



THE WORD *Alive*

The Preaching Ministry of
Ashley River Baptist Church

Hosanna! Give us Barabbas Matt 27:15-26 Matthew 27: 15-26

How is it that the life of a notorious criminal, Barabbas, could be chosen and spared over the life of Jesus, the Son of God? Is it possible that we still make the same choice today?

1 - We cry Barabbas when our belief is based on that which is sensational and popular....*faith in the fantastic!*

John 12:18 tells us, the reason the crowd went to meet Him was because they heard he had called Lazarus out of the tomb. Jesus had done the sensational. True faith is bound in Christ alone which leads to commitment to Him and His church and all that entails - even the cross. Faith in the fantastic is fickle and soon subsides.

2 - We cry Barabbas when we live by no absolute standard of truth and ethical standard of right and wrong in our lives.

When no absolute standard of truth exists, it is easier to rationalize and accept the deviant acts of others as well as to justify our position to accommodate our feelings and desires. Thus, the Son of God was rejected and Barabbas, a "notorious" criminal became the people's choice. Anytime truth is made to be relative or compromised, "we choose Barabbas" and we reject Jesus who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

CONCLUSIONS:

In this provocative narrative, we see embodied the choice of all mankind today - a choice to accept Jesus or to accept a substitute.

The name **BAR-ABBAS** means, "Son of" "the Father." Thus, the choice before the crowd that day was for the true "Son of the Father" or the substitute "son of the father". Ultimately, the only two choices in life are to follow Jesus or something else. One leads to eternal life - the other to eternal separation from God.

I wonder if Barabbas ever walked by the cross that was prepared for him only hours before and saw hanging there another man - a substitute - one who received the punishment in HIS place - the punishment of death - on HIS cross - for HIS sins. I wonder if he ever heard the words of Jesus, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Of all the people in the world for whom he could have died, He died for Barabbas - a criminal.

How do you feel this morning as you reflect on Him hanging there - as you realize that it was for you he died - your substitute? What is your choice? For whom does your life cry today?

Matthew 21-6-11 6The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. 7They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. 8A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest!" 10When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" 11The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

Matthew 27: 15-26 15Now it was the governor's custom at the Feast to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. 16At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. 17So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you want me to release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" 18For he knew it was out of envy that they had handed Jesus over to him. 19 While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him." 20But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed. 21 "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" asked the governor. "Barabbas," they answered. 22 "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?" Pilate asked. They all answered, "Crucify him!" 23 "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!" 24 When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!" 25 All the people answered, "Let his blood be on us and on our children!" 26 Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

John 12:17-18

17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. 18 Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him.