

rejecting Him in our everyday choices and lives?

Hebrews 6:5-6 *5 And have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.*

You see, there is no way out of it; all of us here today will have to choose between Jesus, the Son of God, or the “Barabbas” in this world. Jesus brings life, salvation, and hope for all mankind. On the other hand, the “Barabbas” of this world brings only death and destruction to those who foolishly accept him. When the teachings of Jesus are no longer popular or easy to obey, will we still follow Jesus or reject Him?

James 4:4-5 *4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit*

who dwells in us yearns jealously?”

So the question for all of us today is, “Do I want Jesus, the Son of God, to be my Lord and Savior, or do I want what the “Barabbas” of this world has to offer?” I made my choice the day I was baptized. I have decided to follow Jesus. The choice is yours.

Joshua 24:14-15 *14 “Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! 15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the river, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”*

By Bill Davis

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Faithful Sayings

Olsen Park Church of Christ

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Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.
 10:20 a.m.
 6:00 p.m.
 Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Ken Ford
 Charles Kelley
 Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
 Eddie Cook
 Bill Davis
 Pat Goguen
 Neil Ledbetter
 Jeff Nunn
 Fred Perez
 Rusty Scott

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

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Jesus or Barabbas

Matthew 27:20-26 *20 But and on our children.” 26 the chief priests and elders Then he released Barabbas to persuaded the multitudes that them; and when he had they should ask for Barabbas scourged Jesus, he delivered and destroy Jesus. 21 The Him to be crucified.*

Have you ever wondered why mankind has always been a willing partner in following those who are smooth talkers and live an ungodly way of life. It seems that we, as humans, are drawn toward those who appear to show strength and wisdom, though they have a lying heart. Often, we love these types of people in our country. Many young people are more than willing to follow these so-called rap stars who sing about sex, drugs and violence. These types of people are glamorized as super stars in our culture, even when we know the evil they stand for. On the news, we see certain politicians who are smooth

talkers; but they live a double life with double standards. Their motto is, "Do as I say and not as I do." Yet the public just raves over them. In Hollywood, the "movie stars" live a double standard life as they portray themselves as a good, noble and honest character on television. In the real world, they have been married two to four times, have been in alcohol or drug rehab, or have been put in jail for DWI's. It is no wonder that we, as Christians, have to walk carefully and examine each person we come into contact with, because if we judge by the outward appearance only, we will fall prey to anything people say. Today, in our modern society, we may think it is something new to follow those we know who are evil, wanting to associate with them because we think they are strong and defiant of the laws of the land. A good example of this can be found in the history books. Let's look back to Germany in the mid 30's. A man named Adolph Hitler rose to power on the message of hate to take back what used to belong to Germany due to their loss in WWI. Hitler's aim was to not only take back the Rhine land but to conquer most of the world in order to build an empire like the Romans created. The masses heard the message of hate and they loved it. They followed Hitler down a path of hate and death where millions lost their lives due to one man. In **Mark 15:6**, we see where the chief priests wanted an insurrectionist and a murderer to take the place of Jesus as a re-

sult of the hatred which the chief priests had toward Jesus.

Mark 15:6-15 *6 Now at the feast he was accustomed to releasing one prisoner to them, whomever they requested. 7 And there was one named Barabbas, who was chained with his fellow rebels; they had committed murder in the rebellion. 8 Then the multitude, crying aloud, began to ask him to do just as he had always done for them. 9 But Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" 10 For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy. 11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd, so that he should rather release Barabbas to them. 12 Pilate answered and said to them again, "What then do you want me to do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?" 13 So they cried out again, "Crucify Him!" 14 Then Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, "Crucify Him!" 15 So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to be crucified.*

The main reason the masses loved Barabbas was because he had taken part in the rebellion against the Roman government. Barabbas was an enemy to Rome and a hero to the Jews due to his violent nature. Barabbas was guilty of the crime for which Jesus was accused of. Interestingly, Barabbas means "son of the father", which was actually

Jesus' position with God. You see, the crowds were fickle; they loved Jesus on Sunday because they thought He was going to inaugurate His kingdom in Jerusalem at that time. But later, they hated Him on Friday when He had been arrested and charged with blasphemy when Jesus claimed to be the Son of God as seen in **Matthew 26:59-66** *59 Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, 60 but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward 61 and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" 62 And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?" 63 But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!" 64 Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." 65 Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! 66 What do you think?" They answered and said, "He is deserving of death."*

The people were faced with a clear choice regarding who to follow; the people chose

Barabbas, a revolutionary and a murderer, over the Son of God. As Christians, do we do the same thing as the Jews did when they helped to crucify Jesus on the cross? In our everyday lives, can we reject the Son of God for the ways of the world? Can we ask for a super model or a rock star, or even a politician to take the place of Jesus because we would rather hear what they have to say instead of what Jesus has to say? Can we elevate preachers or authors who do not abide in the Word of God and desire their teachings instead of the teachings of Jesus? When young Christians go off to college and some of their professors don't believe in God or Jesus, do we say, "Crucify Jesus," because we don't want to still walk with Jesus? Would we rather take every word the professor says to heart and reject Jesus? In our hearts, do we say, "Away with Jesus and release Barabbas." As parents, do we spend the time with our children studying the Bible and praying as a family? Do we hold to all that Jesus said and did? Do we reject Jesus by our neglect? Our examples as parents speak volumes to our children. How we value God's Word and apply it in our own lives teaches our children. Do we cease to put Jesus first when watching tv? Is it preferred to spending time with our Lord in Bible study and prayer? Do we regularly use our time for other things instead of Jesus? Do we put ourselves first and find little time for serving our Lord and Savior? Do we crucify Jesus by our neglect? Are we