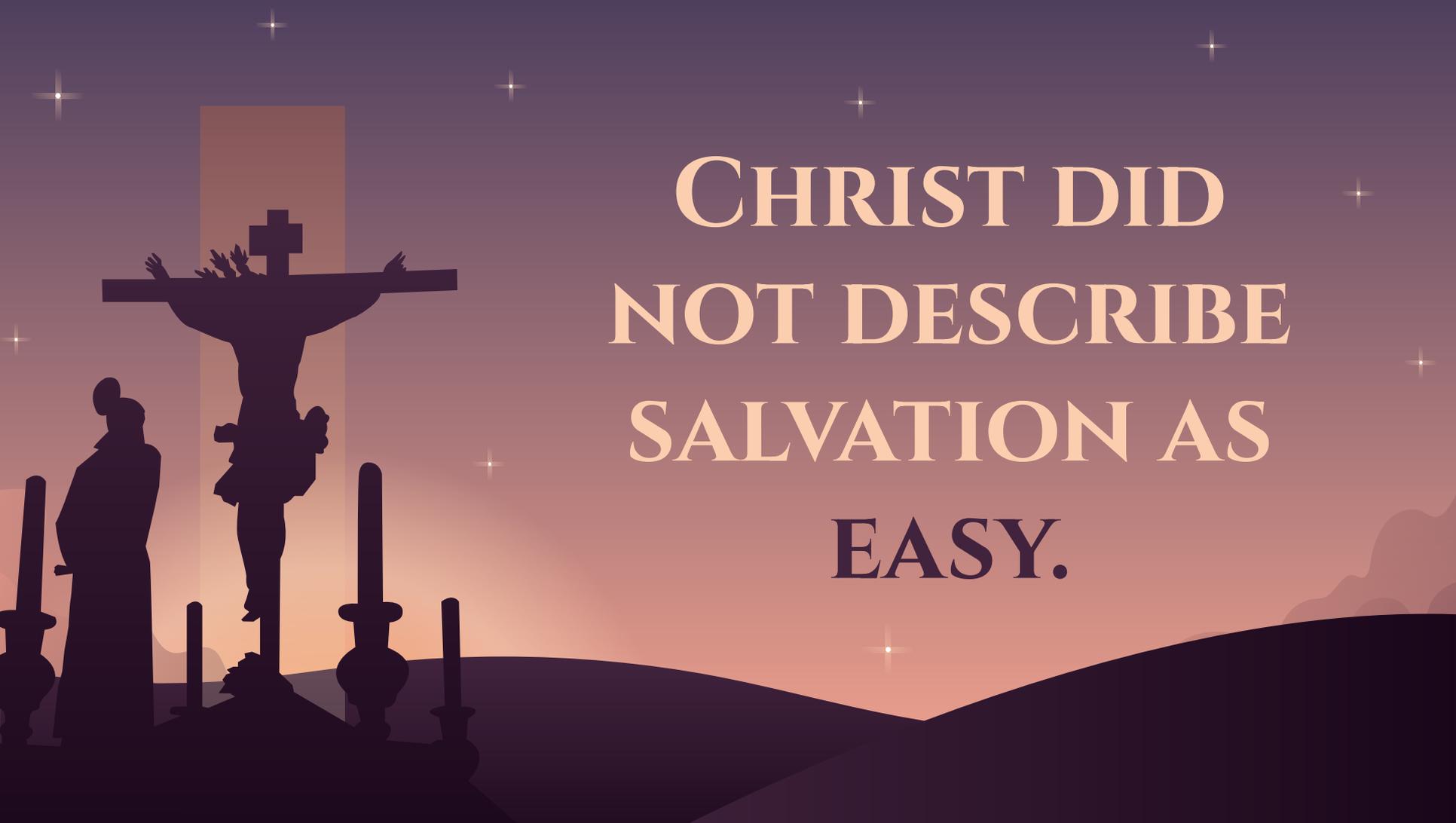
The Non-Orthodox Claim

- ★ False belief of “salvation in a moment.”

What are the results of this belief?

- ★ Salvation becomes a “do-it-yourself” experience **WITHOUT** the **Church**, **Priesthood** and the **Sacraments**.



The image features a silhouette of the crucifixion scene on the left side. Christ is on the cross, with two other figures on either side. In the foreground, there are silhouettes of tombstones and a figure standing. The background is a gradient from dark purple at the top to a warm orange glow behind the cross, with several white starburst effects scattered across the sky. The text is positioned on the right side of the image.

CHRIST DID
NOT DESCRIBE
SALVATION AS
EASY.

THE TIMING OF SALVATION

5 HOURS TOTAL

6TH HOUR

Promise of
salvation made.

11TH HOUR

Right thief died,
around sunset.

9TH HOUR

Christ shed his blood and died,
BUT THIEF IS NOT YET SAVED.



THE THIEF IN COPTIC ORTHODOX TRADITION

- ★ Thief has a special and honoured place
- ★ He is mentioned constantly in ninth hour prayers, where the Church commemorates Christ's redemptive death and the acceptance of the thief's repentance





EXAMPLES OF NINTH HOUR PRAYERS

1.

“O You, who commended the spirit into the hands of the Father as You hung on the cross in the ninth hour, and guided the thief who was crucified with You into entering Paradise, do not neglect me, O Good One, nor reject me, I, the lost one.”

2.

“When the thief saw the Prince of Life hung on the cross, he said: had not the One crucified with us been God Incarnate, the sun would not hide its ray, nor would the earth have quaked trembling. But O the Almighty One who endures all things remember me O Lord when You come into Your Kingdom.”

3.

“O You who accepted unto Him the confession of the thief on the cross, accept us unto You, O Good One; we who deserve the sentence of death because of our sins.”



THE RIGHT THIEF AND HOLY TRADITION

- ★ Scripture mentions two thieves but does not name the one who was saved.
- ★ Holy Tradition identifies the saved thief as Demas, known as the Right Thief.

Tradition completes details not explicitly stated in Scripture.

- ★ “Right Thief” reflects **his place among the righteous** (Mt 25:33 – the sheep on Christ’s right)
- ★ The Right Thief is **a model of repentance and salvation.**
- ★ His prayer is **central** in Good Friday, Pascha, and prayers for the departed.



THANKS!

Do you have any questions?

Source:

<https://cdn.suscopts.org/files/messages/lectures/soterlecture12.pdf>

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