



DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR APRIL 6, 2012

## INNOCENT UNTIL...

*It is written: "And he was numbered with the transgressors." (Luke 22:37, NIV)*

ALL OF US GAIN A CERTAIN PORTION OF OUR OWN IDENTITY by identifying (or being identified) with others. Some of these identities we do not choose for ourselves—our families, our nationalities, our elementary schools. Other identities we most certainly choose—as golfers, say, or country club members. Some make their college important in defining themselves, others their career. Some like to be known by the cars they drive, others by the restaurants they frequent.

Whether by conscription or by choice, we are numbered with others. But all of us would prefer the latter—to choose for ourselves the terms of our identity.

Jesus surrendered this choice.

His truest identity, we know as his believers and followers, is no less than King. As the incarnate God—the Son who has eternally existed with the Father and the Spirit in that intricate, mysterious Trinity—Jesus had every right to honor, every right to worship.

Instead, just as the prophet Isaiah announced 700 years before he was born in Bethlehem, Jesus allowed himself to be “numbered with the transgressors.” He allowed himself to be betrayed by an anxious disciple, to be accused by mock witnesses, to be tried by self-righteous men, to be assigned to death by a crowd-pleasing proconsul, to be beaten and led to the cross by brutish soldiers, and then to be crucified between two thieves.

Nonsensical, all of it—unless we remind ourselves that *this* was God’s grand plan. This was the way of salvation laid out from the hour of sin in the garden. It required an innocent man being sacrificed in the thick of a guilty world.

That innocent man is as pure today as ever, and as able to save. He was numbered with the transgressors. Let us now be numbered with him! He is the one leading the way to eternity. His call remains: “Follow me.”

## Our common lot, our common hope

*Read Psalm 14:1-3 and Romans 3:23.* What is the identity we all share on our own before God?

*Read Romans 3:24-26 and 6:23.* How can our identity before God be changed? Have you made this switchover in your own life? What caused you to trust in Jesus as your righteousness, or what is still keeping you from it?

## Jesus as the innocent, successful sacrifice

*Read Hebrews 9:11-28.* How was the sacrifice of Jesus different than the sacrifices of the priests (vv. 12, 24-27)?

How was Jesus’ sacrifice effective for our sakes (vv. 14, 15, 28)?