

## Session 5

### *I have the promise of eternal life*

#### **OPENING QUESTIONS**

?Have you ever known anyone who ended up in jail? If so, what was their story?

? Do you identify with that person in any way?

***Watch DVD episode.***

#### **DISCUSSION**

1. Rembrandt painted himself into his portrayal of the crucifixion. If you were to paint yourself into the scene, where would you be? What would you be doing?
2. Of all the characters we've looked at—such as these two thieves, Peter, Judas, Mary—or even of those we haven't looked at closely, like John or the soldiers, with whom do you most identify and why?
3. This episode focused a great deal on the one criminal. What is it that leads a person to steal what someone else has and use it for himself?

4. We might wonder how a man could end up as a habitual crook. But is there a sin you commit habitually? Maybe it is gossiping—after all, what's so wrong about that? Or maybe lusting—it's impossible to prevent anyway, right? Or simply living for yourself—after all, doesn't everybody?

When you end up doing the same wrong thing over and over, what effect does it have on you?

What effect does it have on your relationship with Christ?

5. Something Jesus said or did changed the criminal, though we don't know what it was. What changed you? What did Jesus say or do that originally led you to turn toward Him?
6. We sometimes hear, "Even if you were the only person on earth, Jesus would have died for you." If you were the only one, are your wrongs so bad that Jesus would have to die for you?
7. Let's look at one passage from the second chapter of James. James, the brother of Jesus, did not come to believe that Jesus was the Messiah until after His resurrection. Read verses 8-11.

<sup>8</sup> If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. <sup>9</sup> But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. <sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. <sup>11</sup> For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

Here we are told that whoever falters at one point of the law, even something as "small" as showing favoritism to one person over another, is guilty of breaking all the law. What do you make

of that?

## FOR REFLECTION

Read this passage from Luke 18 every day this week, first asking Jesus to open your eyes to what He wants you to see. Circle, underline, or write in the margins whatever words, phrases, or thoughts stand out.

<sup>9</sup> To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: <sup>10</sup> "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.<sup>11</sup> The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector.<sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' <sup>13</sup> "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'<sup>14</sup> I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."