

di power to pardon

"two oda men, both criminals, de also led komot wit am be executed. Wen dem com go di place dem dey call di skull, dia dem crucified am, along wit di criminals—one on top im right, di oda on top im comot. Jesus say, 'father, forgive dem, for dem no sabi wetin dem be doing. ' and dem divided up im clothes by casting lots. Di pipo stood watching and di rulers even sneered for am. Dem say, 'he saved odas; make am save imself if im na di christ for god, di chosen one. ' di soldiers also com up and mocked am. Dem offered am wine vinegar and say, 'if you de di king for di jews, save yourself. ' dia na a written notice above am, which read: dis na di king for di jews. One for di criminals who hung dia, hurled insults for am: 'aren't you di christ? save yourself and we!' but di oda criminal rebuked am. 'don't you fear god,' im say, 'since you de under di same sentence? we are punished justly, for we are getting wetin awa deeds deserve. But dis man don do nothing wrong. ' then im say, 'jesus, remember me wen you com into ya kingdom. ' jesus answered am, 'i tell you di true, today you go de wit me for paradise. '" (luke 23:32)

as you look dey di scene for di crucifixion, wit which for di characters do you most readily identify? as you look into dia faces na dia anything dat reminds you for yourself? for some for you, dat ansa might be peter. You mek statements and promises for loyalty, only to don dem fall short. You fit be wrestling wit guilt and frustration dey ask yourself di kweshion: fit god ever forgive me for falling short again? perhaps, you identify wit pilate. Tink wey concern pilate, di main main word e get, "almost," abi im "almost" released di pikin for god. Im "almost" do di right tin. Maybe ya life na wrapped up for di word, "almost. " you "almost" became a christian. You "almost" lived a faithful life. You "almost" lived a disciplined existence.

maybe you identify wit mary. I tink dem get a lot for marys, both male and female, faithful, loyal, true, sometimes sad or sometimes confused.

Or, perhaps pesin identifies wit john. You're dia too, but you're timid, you're mellow, you're fear. Outside for dis place, dia's realli send who knows dat you're jesus' disciple.

as you look ova di whole cast for characters dey di crucifixion, wit whom do you identify.

amid all dos characters, i suggest to you dat e get one wit whom each for we wey be for

christ fit identify. Im's di focus for awa study. You're no bi going to laik dis, but all for we christians identify wit di crucified crook. Laik am, you hang for di cross beside jesus. Laik am, you've looked for faith and make pass unimaginable request possible. And laik am, you get received wetin paul dem dey call di "indescribable dash" for salvation.

wetin does di scene wey concern di crucified barawo tell we? wetin does it show we? juss two basic tins, but dem be di two most important lessons a human being fit ever sabi. Di immeasurable value for a pesin and di immeasurable depth for god's love. Na fine well well tori, for many ways na mysterious tori. For generations, di tori for di crucified crook don been a controversy for some wey concern how one accepts god's grace today, wey concern how one becomes a christian. Folks, it's no bi recorded for dat purpose. Dis whole tin occurred before dia de any christians, before god ever established im church. Di reason di tori don make na way down through history na to show we as graphically as any oda page for bible, dos two powerful lessons: di immeasurable value for a pesin and di immeasurable depth for god's love.

seven statements jesus make for di cross summarized im whole life and mission laik tabs or an index page for one big notebook. You turn and find a volume for material behind each little tab.

1. Di immeasurable value for a pesin.

we sight jesus treating dat crucified crook di way im's been treating pipo through im ministry all along. Dos pipo are helpless and look to am for faith. , im displayed di same send and grace boku earlier wen im com down from dey give di sermon for di mount. Matthew tells we for im gospel, chapter 8, wey he na huddled dey a group for pipo talking wen all for a sudden dat group scatter laik roaches dat had juss seen a ray for lait. Pesin yells komot for di top for dia lungs, "leper. " sure e don do dia im na a huddled plenti plenti humanity, a walking wunjure, a festering sore, maybe no arm, maybe no nose. I'll tell you for a fact, im had nothing, except for one final, desperate prayer. Di leper looked up and say, "master, if you would, you fit mek me clean. "

sight, dat leper had exactly wetin di crucified barawo had nothing except a desperate prayer. Do you remember wetin jesus do go dat leper? jesus reached komot and touched am. Im put im hands on top one for dos open, bleeding sores. Now you've get to sight peter and john ova for di bushes looking komot say, "oh no, oga, oga, no, no touch am!" why do im? fit jesus no bi don healed di leper without touching am? sure im fit. Why do im do it? im na teaching we di immeasurable value for a pesin.

folks, a human being don value bicos im or im na human. Now di world no de buy dat. Di world teaches we dat we get value reason say how we look, wetin we fit do or wetin we've get for awa bank account. Now you take dos tins and mesh dem together and you get di world's value system. God says, "no, you're valuable juss bicos you de make for mai very image, unique for all creation. "

jesus taugt di same tin go di adulterous woman for john 8. Do you remember am tori? im had no grounds on top which to tanda. Im had been catch for di act for adultery. Im had no defense. We'd tok im na guilty as sin. But wen am eyes met di eyes for jesus, im no sight di

hatred and di bitterness wey she had seen for dos oda eyes. Im looked for am wit a plea for am eyes, and im spared am life.

on top and for di tori go for di gospel, di samaritan woman, zacchaeus up for dat tree and di blind bartimaeus. So, it no surprise we wen we sight wetin happun to dis man who kpai beside di christ. It's interesting wey we no sabi boku wey concern dis barawo, do we? we no sabi im name, im haus town, wetin im do for a living or wetin im knew wey concern jesus. Some don speculated wey he na a patriot, one for dos jewish zealots who bin de try to drive di roman army komot for di land. To tell you di true, i doubt dat. I doubt dat bicos if dat de true, surely luke for get told we. And if no bi luke, some oda historian somewhere for get mentioned dat.

no, i tink we've get to face di fact dat dis man hanging beside jesus na juss a crook. Im na juss a barawo. For fact, judging from di severity for im sentence, im na di worst for di worst. Im na a habitual criminal and to kpai on top a roman cross for thievery, dat realli na pretty severe. E get no dey tell how many oda atrocities im fit don committed. Pesin says, "well, if im de dat bad, wetin be it dat jesus na trying to teach we?"

2. Di immeasurable depth for god's love

make's make awa minds wander back go dat cross on top dat hill dem dem dey call "golgotha," or di place for di skull. Na im barren, it looked laik a skull. Na im a place wia many skulls had fallen. Now imagine dat you de for di crowd for di nyash for di hill looking up for dos three silhouetted crosses. You go a little closer to sight di face for di one wey dem call di criminal, di one who would eventually ask for forgiveness.

as we look up for am, im face na gray, ashen, and weary from no dey tell how boku taim im had been for kri-kri and bin expect. Im eyes are sunken and desperation don destroyed any sense for joy for all for im

life. Im get all but give up. "let's get it ova wit," im's thinking, "let's juss get it ova wit. " so im's hanging on top dat cross, and dem get only a few grains for sand for im hourglass comot.

but then im looks ova for dis man who na crucified next to am. Di man for di middle, di man ova whose head na nailed a placard dat says: di king for di jews. We no sabi if dis crook had ever seen jesus before, maybe im had. Maybe im had seen a miracle, maybe im had seen jesus love di unlovable, maybe im had seen awa lord treat di scum for di earth laik di salt for di earth, maybe im had heard one for im teachings, or, maybe all im knew wey concern jesus na wetin im na looking for as e stand so, a crucified carpenter whose lungs de gasping for air and whose skin na tear and bleeding. But as im gazed for di man beside am, dia na sontin wey concern dis man dat na riveting to dis barawo. Why na dis fellow so serene? why na im so amazingly mellow while everybody else na ridiculing? why doesn't im scream komot for pain laik everybody else does who na for di cross? then sontin amazing begin to happun.

dis crook, dis barawo begin to fashi wey concern imsef. Di intensity for im pain na momentarily dulled, di sting for di nails na momentarily forgotten and im finds imsef no fit to take im eyes off dis man. Im senses an emotion wey he hasn't felt for "who knows wen. " im finds imsef concern wey concern di messiah. Im catches imsef caring wey concern dis man. A calloused crook, it's been so long tey tey im cared wey concern anything. It feels strange, but di feeling na dia.

dia's an interruption. Dia's a foghorn-like voice dat breaks im train for think. It comes from di oda crook, di fellow who's crucified for di oda area. Di voice na bitter and it's wor wor. You sight, pesin else don also been looking for jesus. Dis criminal don no bi been looking for awa lord through di eyes for compassion and concern. Im's been looking through di cracked lens for cynicism.

na so? an amazing tin how two pipo fit be so close to jesus, don virtually di same circumstances, and yet don two totally different perspectives? you don ever been amazed by how one for dem fit com komot absolutely committed to following di lord and di oda juss totally reject am and yet dia circumstances virtually di same? i've lai lai fully understood dat, but here's a ogbonge example for it. One felt compelled to request di no fit by faith, and di oda juss promise to join for wit di jeers for di crowd. "if you're di christ, save yourself, oh, while you're for it, save we, too!" na im juss anoda verbal spear. Then dia's shun again.

i wonder if dat critical barawo no realli expect di oda fellow to join for. Misery does love compin. But instead, pass remarkable tin happens. Dat oda crook does juss di opposite. I no sabi how many pipo heard wetin im say to jesus. I'm talking wey concern dos for di ground, di soldiers, mary and di odas. But i go guarantee you pesin who heard na im for awe. "don't you fear god?" di barawo says? "since you de under di same sentence, we are punished justly. We are getting wetin awa deeds deserve, but dis man don do nothing wrong. Then im says, "jesus, remember me wen you com into ya kingdom. " no fit you sight di soja glancing up, mary wiping away a tear and staring into di face for dat barawo? why i fit sight di angels for heaven gasping. "when na di last taim dis fellow ever spoke up for pesin?"

but here im na, performing perhaps pass noble act recorded for scripture wen send else would come god's defense, wen e remain small everyone else turn dia back, wen even di angels de weeping and di demons from hell de dancing for di lait bicos dem think dem had bin kill di pikin for god. It took a crook, it took a rejected low-life crook to tanda on top behalf for god and for so doing, for di very sunset for im existence, im salvaged evritin wey concern im life.

peter, di one who would lai lai forsake am, na nowhere be found. Pilate, di authoritative one, had washed im hands a tey tey. Di crowd had turn

fickle, di disciples had run, but a crook without even knowing it shares wit we di three tins dat you must sabi and believe deep for ya heart for hearts if you de ready to come christ. Wetin do i need to sabi cloth a christian? wetin do i need to ? folks, you lai lai quit understanding, it's hard. Wia do you draw dat line?

di book for acts show multiple examples for dos who com to christ and wetin bare necessities dem understood. But, it na capsulated right here as clearly as any place i've ever seen.

1. He com go di kpatakpata wey he na filthy. Im looked ova and say, "you sabi i deserve wetin i am getting. " im no juss tok im na a sinner. Im's say, "i'm a mega-sinner. I deserve to hang on top dis cross. I deserve to kpai," gasping for breath.

2. He com go kpatakpata dat jesus na absolutely pure. Im say, "but dis man don do nothing wrong. " di crook say, "i am guilty. God's innocent. I'm wrong, im's right. I'm lost, but im's di savior. " di crook say wey concern im and im fren dia, im buddy for di oda area, "we're here bicos we deserve it, but im does no bi. "

3. Jesus don di power to incorporate we into a kingdom dat transcends dis life. Dat barawo knew dat dia de juss a few grains comot for im hour glass and knowing im na dying, im looked ova and say, "master, go you remember me wen you com into ya kingdom?"

by now jesus had turn im head toward dis barawo and i no fit help but wonder if even for im pain, jesus had managed a slight smile as im seized dis lost, lone sheep, broken, bruised and bleeding limping into di fold. Dat sheep looked up for di shepherd and say, "can i com for? i no deserve to, but fit i com for? oga, would you remember me wen you com into ya kingdom?" di gud shepherd looked for di sheep and say, "come on top for. Today, you're going be wit me for paradise. " di immeasurable value for a human, di immeasurable depth for god's love.

di words for di song beneath di cross for jesus summarize dis lesson
"upon dat cross for jesus, mine eye for times fit sight di very dying form
for one who suffered dia for me; and from mai smitten heart, wit tears
two wonders i confess: di wonders for im glorious love and mai own
worthlessness" except we are no bi worthless for di eyes for di saving
god. Amazing grace lesson #1252 steve flatt march 3, 1996