

MARK — Two Jesus's

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Mark 15:1-15

Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

“Are you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate.

“You have said so,” Jesus replied. The chief priests accused him of many things. So again Pilate asked him, “Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of.”

But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

“Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate, knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

“What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked them.

“Crucify him!” they shouted.

“Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”

Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Mk 15:1–15.



Do you find it easy to do something simply because you know it needs to be done? Sometimes we assume it's easier for other people to do things than it is for us. Do we carry that assumption over to Jesus?

- I think we project an expectation that it's easier for people to make the right decision than it is for us so that we can get off the hook.
- **But if we realize it isn't easier then what does that mean in terms of our response?**

A Sham Trial

In this text we see Jesus facing a trial with no evidence to determine whether he'd hang on a cross and die as a criminal.



We also see Jesus doesn't plead, beg, argue for justice; no shouting “you've got the wrong man” “I'm innocent!”

- **Does that mean it was easy for him?**

In this last moment before he would be taken to be whipped and crucified we have only 4 words we see him say “You have said so” in response to whether he is the king of the

Jews.

How could Jesus make no reply at this moment?

- **What would you do if you were him?**
- Would it be easy to be silent?
- Would it even be right to be silent?



What if you were innocent? If all these religious self-righteous expensive robe-wearing men were accusing you and had it in their hearts to have you killed?

Our social media is filled with voices angrily fighting for the truth to be heard from their own perspective. The world can't remain silent. But there are others among us who remain the angry but silent type, stuffing it all.

So was Jesus stuffing it? Was it easy for him to remain silent about the truth?

I'm pretty confident he is not — why not?

Deeply Distressed & Troubled

Let's look back at Mark 14:32-35- before Jesus' arrest he went to a place called Gethsemane.

They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch."

Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. “Abba, Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

Before Jesus stood before Pilate he spoke out loud that **his soul was overwhelmed with sorrow — To the point of death.**



He was so sad, so dreading what he knew would happen — that he just wanted to go ahead and die right then rather than go through it.

Seeing this — Does this sound easier for him than for anyone else?

Yet in Mark 15 we see he goes through it anyway.

Jesus’ Pattern of Engagement

And how do we know he isn’t stuffing his emotions, numbing out, or taking the posture of the aloof stoic?

- He hasn’t ever done that before. There is already an established pattern of him being very real with those who oppose him and calling them on their error. So there is no reason to believe he is doing that now.
- **We also see him surrender in the text we just looked at, so stoic anger would be a turn from the kind of emotive surrender he just expressed.**
- I also think if Jesus was numbing or holding a stoic but angry posture then Pilate wouldn’t have been amazed.

So we see it wasn’t easy, and he isn’t stuffing. What is going on?

In Mark 14 Jesus gives himself permission to feel, to hurt, to be real and raw about where he is- with the Father and a few close friends

But In Mark 15 with the crowd, with his accusers, even with the “government” he is silent.



I think it is important to know Jesus did all of his pleadings in prayer with the Father, his cry for justice for any other way happens with the only one who is truly just and carries out true justice- the Father in heaven.

- He doesn't numb out to navigate the fear, or lash out to defer the harsh treatment in the moment bc he has already dealt with it before the Father.
- He got real and raw in prayer, he sought wisdom and direction from the Father, and he ultimately submitted to the Father.
- Not only that but he also shared his pain with a few close friends, and he asked them to pray as well- they stunk at it but still he shared with them anyway.
- When it came to standing and enduring a difficult decision he had already made his case with the only one who matters. And he submitted the verdict to him as well.

That appeal and surrender happening with the Father gave him strength to stand in obedience when the time came.

So is that it then?

WE just make sure we pray hard, plead with God, and then surrender and submit. It's not easy but maybe it is the clear path Jesus sets for us to walk out the hard things in life.



Most honest question- DOES our pleading with God in prayer and sharing our pain with trustworthy friends mean we will have the strength to do the same as Jesus did?

| If we know what to do, then can we just do it?

Always Doing The Right Thing

If simply copying Jesus' prayer life and having our closest friends with us in our struggle ≠ our being able to stand, as Jesus did before Pilate, and do the right thing- then What does??

The text gives us a clue.



In this story, there are actually **two men called Jesus** being held as prisoners at this moment. Here in Mark we only get the second Jesus' second name — Barabbas, but in Matthew 27:16 he is called Jesus Barabbas. Barabbas' first name is Jesus.

| At that time they had a well-known prisoner whose name was **Jesus Barabbas**. So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, “Which one do you want me to release to you: **Jesus Barabbas**, or **Jesus who is called the Messiah?**”

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Mt 27:16–17.

Jesus Barabbas is similar to Jesus the messiah- they are both Jewish men being accused of insurrectionist behavior- accused of being rebellious against Rome and it's authority, and they are both imprisoned for it and facing crucifixion.

The difference between them is that Jesus Barabbas had participated in an uprising against Rome and had committed murder. Guilty as charged.

Jesus the Messiah hadn't committed any wrongdoing ever and was about to be murdered. Innocent of any charge.

Two Jesus'es. One guilty and one innocent.

Two Jesus'es before the crowd- one would go free and eat the Sabbath meal with their friends and family in just moments after the verdict, the other would be crucified.

Why won't us copying Jesus the Messiah's prayer method of dealing with temptation, tough decisions, and painful injustice work for us?

Because we are too much like Jesus Barrabas.

How are we like him?

We are like him because most often we live our lives with the "right thing" for us being whatever adrenaline and desires dictate. He was a good Jewish man who cared about his people, but he still probably do the things we do:

- When we argue with our spouse, or family members, friends, roommates or coworkers.
- When we are dealing with people in the city.
- When we see the decisions the government is making that violate our values — how often do you speak "your truth" in that moment of adrenaline?
- How often do you defend, blame others, justify your words or actions because you really can if they'd listen?
- [How often do you like Barabbas, redefine good and evil according to your own political party, preferences, or self-actualization?](#)

Can you be honest with yourself and see Barabbas in the reflection?

Can you imagine if Barabbas had said "no thanks I don't want Jesus Messiah to take my place?" After-all he could have said, "*I am a Jesus too! and my version of what is right and wrong is just fine. I'm not that bad.*"

And we are just like him.



The only thing getting him off that cross was the other Jesus was there. It's the only thing that will get us off as well.

Start to finish, we are more like Jesus Barabbas than like Jesus Messiah.

In real time, Jesus took Barabbas' place, and in real-time he will take yours.

How?



We do the only thing that we can do — we copy what Barabbas did right: let Jesus take our place.

Before you kneel to pray like Jesus Messiah you need to first confess you are very much like Jesus Barabbas and you need Jesus.

No covering or denying your sin.

No spinning the spotlight to your good works to ignore where you've broken God's law, which is to love God and love others.

Barabbas didn't love the neighbor he killed.

We don't love the neighbor we lie to, the neighbor we ignore, the neighbor we refuse to forgive.

The Real Path Forward

1. So the first step to go in the garden and pray and come out like Jesus Messiah is to acknowledge and repent for the Jesus Barabbas in you.
2. Admit it, acknowledge your need for forgiveness and help.

We must be willing to acknowledge that we can't fix what is broken, we need saving and we need supernatural help to be transformed out of Barabbas behavior into the image of God.

The only solution for Barabbas and for us is to receive what Jesus did for us — he surrendered perfectly to the Father and took our place on that cross.

We are all just like Jesus Barabbas- guilty and no matter what kind of good works we do we can't erase our guilt.

We need Jesus Messiah just as much as Barabbas did- to be in front of those who would condemn us- and take the cross so we don't have to.

If you say you don't need forgiveness, you want to perfect yourself on your own terms, then what comes next is on you.

If you say yes I do need him, I've been hiding sin, I'm guilty and need forgiveness, then what comes next is on him.

And what comes next is Jesus Messiah begins working in you to transform you from looking and acting like Jesus Barabbas to looking and acting like him.

BUT it's a process.

That process is what we call Lordship.



It's weird how the gospel says- you can't fix yourself only Jesus can. But it also says he won't do it without you participating in it. He has to be welcomed to work in you. He has to be Lord instead of you.

Not Once, But Every Day Forever

When you receive what Jesus did you can then participate in becoming like who Jesus is.

But Christians, it is a daily confession and surrender, not just a one-time act.

Every day after that the reality of the forgiveness we have translates into a walk of surrender, repentance, and obedience which welcomes transformation.

Every day after that is receiving Jesus Messiah as Lord and following him instead of following Jesus Barabbas in you.

Walking With God Isn't Easy

If you stuff your feelings and pretend to be awesome, you embolden the Barabbas in you.

If you focus on perfecting your prayer life, you might accidentally slip into self-righteousness

The wonderful truth is that a real prayer life means getting real with God, letting the Holy Spirit convict you, and be willing to face when you are confronted with your sin, and willing to let the Holy Spirit change you when you are confronted.

The more we walk with Jesus Messiah, the less we walk with Jesus Barabbas.



The process of moving from one to the other starts and continues with repentance and surrender to letting Jesus take your punishment and you taking his Lordship.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Heb 12:1–2.



We can fix our eyes on Jesus because he first fixed his eyes on us.

You're in charge of where you fix your eyes. If you're fixed on your own imperfection and trying to perfect it, you can't fix your eyes on Jesus. If you're so focused on perfecting yourself, you're not permitting the Holy Spirit to work in you and perfect you.

I'm not a follow of Jesus because of my knowledge, I am a follower of Jesus bc he went first, and I put my faith in him, keeping my eyes on him, the author and perfecter of my faith. I can't perfect my faith but I do get to participate in where I'm looking for my transformation to come from.