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## My Rights

### Luke 23:32-43

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#### Taken for a Ride

“They can't do that! I know my rights,” Harvey yelled. They just couldn't treat him that way. A wild group of troublemakers had slid their car into his fence with no intention of paying for the damage. His mind raced in anger. He would get even. He determined that he would take them to small claims court and get every last penny. And, he would make a point to tell everyone in town how irresponsible they were and what an injustice he had experienced.

Have you ever thought these kind of thoughts?

Have you ever acted on these thoughts and feelings?

As Harvey drove his car down the road, he started to cool down. He parked the car and entered the church, and the music started. Harvey felt his spirit begin to soften as he entered into worship. The pastor read from the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Luke. When he got to the 34<sup>th</sup> verse, Harvey began to feel uncomfortable. The words of Jesus cut deep: “Father forgive these people! They don't know what they're doing.” Harvey hadn't been thinking the way Jesus thought. He'd not forgiven this group. He didn't even take time to find out who they were. He'd hung onto his right to have his fence free from invasion.

#### Reflection

Jesus willingly gave up his right to be in position with his Father when he came to earth as a servant. And he willingly gave up his right to life on earth when he sacrificed himself on the cross, fully capable of calling for help and freeing himself from the trauma and death. Yet, when our possessions are tampered with, we hold on to our rights. When our positions at work or in the community are threatened by unfair intrusions, we protest emphatically. What are our rights, really?

#### Accountability and Application

At what times do you demand your rights?

In what area of your life is God calling you to give up your rights?

Pay attention to the way you tend to hold on to your perceived rights the next time you feel them threatened. Find a way to release what really isn't yours anyway. See if it makes a difference in the way you view situations and in the way you deal with them.

**Prayer:** Lord, show me where I am demanding my rights and keeping you from being able to use me fully Help me trust you enough to release my rights and trust in your mercy.

## Luke 23:32-43 (New American Standard Bible)

<sup>32</sup>Two others also, who were criminals, were being led away to be put to death with Him.

#### The Crucifixion

<sup>33</sup>When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left.

<sup>34</sup>But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing " And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.

<sup>35</sup>And the people stood by, looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One."

<sup>36</sup>The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine,

<sup>37</sup>and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!"

<sup>38</sup>Now there was also an inscription above Him, "THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

<sup>39</sup>One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!"

<sup>40</sup>But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?

<sup>41</sup>"And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."

<sup>42</sup>And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!"

<sup>43</sup>And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."