

REFLECTION GUIDE

3.17.24

INTRO

We can never wander so far from Jesus that he isn't up for a rescue. The story of the thief on the cross demonstrates the far-reaching nature of the love of God for everybody. Nobody is too far gone.

THOUGHTS

PRAYER

Merciful God, I am so thankful for the ways you have rescued me. Thank you for your ongoing grace and the way you continue to nudge me out of my comfort zone. Help me grow in self-awareness of my prejudices and help me fight feelings of judgment toward others. Amen.

DIGGING DEEPER

- Have you ever felt like something you did in the past disqualified you or made you feel undeserving?
- Read Luke 23:13-43.
 - Pilate was in the position to judge Jesus correctly and deferred to the crowd in order to preserve his status as a *somebody*. In what ways can you relate to the pressure of the crowd?
 - There were two very contrasting responses to Jesus by the criminals who were next to him on the cross. Which attitude is more difficult to identify with: the humble or the mocking cynic?
 - Jesus appeared to be a *nobody* at this point in the story, yet he still worked to let someone else know they were a *somebody*. Identify biases that might interfere with your ability to show love to certain members of society.
 - Consider this thought: everything Jesus did was a statement about God. What can you infer about God after reading this passage?
- If Jesus was willing to rescue the convicted criminal who saw hope in him, how might that change the way you feel about your own past mistakes?
- Is there someone in your life you have struggled to forgive? Take a few moments and ask God to help you offer mercy just as Jesus does.