

Nov 16th 2008 Mark: That Dreadful Choice: Mark 15:1-15

Choices.....big part of life for each one.....**We are constantly making**

Or.....having them made for us

Most.....seem quite small and inconsequential.....Like deciding whether to bike/car
...but even that decision could.....be life changing

The passage from Mark.....looking at todayis full of choices

But these choices are neither small.....nor inconsequential

They are life changing....world changing.....eternity changing

Take a look at the insert.....it contains this passage for you to look at

Five very definite choices.....**that** includes the choice of Jesus

See if you can pick the five.....Work out who made the choice

What was behind the choice.....What motivated it.....What caused them to choose

Then in a moment I will ask for one from the mid.....Another from.....

FEEDBACK

- **Chronologically the first choice**.....Sanhedrin.....WE looked

In 15:1 we read:

Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, reached a decision. They bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

Resulting from their choice.....Jesus was bound like a dangerous and guilty criminal
Handed over to the hated Romans

He had already been beaten....mocked....spat upon....abused.....

Now He a Jew.....was given up to the enemy

- **What we must realise**.....more than just the decision of a few individuals
It was the choice of whole Sanhedrin.....many....very good meaning people

So when we ask....what motivated their choice.....

I would suggest.....that it came down to a question of **EXPEDIENCY**

What they decided was best for the nation

John 11:47-50

Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin.

"What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish."

John then goes on to tell us that it was God who enabled him to so prophesize
And it was indeed the best outcome for the world

Yet even so....the first choice.....based on expediency

- **The Second choice.....**I reckon.....**belongs to Jesus**
He chooses how He will respond to Pilate.....**To the unjust** accusations

With that first question of Pilate's: **"Are you the king of the Jews"?**
Jesus shows His intentions

- **He will respond when the truth needs to be declared**
For he is the king
Otherwise He remains silent.....Choosing to fulfil scriptures.....Choosing to die

And the motivation for His choice.....**OBEDIENCE** to the will of His Father
Just a follow on....from His praying in the garden

The Third choice is a very interesting one

It's instigated by a crowd who are responding to a custom.....put in place by Pilate

Now it was the custom at the Feast 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.

The mention of Barabbas.....suggests that this crowd.....knowing the custom
Were in fact supporters of this man who had risen up against the Romans.....

From the beginning they had a plan.....and it was to get Barabbas

- **Pilate however**.....saw this as an opportunity to help Jesus...So Matt tells us....
He gathered.....and gave them the choice.....Barabbas the murderer or Jesus.....

This is the third choice.....and it was made under pressure

Though the initial intention may well have been....to get Barabbas released
Many it seems....were willing to consider choosing Jesus

Until the chief priests stirred up the crowd

- **So the motivation for their choice**.....and their cry of crucify
Was the pressure put on them by others

The fourth choice

was the choice the Chief Priests made.....to call for Jesus' crucifixion
They used their power over that crowd....to demand....horrific exec

And it's Pilate who tells us what motivated their choice.....ENVY

The final choice however.....belonged to Pilate.....and it was not envy driven

He **was** pressured.....we read that the crowd shouted him down
It **was also** an act of Expediency

**But the Motivation that screams out of this passage
Is that of SELF-PRESERVATION**

Pilate tried everyway.....to get out of making that choice

- He had publicly washed his hands
- He had sent Jesus to King Herod
- He had offered to free him under the Passover amnesty custom

And in the end.....when a choice had to be made.....

He chose to self preserve.....and had Jesus flogged....and handed....

Five choices.....lead directly to the crucifixion

• First	Expedient
• Second	Obedience
• Third	Pressure
• Fourth	Envy
• Fifth	Self Preservation

Only one choice was motivated rightly

Only one choice brought great blessing...not just to the One who chose...but to

It was the choice that meant the greatest pain....suffering....Greatest Reward

Hebrews 12:2-3

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

- **Every Christian knows the feeling of weariness**

because living for Jesus is challenging

Ministry is both exciting and demanding.....**Discipleship is costly**

Every day the Lord places choices before us

Even in our Participaper.....And I know God will be speaking to

- **The fact is.....**that we still have the liberty.....to choose wrongly

To be motivated by what is **expedient**

To give in to outside **Pressure**

To act out of **envy.....or self preservation.....**

Rather than look to Jesus.....To His example of Obedience.....

and to the blessed position....He now has.....and has promised that we will share

CHALLENGE YOU.....to take time

....to think about choices.....the Lord is setting Before you

..let me encourage you to take to heart this list

To analyse what it is that is motivating you....

And then seek to do what Hebrews advises....Look to Jesus

His example of obedience.....**Knowing** that such....pathway to

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2"Are you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate.

"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.

3The chief priests accused him of many things. 4So again Pilate asked him, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of."

5But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

6Now it was the custom at the Feast to release a prisoner whom the people requested.

7A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. 8The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

9"Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate, 10knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. 11But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

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

13"Crucify him!" they shouted.

14"Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

15Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

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