

**Following Jesus
The Substitute
John 18 and Luke 23**

I. Message

a. Jesus is the SOVEREIGN – John 18:33-36

- i. The High Priests rejected the Great High Priest
- ii. The religious elite (leaders of worship) rejected the Son of God for blasphemy
- iii. Pilate, the local ruler, rejects the Ruler of rulers
 1. Don't miss this obvious truth!
 2. Jesus is the sovereign
 - a. To understand how special the metaphor of Barabbas is
 - b. You must understand how special Jesus is
 - i. He is the long-awaited King of the Jews
 - ii. The fulfillment of all the OT prophecies
 - iii. The promised One from Genesis 3 and all the covenants that someday a king would sit on the throne is Israel forever
 - iv. Remember the journey of the wise men, seeking the King?
 - v. Remember the fear of Herod, killing the children for fear of the King
 - vi. Jesus is THAT King!
 3. He is the promised and long-awaited King of heaven
 4. Sovereign over all

b. Barabbas (like all of us) was a SINNER – John 18:39-40, Luke 23:16-22

- i. In contrast to the King of heaven, WE all “fall short of the glory of God”
- ii. And so did Barabbas
- iii. That's interesting
 1. They did not want the King of kings, the King of heaven, the King of the Jews released
 2. They wanted a criminal instead!
 3. A classic example of calling good evil and evil good (Isaiah 5:20)
- iv. We must go to Luke 23 for more information on this Barabbas
 1. Saying Barabbas was a “robber” was a bit of an understatement
 2. He was a murderer and insurrectionist
 3. Luke 23 tells us that Pilate HAD to release one criminal
 - a. **Luke 23:16**
 - b. This of course was unacceptable to the Jews
 - c. **Luke 23:18-22**
 4. Pilate understood that something was badly wrong

- a. He, as a ruler, knew his job:
- b. To as Romans 13 says, be a terror to EVIL
- c. And to be a minister to good
- d. This is what good rulers do
- e. They call evil “evil” and they call good “good”
- f. What was going on here was clearly wrong
 - i. The king of the Jews was innocent (while accused)
 - ii. Barabbas was guilty (while excused)
 - a. Isaiah 53:6
 - b. Isaiah 64:6
 - c. Ecclesiastes 7:20
 - d. 1 John 1:8
 - i. We are Barabbas in this story!
 - ii. The King of kings is perfect
 - iii. Hebrews 7:26 “...holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners...”
 - iv. We are guilty
 - v. Guilty of the entire law

c. God makes the SUBSTITUTION – Luke 23:24-25

- i. Luke 23:24-25 “And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they (the religious leaders) required. 25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will [to be crucified].”
- ii. It might look like a decision of Pilate
 - 1. But this is a God-moment
 - 2. Because what happens here is a metaphor for the entire GOSPEL!
 - 3. 2 Corinthians 5:21 “[God] made [Jesus] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
 - 4. The innocent was made sin and bore the consequences of it
 - 5. The guilty (us) walked away “scot-free” (penalty free)
 - 6. By the way, this is the point of Peter’s first gospel sermon in Acts 2
 - a. You killed the wrong guy!
 - b. You killed the king and the guilty went free!
 - c. If you believe in Him, you too can go free!
 - i. That should have been me on that cross
 - ii. That should have been you on that cross
 - iii. Instead, the King died so that you and I don’t have to!

II. Closing

- a. **Amos 1:1-2:6**
- b. God punishes evil in His own people and in pagans
 - i. He is JUST and cannot overlook it
 - ii. **Deuteronomy 7:9-10**
 1. And yet, because of Jesus, Barabbas goes free
 2. Because of Jesus, you and I can go free!
 3. The King is the great Substitute!

III. Conclusions

- a. **Is Jesus King in your life?**
- b. **Do you even see your own guilt without Jesus?**
- c. **When was your Barabbas moment?**
 - i. Barabbas is me. Barabbas is you.
 - ii. **Romans 5:6-8** “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet **sinners**, Christ died for us.”