

# I Am Barabbas

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Pontius Pilate had a problem. The Jewish leaders charged Jesus with blasphemy and unruly behavior. Pilate tried to sidestep the problem by referring Him to Herod. Herod mocked Jesus and sent Him back to Pilate (Luke 23).

Pilate had another political maneuver he hoped would work. He traditionally released a Jewish prisoner during the Passover. He decided Jesus was the perfect prisoner to fulfill this custom, especially since Pilate could find no valid claim that Jesus had broken any laws.

The Jews, spurred on by their leaders, would not allow this. They cried out, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" So Pilate famously washed his hands of the matter and let the Jews have their wish. Instead of Jesus, Pilate released a notorious criminal named Barabbas. Barabbas had been imprisoned for rebellion and murder. Now he was free to go and Jesus was crucified in his place.

In a way, Barabbas represents everyone. He was a sinner who was freed because Jesus paid the price for his sins. Jesus died on the cross that we might be free from the sins we commit.

There is a famous scene in the movie Spartacus where a Roman General tries to identify the slave revolt leader from the rest of the group. Instead of giving him up, the individual slaves defied the officials by standing and saying, "I am Spartacus!"

In a spiritual sense, we all could declare "I am Barabbas!" since each and every one of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We can be free from our sins because of Christ's sacrifice on that cross. "Now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and blameless and above reproach in His sight, if indeed you continue in the faith (Colossians 1:22&23).

For the elders,  
Dave Benner