

HOW TO LIVE THROUGH A BAD DAY

The Helpful Step

Luke 23:43

Keep your eyes on *Jesus*, who both began and finished this race we're in. *Study how he did it*. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God. (Hb 12:2, The Message)

And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43, NLT)

The Helpful Step: Help others who are experiencing your same struggle.

The Reason

(1) It distracts us from our own struggles.

One of the criminals hanging beside him *scoffed*, "So you're the Messiah, are you? *Prove it* by saving yourself—and us, too, while you're at it!" But the other criminal *protested*... (Luke 23:39–40, NLT)

(2) It helps us to see the solution.

But the other criminal *protested*, "Don't you *fear God* even when you have been sentenced to die? We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn't done anything wrong." (Luke 23:40–41, NLT)

(3) It allows us to put everything in perspective.

Then he said, "Jesus, *remember me* when you come into your *Kingdom*." (Luke 23:42, NLT)

If you *spend yourselves* in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your *light* will rise in the *darkness*, and your *night* will become like the *noonday*. The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sunscorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a *well-watered garden*, like a spring whose waters never fail. (Isaiah 58:10–11)

**When we help others, who are facing what we face,
it gets what we face out of our face!**

He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, *he brings us alongside someone else* who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God was there for us. (2 Corinthians 1:4, The Message)

The Approach

(1) Offer them stability.

"I *assure* you..." (Luke 23:43, NLT)

**People need something solid
because everything in life is shifting and changing.**

He lifted me out of the *slimy pit*, out of the *mud* and *mire*; he set my feet on a *rock* and gave me a *firm place* to stand. (Psalm 40:2)

(2) Offer them support.

"... *today* you will be *with me*..." (Luke 23:43, NLT)

A person standing *alone* can be *attacked* and *defeated*, but two can stand *back-to-back* and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:12 NLT)

a) Through your gifts and passions.

b) Through your mess ups and mistakes.

God uses our mess-ups to be a ministry!

(3) Offer Them Heaven.

And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today you will be with me *in paradise*." (Luke 23:43, NLT)

"Do not let your *hearts be troubled*. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. *I am going there to prepare a place for you*. (John 14:1–2)

**Jesus offers more than a better now.
He offers a better forever.**