

### **Barabbas and Jesus (Mark 15:6-15)**

- Last Sunday, vs. 1-5 noted the continued conspiracy of the religious leaders (v1)
- The confusion: Jesus before Pilate, his question, “are you the king of the Jews?”
- Jesus responds “it is as you say.” Literally, “I am, but not in the way you think”
- They brought charges against Jesus, vv 3-5 they accused him of many crimes
- Pilate was amazed that Jesus was not defending himself but remained silent

#### **I. The Custom (15:6)**

- Mark omits that Jesus was sent to Herod, Pilate knew Jesus was from his region
- By handing Jesus over to Herod, Pilate hoped he would be free of the matter
- Herod abused Jesus, dressed him in splendid apparel and sent him back to Pilate
- Mark makes reference to a religious festival, it was most likely Passover
- Appropriate to set a prisoner free as Passover commemorated Israel’s deliverance
- Pilate is very willing to release a prisoner; he sees it as a way to get rid of the case

#### **II. The Choice (15:7-15)**

##### *a) The crowd demands the release of Barabbas the murderer (15:7-11)*

- Mark: Barabbas a rebel & a murderer; Matthew: notorious prisoner; John: robber
- We know little about Barabbas: was he a fanatic patriot? there were many of them
- Vs 8 the people came up to Pilate & asked for him to do as he always did for them
- Vs 9 Pilate asked, do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?
- Mark’s nuance is that it seemed that Pilate wanted the people to choose Jesus
- The purpose for Pilate asking this question is clear: he had purposed to let Jesus go
- Pilate knew what the real motive was for wanting Jesus dead- note vs.10
- Matthew records Pilate was distracted by a message from his wife (Matt 27:19)
- While this was taking place the leaders stirred up the people into a frenzy (v.11)

##### *b) The Crowd demands the death of Jesus the Messiah (15:12-14)*

- Mark says “what shall I do with the man you call Jesus” Matthew expands (27:21)
- Pilate is ignorant of the chief priests’ tactics & expects the people to choose Jesus
- To his dismay they demand the release of Barabbas and Pilate grew desperate
- He asked what do you want me to do with him who you call the king of the Jews?
- Vs 13: they cry “Crucify him” Pilate asks, “why what evil has he done”? (14)
- Vs 15 Pilate hands Jesus over to be crucified and releases Barabbas (Matt 27:24)