

## Paradise

Paradise isn't our final destination. The final destination is resurrection; the seamless union of heaven and earth. But until the resurrection, there is Paradise, the place where Jesus is. I've heard too many exceedingly sane and loving people talk about heaven with gentle authority not to believe in it's existence. People who live heaven's agenda on earth tend to have an easier time believing in Paradise. Response?

### Our Common Practices

Early on we discovered that folk didn't know what was expected of them as participants in the story of Table Life Church. We came up with a list of "Common Practices." These are the practices of the Christian faith we consider fundamental to what it means to follow Jesus.

#### **We Gather**

We gather for worship on Sundays more often than not.  
We gather in smaller groups to connect, learn, and grow.  
We create hospitable space for one another.

#### **We Grow**

We attend the means of grace daily. (i.e. We attend to the presence of God through Scripture reading and meditation, prayer on behalf of others and myself, breath prayer, spiritual reading and study . . .).  
We nurture our faith.  
We attend to relationships that promote growth.  
We develop and learn as human beings made in the image of God.

#### **We Give**

We are a generous people who give our time and resources to the mission of God in the world.  
We tithe as the means through which our community enjoys fiscal health so as to minister generously.

#### **We Go**

We follow Jesus into the world as His healing presence.  
We help the vulnerable among us.  
We go into the world offering Jesus' invitation to gather at His table.

For your calendar!

### TRAINING FOR ALL NURSERY, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH VOLUNTEERS!

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This is important and mandatory training for anyone working with minors at Table Life Church! We will be covering **child safety** policies and practices, **vision** for ministry, and much more!

MARCH 10, 2018  
9 AM - 3 PM

 

### CHURCH STAFF

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**9:45 AM - 10:45 AM Sunday School**  
**11 AM - 12:30 PM Worship Service**  
**617 16th St. New Cumberland, PA 17070**  
**717-774-6444**

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CHURCH OF  
THE NAZARENE

TABLELIFE  
CHURCH



Order of Worship

25 February 2018

The Second Sunday in Lent

## We Gather to Worship God

Prelude Music

Welcome

Call to Worship

Worship Reading

## We Listen to the Scriptures

Pastoral Prayer

Offering

Scripture Reading: Luke 23.39-43

Sermon Two: "In Paradise"

## We Come to the Table

Passing the Peace of Christ

Prayer of Consecration

The Lord's Prayer

We Eat and Drink Together

Prayer of Thanksgiving

## We Go to Live in the Reign of God

Community Life

Gossiping the Good Stuff

Doxology

Blessing and Sending

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***If you are a guest with us today,***

***Please take time to fill out a***

***Connection Card.***

Please visit us on our website,

[www.tablelifechurch.org](http://www.tablelifechurch.org) for details of events.

Also you will find, Worship folders, online giving and you can also  
send prayer request to the prayer chain.

## COMING SOON

Mar 10 Youth and Children's Teacher Meeting	9:00AM
Mar 11 Day Light Savings Time	2:00AM
Mar 11 Market Street Breakfast Ministry	7:24AM
Mar 13 Team and Board Meetings	6:30PM
Mar 18 Common Meal	12:30PM

*Official Church Calendar ~ [www.tablelifechurch.org/calendar](http://www.tablelifechurch.org/calendar)*

## Sermon Reflection Guide

### Luke 23.39-43

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

### Question for Everyone

(1) Honestly I struggle to believe that there is life after death and that heaven is real. (10) I have no doubt whatsoever that heaven is real and then when I die I will be in Paradise with Jesus. Where are you on this range?

### Our King from His Throne

"Today, you will be with me in Paradise." Seems like a rather overly-confident declaration from one who is about as far from Paradise as you can get. It's almost as if Jesus thinks he's the one calling the shots from his rather vulnerable predicament. Jesus speaks like a king granting forgiveness, pardon and Paradise in this place of extreme cruelty; which is precisely the point. The

crucifixion is a conspiracy of supreme evil, and it is the enthronement of our king at the very same time. How might reading the crucifixion through the interpretive lens of enthronement help us better understand the crucifixion?

### Mocked

"The electric chair, when it was still used, was almost always used for executing the lowest class of criminal, a majority of them black, with no powerful connections or other resources. Similarly, the Romans virtually never used the cross for executing people who had occupied high positions, and never for Roman Citizens. . . . Crucifixion as a means of execution in the Roman Empire had as its express purpose the elimination of victims from consideration as members of the human race. . . . It was meant to indicate to all who might be toying with subversive ideas that crucified persons were not of the same species as either the executioners or the spectators and were therefore not only expendable but also deserving of ritualized extermination . . . . Crucifixion was cleverly designed—we might say diabolically designed—to be an almost theatrical enactment of the sadistic and inhumane impulses that lie within human beings. According to the Christian gospel, the Son of God voluntarily and purposefully absorbed all of that, drawing it into himself" (Fleming Ruedge, *The Crucifixion: Understanding the Death of Jesus Christ*). Response?

### "Today, you will be with me in Paradise."

The scandal of these words is revealed not only in their content and context but by the recipient of these words. These are not good men. They are not wrongly accused. If the law of the land is "eye for eye" and "tooth for tooth," these guys are right where they belong. Perpetrators of violence are now the victims of violence. Paradise is offered to this common criminal. The King of the Jews ushers a broken, hopeless, soon to be exterminated criminal into his kingdom. Response? What does this moment teach us about the reign of God in Christ?