

God Send Part 2

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Preacher: Pastor Steve Hersey

[0 : 00] Matthew chapter 27, Matthew chapter 27. Over the last few weeks I have been giving you different people who were around and a part of, in one way or another, the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We talked about Judas, who betrayed Jesus. We talked about Peter, who denied Jesus. Last week we talked about Pilate, who had Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life standing right in front of him and asked him, what is truth?

Today I want to look at another person. And you notice the title behind me, I'm sure. Which Jesus would you choose? As I was studying this week, I found out something kind of interesting.

Look with me in Matthew chapter 27, beginning at verse 15. Matthew 27, 15. Now, at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

And they had a notable prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you, Barabbas or Jesus, which is called Christ?

[1 : 25] For he knew that for envy they delivered him. Stop right there for a second. Pilate knew what was going on. He knew what was happening.

You notice what he said there? Because the Jewish leaders were jealous of the notoriety that Jesus had. They were jealous of the people that were following him and not them.

They were jealous of the fact that whenever he was asked a question, he could answer it, and they couldn't. He says it was for envy that they delivered him. Verse 19.

When he was set down at the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man? For I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said unto them, Whither of the twain will ye that I release unto you?

[2 : 24] They said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

And the governor said, Why? What evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person.

See ye to it. Then answered all the people and said, His blood be upon us and upon our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them.

And when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. His blood be upon us and upon our children. Wow.

What a statement to make. How bold and how brazen. Let's have a word prayer. Father, I pray this morning you would teach us some things as we look at Barabbas.

[3 : 32] Lord, I'm not sure if Barabbas really truly ever understood everything that was taking place that day. But Barabbas reminds us of the fact that Jesus gave his life for sinners.

Lord, I pray that you would help us to learn today and be reminded today of what you did when you went to that cross. Lord, help us to see your hand at work in everything that takes place there.

Lord, may we see your hand at work in our lives today. Lord, may you teach us, grow us, mature us. Help us leave here understanding even more about who you are.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Pilate presented Barabbas to the crowd as an alternative. Custom was, you can choose on this day before the Passover, you can choose which one you would like to have released.

I'll release one prisoner. I'm going to give you Jesus. I'm going to give you Barabbas. He was doing that partly to make sure that he didn't condemn an innocent man.

[4 : 47] Romans may have been tough on a lot of things, but one of the things was they knew not to mess with innocent people. They had a real thing about condemning an innocent man. Pilate offers to take care of this by giving them the choice, giving the people the choice.

And as I was studying, I read something that I had never really seen before. I was reading some different ones, and they say, the scholars, and they say there's manuscript evidence for this, that Pilate was giving them a choice between two men with the same name, Jesus of Nazareth and Jesus Barabbas.

I'd never heard that before. I read it in a number of different places, though. And they say there's documents to prove that that was his first name. His name was Jesus Barabbas. So during the time that Jesus lived, that name Jesus was a popular name.

In the Greek, it's called Jesus. In the Hebrew, it would have been Joshua. And Joshua was a famous name in Israel, obviously.

Joshua led them into the Promised Land. Joshua led them in the Battle of Jericho. Joshua helped them to conquer the land. Joshua was a great name.

[6 : 11] And so you could have Jesus, the Messiah, the Christ, and Jesus Barabbas, the insurrectionist, the terrorist. Choose you between these two.

Now, this morning I want you to see Barabbas as the face of God's mercy.

I'm not saying he was saved. I'm not saying he understood God's grace. But he understood God's mercy. Here's a man who wakes up in the morning and he expects to be crucified.

Before the day is over, Jesus is going to die on a cross that should have belonged to Barabbas. When the Sabbath came, a couple days later, Jesus is going to be laying in a tomb.

Barabbas is going to be somewhere else laying on a bed. Why am I bringing Barabbas to you today? Because Barabbas shows us that Christ died for us.

[7 : 28] Barabbas was the worst of the worst. And Jesus took his place when he went to that cross. He was actually hanging on a cross that probably was going to go to Barabbas that day.

This morning I want you to see some things about God's mercy. Undeserved, unsought, and unrestricted. Today we're going to see that Jesus died for everyone.

Not just his friends, because we were all his enemies. And Barabbas was definitely an enemy at that time. He wasn't a follower of Jesus. He didn't really care. So this morning, first of all, let's look at the fact that he's a face of undeserved mercy.

Undeserved mercy. He deserved to die. He had gone to trial. He had been in trial before a Roman court. And they had to pronounce that he was guilty. And they were going to crucify him.

He'd been sentenced to a crucifixion. When he wakes up that morning, it's the last day of his life. And he's come to terms with that. He knows what's about to happen.

[8 : 38] What's going to happen to him. And to others. You know. We're all worthy of death. Based on God's standards.

Of righteousness. Paul wrote. For many verses you know. Romans 3.23. For all have sinned. And come short of the glory of God.

All have sinned. Take out the word all. And put your name in there. For Pastor Steve Hersey has sinned. And fallen short of the glory of God.

Pastor's wife, Bonnie, has sinned. And come short of the glory of God. Music leader, Stan, has sinned. And come short of the glory of God.

Put your name in there. For. I. Have sinned. And come short. Of the glory of God.

[9 : 41] And you know. If you've been in church any time. Follow up verse to that is what? Romans 6.23. For the wages of sin. Is death.

For all have sinned. And the wages of sin is death. Barabbas had sinned. He had committed. He had. He had.

He had. He had. He had. He had. He had killed people. He had been part of insurrection. He had done all kinds of things. He was guilty of sin. And the. Wages of sin. Is death.

But then in verse 6. Chapter 6. Verse 23. There's one little word. I love this word. I have preached on this word before. Maybe I need to do it again someday. It says.

For the wages of sin. Is death. But. But. The gift of God. Is eternal life. Through Jesus Christ.

[10 : 38] Our Lord. We know Barabbas wasn't crucified. On that Friday morning. 2,000 years ago. We know that Jesus Christ. Took his place. We know the crowd asked for Barabbas.

To be released. He didn't deserve God's mercy. He didn't deserve to be set free. And I can give you at least two reasons.

Why he didn't deserve it. Number one. Wasted opportunities. Wasted opportunities. Barabbas means. Son of a father. Bar.

Son of. Abbas. Father. Father. Remember this verse. I think it's over in Romans. Abba. Father. Barabbas.

Means son of the father. Some say. Actually. You had an extra R in there. It might have meant. Son of. A rabbi. Barabbas.

[11 : 36] Son of a rabbi. Now think about this for a second. What if he. That's what Barabbas' life was. What if he was the son of a rabbi. Think of the wasted opportunities he had.

Growing up in a rabbi's home. Having the word of God around him all the time. Being in the temple. And hearing about God and what he had done for his people.

If he was like me. I didn't grow up in a pastor's home. But I did grow up in a deacon's home. And so.

I was in Sunday school. I was in vacation Bible school. I. We had things at home. We had evangelists come into our home for supper. We had missionaries come into our home for supper. And things. I had a lot of opportunity.

And I took that opportunity. And I learned from those opportunities. Barabbas did not. Barabbas went out.

- [12 : 35] Did his own thing. He failed to take advantage of those opportunities. And instead of following in his father's footsteps. He became a thief. And a murderer. Now.
- Think about your story. My story. Again. We may not have grown up in a pastor's home. But God has graced you with opportunities. Think of the fact that you're here this morning.
- You're here hearing the word of God this morning. God has given you opportunity after opportunity after opportunity. Now. If I look around. I'm saying everybody here is saved.
- But I don't know that. Only you and God know that. Let me give you a second thing. About why Barabbas was undeserving.
- Because of broken laws. Gods and man's. Broken laws. Barabbas broke the laws of man and the laws of God. He went out as a terrorist.
- [13 : 33] Basically. Against the Roman government. He was probably a member of the Zealots. Who were dedicated to overthrowing the Romans. And driving them out of the land.
- He broke so many of the laws. Of their laws. And the laws of God. If you stopped and looked at the Ten Commandments. He probably broke the whole second tablet. Every one of them.
- He. Had disobedience to parents. Obviously. Murder. Stealing. Lying. Covetousness. Those are all things that were characteristic of his life. That's who Barabbas was.
- Barabbas. And yet Jesus is going to take his place. If you were to take Barabbas and put him in today's society. Other than the fact that he's Jewish. Think.
- Think. ISIS. Al Qaeda. Something like that. That would be Barabbas life. That's who he would be. And if Jesus is going to die for someone.
- [14 : 33] Not him. Not Barabbas. Why would he take Barabbas place? He's the worst of the worst.
- But. God's grace. And God's mercy. Jesus did take the place of Barabbas that day. He did. Come. And show us. That he would die for the worst of the worst.
- And that's the truth of the gospel there. Romans 5.8. But God commended his love toward us. In that while we were yet sinners. Christ died for us.
- He gave himself. So. Sinners. Could be saved. You're here this morning. You're saved. Thank God. For what Jesus did.
- Thank God. That he came. And took. Your sins. On himself. Thank him. That he didn't come in the world. To call righteous.
- [15 : 34] But sinners. To repentance. He came for you. And for me. Barabbas didn't deserve. To have Jesus take his place on the cross.
- He didn't deserve. To have Jesus die in his place. And we didn't either. We have a lot more in common. With Barabbas than we think.
- Sometimes. Jesus took his place. And he took our place. Second thing. There is unsought. Mercy. Unsought. Mercy.
- Barabbas never asked Jesus to take his place. Jesus just did it. Barabbas stayed in his cell. Awaiting execution. Awaiting that crucifixion.
- He never thought. Of asking someone else. To take his place. Steve. I'm supposed to be crucified today. Will you take my place? Steve's answer is going to be.
- [16 : 32] No. I don't want nails through my hands. I don't want spears through my side. I don't want you. No. I'm not doing that. And yet.
- Here's Jesus. About to take. His place. Barabbas that day. Woke up. Simply assuming that. His crimes.

Had finally caught up to him. They'd finally. He'd done the different things. And then finally. They caught him. And he's about. To be crucified. Can you imagine.

When the soldiers came. He sees the soldiers. Coming toward the cell. He's thinking. This is it. I'm about to go out. And be crucified. I'm about to go out.

And die. And the soldiers. Get to the cell. And they open the door. Barabbas. You're free to go. What? You're kidding.

[17 : 27] What kind of prank. Are you guys trying to pull on me? What are you trying to do? You're kidding. No. You're free to go. Really? I'm sure.

He questioned it. And questioned it. And questioned it. No. There's a man named Jesus. From Nazareth. He's going to take your place today. What?

Pilate gave us the orders. Pilate said. To let you go. Think for a moment. Jesus didn't die. For us. Because we asked him to.

Jesus died for us. Because he loved us. Think about this.

Jesus died for those Jewish leaders. Who were sending him. To the cross. He was going to bear their sins.

[18 : 25] And they didn't even realize. Even though they were the Jewish religious leaders. Even though they knew the Old Testament. Even though they knew the prophecies. They were so upset. So jealous of Jesus. They wanted him crucified.

And didn't realize. What was happening. Because they were too busy rejecting him. Instead of listening to what he was saying. You know in John chapter 1.

We use a lot of verses from John chapter 1. Remember verse 11. He came unto his own. And his own received him not. He came to them. For them.

For them. To die for them. And they're like. I don't care. And the only explanation for that.

What Jesus did. Is because of love. He died for us. Because he wanted to save us from hell. He died for us. Because he wanted the world to know.

[19 : 19] That there was a way. Out of their sin. I believe Pilate and the Roman soldiers. That day thought they were in charge. This crucifixion is about to take place.

We're in charge. We're carrying it out. We said it was going to happen. It's happening. Little they know. They had nothing to do with it. The man they were crucifying.

The man who was going on that cross. With nails on his hands. And his feet. Crown of thorns upon his head. Was totally in charge. That day. Of what was happening. He chose to die.

For you and me. There's a song. Some of you. Those of you that are older. Probably remember. He could have called 10,000 angels. But he died alone.

For you and me. What a great savior. Who died for great sinners. But he was powerful enough.

[20 : 16] To overcome our sin. When he gave himself on the cross. Third thing. Unrestricted mercy. He gave us unrestricted mercy.

There was freedom that day. Freedom for Barabbas. He gets released from the cell. He gets to go home. He gets out of jail. There's also freedom.

For you and I. Because Jesus went to that cross. Because of his death and resurrection. We have freedom. Through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Look first at the freedom of Barabbas.

He walks out of that jail. A free man. He walks out of that jail. To go wherever he wanted to go. When Pilate said. Jesus.

Of Nazareth. Is going to take your place. Barabbas got to walk out. With no claims upon his life.

[21 : 15] Roman law had no claim on him. I wonder how long it took for that to sink in. Can you imagine being in that cell? You're knowing you're going to go to the cross.

You're about to be crucified. They open the door and say. You can go. I'm sure he kind of. Took a step. Over that threshold. And kind of waited.

And watched. See if this was some kind of trick. I'll take one step. And see if the Romans start to go. Draw their swords. Nothing happens. They're standing there going.

Go ahead. He takes another step. And another. And another. And another. And nobody comes after him. Until he walks right out of that jail.

Do you ever suppose. That someday. Later on. Barabbas is out there. And he sees a Roman soldier in the street.

[22 : 13] And he kind of slinks back into a doorway. He doesn't want that Roman soldier to see him. Because he might be coming after him. He says. You ever hear about. In the news. People messing up paperwork.

At jails. And they sometimes let somebody go. They weren't supposed to. Because somebody messed up the paperwork. Supposed to Barabbas. I said. I know they messed up somewhere along the way. They're going to come looking for me.

They're going to come see if they can find me again. I think it was probably a little while before he finally got the idea that I am truly free. You know, Moravis had been shown mercy because he received unrestricted freedom at the expense of another man. We have been given freedom because of what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross.

Freedom of Moravis was something special. The Bible doesn't tell us if he ever understood what happened that day or not. Can you imagine? I'd like to think that Moravis finally understood.

Finally got it. I'd like to think that Moravis maybe heard Peter preaching after Jesus' resurrection. The Bible doesn't tell us.

[23 : 40] But Moravis, an undeserving sinner, murderer, thief, you name it, he had done it, had freedom that day because Jesus took his place.

What about you and I? Because of what Jesus did that day, we have freedom. We have forgiveness. I think that's one of the greatest gifts God's given to humanity.

Forgiveness. God forgives us for the sin that is in our life. God has canceled out our debt. We are never going to have to face death because of our sin.

God has taken it and it's canceled on it. We talked about Peter a couple weeks ago and his denial of Christ. Later on, we find Peter writing an epistle.

In 1 Peter 2, verse 24, he says this, who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness by whose stripes ye are healed.

[24 : 57] He says, you have been healed. You have been set free. You have now, have no sin hanging over you anymore because Jesus took it in his body as he went to that tree, as he went to that cross.

Ephesians 1, 7, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. We have redemption through his blood.

Redemption, deliverance from bondage because somebody else paid the price. Jesus paid the price for you and I. We have been delivered from slavery to sin, to self, to Satan.

We have freedom because of what Jesus Christ did. We were liberated. John 8, 36, If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Jesus Christ has made us free. His blood is a ransom price. His blood paid for our salvation. no condemnation, no guilt, no stains of sin, nothing, all wiped clean.

[26 : 12] Paul wrote in Galatians 6, 14, But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.

Paul says, Look, Jesus Christ gave his life and I need to glory in the cross of Christ because that cross, Jesus going to that cross and giving himself for me, the world is crucified to me and I to the world.

The world has no hold over me anymore because of what Jesus Christ did for me. God's gift of salvation through faith guaranteed doesn't depend on our works.

Jesus did it all that day he went to the cross. We cannot earn our justification. We cannot do anything for it.

Jesus died to set us free. Jesus died so that we would not have to face an eternity in hell. Barabbas accepted the fact that Jesus took his place.

[27 : 21] He had no problem walking out of that cell. A little hesitant, maybe, but once he understood what was going on, I'm sure he, like I said, step here, step there, step, step, step, step, step, step, step, step, step.

Away he went. He went. He went. Like I said, I don't know if he ever understood what actually happened that day. But we, through the word of God, through the work of the Holy Spirit, we understand what happened that day.

And we should be ever thankful for what Jesus Christ did for us. There's a story about a man named Bill. Bill joined the Navy when World War II began.

and one night he came in on a ship into Boston. He decided to go visit his former pastor and his friend, Reverend Steiger. As they were visiting together, Reverend Steiger said, Bill, tell me the most exciting experience you've had so far.

Bill hesitated. It wasn't the fact that Bill could not think of what the most exciting experience was. it was a matter of that most exciting experience was a wonderful experience.

[28 : 46] It was a sacred type experience. It was a experience that you will always remember and never forget. After hesitating for a little bit, he told the pastor that he was a captain of a large transport ship.

And that transport ship was carrying hundreds of young men across the Atlantic heading to Europe to be a part of the war. They were part of a convoy going over.

As they're going across the Atlantic over to Europe, a submarine appeared one day and fired a torpedo. It was heading straight for their transport ship.

And he said, I had no time to change direction, change course. It was just not going to happen. He said, I grabbed the loud speaker and I said, boys, this is it. Help them get prepared for what was about to happen.

He said, there was a little destroyer a little further ahead. The captain of that ship had seen what was going on as well. He gave the command full speed ahead.

[30 : 05] That destroyer came in between the torpedo and his transport ship. He said, he took it broadside, it blew that ship completely out of the water.

Everyone on that ship, that destroyer, died. And he said, the man who was the captain of that ship was my best friend.

He was quiet for a little bit longer. And then he slowly told the pastor, you know, there's a verse in the Bible that has very special meaning to me now.

Great a love hath no man than this, than the man laid down his life for his friends. He said, I truly understand that verse. I truly understand what it means.

Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And not while we were his friends, we were his enemies. And he laid down his life for us.

[31 : 13] Can you imagine that kind of love for people? you know, I look around this morning and again, and as I said, I would assume that everybody's here is saved, but I don't know that.

If you're not saved this morning, if you've never asked Jesus Christ to come into your life, understand, he gave his life for you so that you might have eternal life in heaven with him.

maybe you have already accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior. Has it become old hat? Has it become just, yeah, Jesus died for me.

I look at the cross over there and I'm, oh, yeah, Easter's coming, yay. Do we remember what Jesus did for us? If you had been there that day, which Christ would you have chosen?

Which Jesus would you have chosen? Jesus, son of the living God, or Barabbas, the murderer.

[32 : 29] They chose wrong that day. We as Christians, if you're here to not save, choose Jesus, the Christ, the son of the living God.

God wants us to follow him. God wants us to understand his love for us. Sometimes we question the fact that Jesus went to that cross for someone like Barabbas, the fact that Jesus went to that cross for someone like me, I can never question his love of what he's done for me.

God if you're here this morning, like I said, if you don't know Christ, today's the day. Come talk to me. I'd be glad to take the word of God, show you how you can know for sure that you're on your way to heaven and that Jesus died for you.

for people in their acid capacity. Father, Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.oly Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[33 : 44] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.