

**Barabbas & Jesus**

*1*Very early in the morning the leading priests, the elders, and the teachers of religious law—the entire high council - met to discuss their next step. They bound Jesus, led him away, and took him to Pilate, the Roman governor. *2* Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

Jesus replied, “You have said it.”

*3* Then the leading priests kept accusing him of many crimes, *4* and Pilate asked him, “Aren’t you going to answer them? What about all these charges they are bringing against you?” *5* But Jesus said nothing, much to Pilate’s surprise.

*6* Now it was the governor’s custom each year during the Passover celebration to release one prisoner—anyone the people requested. *7* One of the prisoners at that time was Barabbas, a revolutionary who had committed murder in an uprising. *8* The crowd went to Pilate and asked him to release a prisoner as usual.

*9* “Would you like me to release to you this ‘King of the Jews?’” Pilate asked. *10* (For he realized by now that the leading priests had arrested Jesus out of envy.) *11* But at this point the leading priests stirred up the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus. *12* Pilate asked them, “Then what should I do with this man you call the king of the Jews?”

*13* They shouted back, “Crucify him!” *14* “Why?” Pilate demanded. “What crime has he committed?” But the mob roared even louder, “Crucify him!” *15* So to pacify the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.

Mark 15:1-15 (NLT)

**Observation** (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

**Discussion/Topic Starters** (Ice Breakers)

- What is the most unjust thing you have ever witnessed?
  - As a kid, would you rather have been punished by mom or dad, and why?
  - Today, would you rather be judged by a church body or a civil court?
- O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

**VI-15**

- O: Discuss the parallels between Barabbas and all of humanity.  
-See Mark 10:45 for context,  
-Romans 3:23, 6:23, Matt. 5:21, Romans 5:10 for our similar character makeup/sinful nature  
-Romans 5:10, 2 Cor:5:21 for our availability for freedom because Jesus took our place.
- I: Why do the people, after witnessing Jesus’ miracles, hearing His teachings and praising him, now demand that Jesus be crucified (v.13)?
- I: Why does Pilate grant their request (v.15), out of concern for justice, or peace-at-any-price?  
Follow-up: What kind of man is Pilate? What evidence is there that he wants to do right?  
What keeps him from doing what is right?  
How can we keep from succumbing to the same temptation.
- A: How are you like Pilate, especially in terms of selling short your convictions in exchange for peace?  
How are you like Jesus, consistently matching your actions with your convictions?  
How are you like Barabbas?

**Recommended Follow-up:**

- Pray: \_\_\_\_\_
- Respond: \_\_\_\_\_
- Read: Next week’s sermon (4/24/2011) will focus on Mark chapter 16. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.

\* As discussed in Riverside’s HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid “go through this guide word-for-word.” There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. These guides rely heavily on a few different study guides; including “LifeChange Series” (ISBN 0891099107), N.T. Wright’s guide (ISBN 9780830821822), James Hoover’s guide (ISBN 9780830830046), and the Serendipity NT for Groups by the Young Life ministry (ISBN is N/A)