The Hope of Easter

A journey through the Easter story

Day 11: Barabbas goes free

Read Matthew 27:11-26

Pilate gives the crowd a choice to release Jesus or release a murderer; a man called Barabbas. Things go pear shaped when the crowd demands the release of Barabbas.

Here’s something strange: Barabbas is not his full name. His full name is actually: Jesus-Barabbas. Two men both called Jesus, how confusing! Pilate asks the crowd which man should I release: Jesus-Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Christ? The crowd must choose which Jesus they want the most; Jesus-Barabbas who was a violent fighter who selfishly took the lives of others or Jesus the Christ; the peaceful, the healer, the forgiver and the sacrificial. It’s a choice we must make each day also; will we choose hate and selfishness or will we be an agent of God’s forgiveness, healing and sacrifice?

1. Where would Barabbas be if not for Jesus Christ? Where would you be if not for Christ’ sacrifice?
2. It’s clear that Barabbas did nothing to earn his freedom. It was an undeserved gift. We too are like Barabbas; Christ set us free.
3. I wonder if Barabbas was changed by the grace he received. Perhaps he was, perhaps not. I wonder how this grace has changed you.

We encourage you to take time to pray and thank Jesus for taking our place (Titus 3:5).