



**JESUS OF NAZARETH**  
**THE EXCHANGE THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING**  
**MATTHEW 27:1-31**  
**11-08-20**

**All = bold sections – read together**

Leader = regular font – leader reads (choose or rotate leaders)

*Sung together = italics*

NOTE: Please have a white candle ready to light.

**Reflect**

O sweet exchange! O unsearchable operation! O benefits surpassing all expectation! That the wickedness of many should be hid in a single righteous One, and that the righteousness of One should justify many transgressors! -The Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus (2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD)

**Welcome**

Boker Tov! (“Good Morning” in Hebrew) Welcome in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who reigns and whose kingdom is eternal and supreme. No matter where you are at this morning, God can meet you there as long as you come with humility and submission to him as God. This is the only proper relational posture we can take as humans, even saved humans in Christ who are new creations and who are called friends by Jesus of Nazareth. We are still inferior to God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Ultimately, we meet God on his terms, not ours. However, we meet him as we are as we seek to be as he is - stronger, more mature and wiser human beings. Let us enter into this time with open hearts and minds to be shaped more into the image and likeness of Jesus of Nazareth.

**May the love and joy of the Father, the grace and peace of the Son and the courage and comfort of the Holy Spirit be ours in abundance!**

**Call to Worship** – Psalm 28 – OF DAVID

**To you, O LORD, I call; my rock, be not deaf to me, lest, if you be silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit. Hear the voice of my pleas for mercy, when I cry to you for help, when I lift up my hands toward your most holy sanctuary.**

Do not drag me off with the wicked, with the workers of evil, who speak peace with their neighbors while evil is in their hearts.

**Give to them according to their work and according to the evil of their deeds; give to them according to the work of their hands; render them their due reward. Because they do not regard the works of the LORD or the work of his hands, he will tear them down and build them up no more.**

Blessed be the LORD! For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy. The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.

**The LORD is the strength of his people; he is the saving refuge of his anointed. Oh, save your people and bless your heritage! Be their shepherd and carry them forever.**

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What or who is your rock? How can you tell? Well, remove it (or imagine it gone or rendered useless) and you will become unstable, overly angry, anxious; you may lose your balance in life, fall and



question or become disappointed, disillusioned and disappointed with your identity – your meaning and purpose in life. Where might you be unstable, off-balance, anxious? God in Christ is to be our “Rock”, our “Shield”, our “Strength”, our “Refuge”, our “Shepherd.” Which image captures your attention today? Meditate on this image and what it might mean for you today and beyond.

### **Christ Candle** – Iraq

Jesus of Nazareth said that to be a Christian means to be maltreated for his name’s sake (Matthew 5:11) and the apostle Paul said that “everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ will be persecuted” (2 Timothy 3:12). Mistreatment as a disciple of Jesus is not a matter of *if* but a matter of *when* and a matter of *degree*. In America, the land of religious freedom, we have it pretty easy in that there is minimal outright persecution against Christians. May we make the most of our religious freedom to honor Christ and give credible and coherent witness to him! At the same time, may we be aware of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world who don’t share the same freedom that we do. The fifteenth place that is most challenging to be a disciple of Jesus is Iraq.

Iraq is a country of about 40.5 million people with about 200K Christians. Many Iraqi Christians are still recovering from the brutal reign of ISIS, and for some believers, that threat has not fully diminished. ISIS still has places of safety in northern Iraq. Additionally, Christians are dealing with a drastic reduction in their population since ISIS began their attacks, along with trauma for those believers who have stayed in their country. Iraq remains very tribal, which can also mean significant pressure for believers who come from Muslim tribes – conversion to Christianity is seen as a rejection of heritage and family.

Prayer Points: Pray for Christians who are rebuilding their communities and churches in Iraq. Pray for trauma recovery and reconstruction efforts, that God would give peace to believers. Give thanks that pressure and violence have both decreased slightly. Ask God to give his hope to Christians in Iraq. Pray that pastors and priests who are leading diminished communities will find encouragement for the hard work ahead. Pray that they would know they are not alone.

**Jesus is the Light. We are a light. Shine His light!**

**Song** – O Praise The Name (Anastasis) -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqBpifDpNKc>

*I cast my mind to Calvary  
Where Jesus bled and died for me.  
I see His wounds, His hands, His feet.  
My Savior on that cursed tree  
His body bound and drenched in tears  
They laid Him down in Joseph's tomb.  
The entrance sealed by heavy stone  
Messiah still and all alone  
O praise the name of the Lord our God  
O praise His name forever more  
For endless days we will sing Your praise  
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God  
Then on the third at break of dawn,  
The Son of heaven rose again.*



*O trampled death where is your sting?  
The angels roar for Christ the King  
O praise the name of the Lord our God  
O praise His name forever more  
For endless days we will sing Your praise  
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God  
He shall return in robes of white,  
The blazing Son shall pierce the night.  
And I will rise among the saints,  
My gaze transfixed on Jesus' face  
O praise the name of the Lord our God  
O praise His name forever more  
For endless days we will sing Your praise  
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God  
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God*

**Centering Responsive Reading** – Our World Belongs to God (A Contemporary Testimony of the CRC)

As followers of Jesus Christ, living in this world—which some seek to control, and others view with despair—we declare with joy and trust: Our world belongs to God!

**From the beginning, through all the crises of our times, until the kingdom fully comes, God keeps covenant forever: Our world belongs to God!**

God is King: Let the earth be glad! Christ is victor: his rule has begun! The Spirit is at work: creation is renewed! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

**Still, despair and rebellious pride fill the earth: some, crushed by failure or broken by pain, give up on life and hope and God; others, shaken, but still hoping for human triumph, work feverishly to realize their dreams. As believers in God, we also struggle with the spirits of this age, resisting them in the power of the Spirit, testing them by God's sure Word.**

Our world, fallen into sin, has lost its first goodness, but God has not abandoned the work of his hands: our Maker preserves this world, sending seasons, sun, and rain, upholding all creatures, renewing the earth, promising a Savior, guiding all things to their purpose.

**God holds this world with fierce love. Keeping his promise, he sends Jesus into the world, pours out the Holy Spirit, and announces the good news: sinners who repent and believe in Jesus live anew as members of the family of God—the firstfruits of a new creation.**

We rejoice in the goodness of God, renounce the works of darkness, and dedicate ourselves to holy living. As covenant partners, set free for joyful obedience, we offer our hearts and lives to do God's work in the world. With tempered impatience, eager to see injustice ended, we expect the Day of the Lord.

**We are confident that the light which shines in the present darkness will fill the earth when Christ appears. Come, Lord Jesus. Our world belongs to you.**

**Song** – This I Believe -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-aSmurqrzA>

*Our Father everlasting, the all creating One*



*God Almighty through Your Holy Spirit  
Conceiving Christ the Son  
Jesus our Savior*

*I believe in God our Father  
I believe in Christ the Son  
I believe in the Holy Spirit  
Our God is three in one  
I believe in the resurrection  
That we will rise again  
For I believe in the name of Jesus*

*Our Judge and our Defender  
Suffered and crucified  
Forgiveness is in You  
Descended into darkness  
You rose in glorious life  
Forever seated high*

*I believe in God our Father  
I believe in Christ the Son  
I believe in the Holy Spirit  
Our God is three in one  
I believe in the resurrection  
That we will rise again  
For I believe in the name of Jesus*

*I believe in You  
I believe You rose again  
I believe that Jesus Christ is Lord  
I believe in life eternal  
I believe in the virgin birth  
I believe in the saints' communion  
And in Your holy Church  
I believe in the resurrection  
When Jesus comes again  
For I believe, in the name of Jesus*

*I believe in God our Father  
I believe in Christ the Son  
I believe in the Holy Spirit  
Our God is three in one  
I believe in the resurrection  
That we will rise again  
For I believe in the name of Jesus*

**Song** – Overcome -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eP-JdZs4V54>



*Seated above, enthroned in the Father's love  
Destined to die, poured out for all mankind  
God's only Son, perfect and spotless one  
He never sinned but suffered as if He did  
All authority, every victory is Yours  
Savior, worthy of honor and glory  
Worthy of all our praise, You overcame  
Jesus, awesome in power forever  
Awesome and great is Your name, You overcame  
Power in hand speaking the Father's plan  
You're sending us out, light in this broken land  
All authority, every victory is Yours  
Savior, worthy of honor and glory  
Worthy of all our praise, You overcame  
Jesus, awesome in power forever  
Awesome and great is Your name, You overcame  
We will overcome by the blood of the Lamb  
And the word of our testimony, everyone overcome  
We will overcome by the blood of the Lamb  
And the word of our testimony, everyone overcome  
Savior, worthy of honor and glory  
Worthy of all our praise, You overcame  
Jesus, awesome in power forever  
Awesome and great is Your name, You overcame*

**Offering** – Operation Christmas Child

Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse, an international relief organization. Their mission is to provide local partners around the world with shoeboxes filled with small toys, hygiene items, and school supplies as a means of reaching out to children in their own communities with the Good News of Jesus Christ. These simple items are shipped outside the United States to children affected by war, poverty, natural disaster, famine, and disease; and to children living on Native American reservations in the U.S.

**We remember that giving is an act of faith, a practice of hope and an expression of love.**

(You can give by sending your offering to the church, P.O. Box 217, Oakdale Ca 95361 or consider giving online through your bank. Our deacons can help you with this if necessary.)

**Youth Celebration** – Presence and Participation

How might you come alongside our youth at CCRC? In what ways might you be an encouragement to them? Sending a note of encouragement or appreciation? Introducing yourself to them at church? Asking them how you might pray for them? Participating in youth led events? Sending them a note of inspiration? All the above? Other?

**Scripture Reading** – Matthew 27:1-31



We continue our series, Jesus of Nazareth from the gospel according to Matthew with chapter 27:1-31.



Jesus has just been betrayed, rejected, denied and had one of his disciples nearly kill the chief priest's servant with misguided passion. The scenes are darkening as the crucifixion of Jesus looms only hours away. After spending the rest of the night in a cell at Caiaphas' palace (picture to the left), he is taken to Pilate, the Roman ruler who had the power to sentence Jesus to death or let him go. There is one scene in particular that we will spend most of our time on as a paradigm for the Good News of Jesus Christ amidst the darkness. The scene is the exchange of the "condemned to be killed" prisoner Barabbas for the innocent Jesus of Nazareth. This scene is a clear picture of what was happening spiritually and theologically in Jesus' death and why it is good news for us today.

Please read Matthew 27:1-31 now with that scene in focus.

### **Gospel Message** – The Exchange That Changes Everything

It is Friday morning and it has been decided the Jewish religious elite that Jesus of Nazareth was guilty of blasphemy and deserved to die for it. However, they were Jews living under Roman law and they could not carry out the sentence. They needed the Roman authority, Pilate to do that. So, they take Jesus to Pilate with their case against him hoping he would side with them and execute Jesus. While Jesus is before Pilate, the one who would humanly decide his fate, Judas was deciding his own fate as he "changed his mind" about the 30 pieces of silver and recognized that he had "sinned by betraying innocent blood." However, instead of repenting, which would involve confession and then a turning toward doing what is right and to the truth, he murders himself...and Judas' story comes to a dark and sad end.

2 Corinthians 7:10 says, "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death." Judas' grief was not a godly grief but a worldly grief. His grief was worldly and brought regret and death, not repentance and salvation. We are to be careful where we go with our grief. Do we allow God's grace to work it towards our salvation where there is mercy and grace, forgiveness and love or do we block God and let it lead us away from him towards ever increasing regret; regret without forgiveness, without mercy, without grace, without love and that ultimately leads to death? May we take our grief to Jesus of Nazareth, who as we will see, is the one in whom grief and guilt are exchanged for hope and pardon, for peace and salvation. Judas' story comes to a sad end. But he is not our focus this morning; Jesus and Barabbas are. Judas sets the scene and the tone and the context for the reason Jesus is tried and found guilty and why Barabbas is freed with all debts removed.

Jesus is taken to Pilate and questioned by him. Pilate's questioning centers on Jesus being a king because Rome already had a chief ruler – Caesar. Anyone else claiming head authority, especially as a king, would be considered a threat by the Roman Empire and would be dealt with swiftly and decisively. Rome would not tolerate insurrectionists that questioned or challenged allegiance to Caesar or undermined his supreme authority. "Are you the King of the Jews?" Pilate asks. "It is as you say." Jesus answers and then remains silent; not responding to any of Pilate's inquiries or accusations that were being levied at him. Pilate is amazed. He knows that the Jews are envious of Jesus, envious of the





followers he was garnering and how the people looked up to him, listened to him and treated him as their leader and lord. The Jewish leaders, it seems, loved power; loved to be the ones making the decisions; the ones who people looked up to and listened to and treated as leader and lord. They were not taking kindly to Jesus usurping this place of privilege that they enjoyed. In short, they were power blind – blind to the over-abundance of evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah that they had been waiting for, praying for, dying for. They couldn't see it. They wouldn't see it. Instead, they saw threat; they saw danger; they saw competition; they saw rivalry; they saw adversity. Power can do that – change our vision; narrow it; color it; distort it and dim it. Judas, as well as the other disciples wanted Jesus to be powerful; to be rising up through the political ranks and usurp Caesar – the very thing that Pilate was justifiably (from the disciples point) right in being suspicious and cautious about. Yes, Jesus is and would be powerful; far, far more powerful than anyone there could possibly imagine. However, it would not be in the way that they did imagine it but in a way that sounded antithetical and impossible to accomplish anything at all except sympathy and regret – the way of suffering, the way of sacrifice, the way of substitution. Yet, it is precisely within this subversive, sacrificial move that Jesus reveals his awesome power and the resulting Good News that we find in him. To that we turn to now.

Matthew states that it was a custom for Pilate to release a prisoner the people wanted during the Passover Feast. While we don't know how long this had been going on, it is described as something that was not unusual or out of the ordinary. However, Pilate changes the custom. Instead of the people choosing whoever they wanted, Pilate offers them a choice between only two people – Jesus and a man named Barabbas. Remember, at this point Jesus is still considered innocent by Pilate; he has found nothing wrong, certainly nothing punishable by death. When they want to crucify Jesus, he asks "Why? What has he done?" Pilate puts out the choice, presumably thinking this was a no-brainer. They'll pick Jesus. Everyone knows who Barabbas is. Matthew simply characterizes Barabbas as a "notorious prisoner." Apparently, Barabbas was well known amongst the people, presumably because of his crimes for which the other gospels shed some light. According to the other gospels, Barabbas was three things: (1) An insurrectionist (2) Thief and (3) Murderer. This is what he was notorious for. He has killed. He has stolen. And he has led or been a part of an insurrectionist plot or attempt on Caesar's life. An insurrectionist plot is a plan to overthrow the current power (Caesar) by force that was often carried out through violence and death. They would try to take power with or by power. But it failed or they were caught before being able to carry it out. Either way, his is found guilty of not only being an insurrectionist but also a murderer (could very well be from the insurrection attempt) and thief. He was found guilty and thrown into prison to await his fate. What was this fate? Likely it was the cross that Jesus ended up on. That was likely Barabbas's cross. So, Pilate is probably thinking (and hoping) that Jesus would be set free and that Barabbas, the already proven threat to the state would be eliminated. How could they possibly send Jesus to his death, one in whom he could find no wrong and one in whom his wife tells him is "righteous" and to have nothing to do with? Yet they do.

The chief priest and the elders see their opportunity in the offer Pilate gives the people – Jesus or Barabbas. Of course, they wanted Jesus of Nazareth to be executed. Now, all they had to do is get the people to choose Barabbas as the one they want to be released. While we are not told how they did this or what they said to persuade the people, they are effective influencers and get the people to release Barabbas. And it was so. Yet, it seems Jesus' fate was not fully sealed yet. Pilate asks the people



what they want him to do with Jesus (note it is not the chief priests and elders he's asking – it's obvious what they want – although they would be a part of the crowd) and they shout the heinous and horrible and unjust words, "Crucify him!" Pilate is stunned. "Why? What evil has he done?" he asks. But he gets no answer. Logic and reason are thrown out, dismissed, ignored because of the wildly and reactionist emotional state the crowd is in. It does not matter one iota that he is innocent, that there are no Roman legal charges that could hold up to justify his death – none. Facts and truth can get lost in when emotions lead the way. And such is the case. In their whipped up emotional state that the chief priests and elders get the crowd in, they chose to murder him. Imagine that. Some of the same people who were just celebrating him with "Hosanna's" five days earlier now are shouting to kill him. Make no mistake, emotions unchecked by truth can be. Pilate is dumbfounded. He has probably never seen anything like this. And when the crowd was becoming a riot, he had enough and was not willing to risk the danger of an emotionally whipped up mob over the innocence of Jesus. In other words, he feared the crowds more than he feared Jesus of Nazareth. So, he symbolically washes his hands of Jesus, declaring that he is "innocent of this man's blood." He will not pull the trigger. Instead, he gives the gun to the crowd saying, "See to it yourselves." In their emotional frenzy, they say an incredibly foolish



and exceedingly condemning statement, "His blood be on us and our children!" Unbelievable. They have no idea what they are doing. And in all truth, you and I may have done the exact same thing. Barabbas is released. Jesus is beaten to near death and delivered over to be crucified. He is mocked with a purple robe and crown of thorns (see pic to the left) and spit on and beaten with a reed. His fate is sealed. He will die an innocent man and Barabbas the guilty will be set free. The "great exchange" is happening. It has just now been foreshadowed in this scene what would be true spiritually for all God's elect in time past, time present and time future in Christ Jesus. The great exchange – the good news of Jesus. What exactly is this great exchange, this "flipping" of Jesus for Barabbas?

The great exchange is seen theologically most clearly in 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 but it is found in a myriad of place throughout the Bible, including the Old Testament. It is a common theme. We will take a closer look at the Apostle Paul's elucidation of the great exchange in a few moments. First, a very brief look at the Old Testament and the great exchange. The clearest passage here is from Isaiah 53.

**Isaiah 53** Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?  
 2 For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? 9 And they made his grave with the wicked and with a





rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. <sup>10</sup> Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. <sup>11</sup> Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. <sup>12</sup> Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

Over and over again in this amazing passage, God makes it clear that the prophesied Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth would be for his people by taking their (our) sins upon himself. While being innocent, he would become guilty; while sinless, he would be punished for their (our) sins. His pain becomes our peace (vs. 5). This, right here, is the great exchange. Jesus taking upon himself what was rightfully ours and giving to us what was rightfully his, peace. Remember, peace is more than the absence of hostility in the Bible. Peace means right relationship with God, oneself, others and creation that results in flourishing, unity and joy. It is a word that describes the way things were and how God designed them to be. Sin is culpable shalom (peace) breaking and is the way things became when Adam and Eve disobeyed and passed it down into all of humanity. Jesus creates shalom because he is shalom. He is our peace. In him, our sins are forgiven. Read through Isaiah 53 again and note all the times that the Messiah (Jesus) does something for us or in place of us. In theology, we call this sacrificial substitutionary atonement. That is, Jesus taking our place, becoming our substitute and sacrificing himself on our behalf so that we might be atoned for, or made right again with God and each other. This is Jesus replacing Barabbas. As mentioned above, Paul explains this great exchange to the Corinthians church in chapter 5 of 2 Corinthians verses 14-21 (for the larger context):

**2 Corinthians 5:14–21** For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; <sup>15</sup> and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. <sup>16</sup> From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup> that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

It starts and ends with God. First the love of Christ which controls those who are in Christ by grace through faith. And, it so that we might be for “him who for their sake died and was raised.” In other words, for Jesus of Nazareth. That is the bigger context. The love of God in and through Christ is so that people might live for God in Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore, Paul says they no longer regard disciples of Jesus from a human, fleshly perspective but as new creations in Christ where the old has “passed away” and the “new has come.” This is reconciliation. This is being made right with God. This is atonement. This is the great exchange and our ministry as ambassadors of Christ. The message of the great exchange is precisely this, “For our sake he [God] made him [Jesus of Nazareth] to be sin who



knew no sin, so that in him [Jesus of Nazareth] we might become the righteousness of God.” Read that last sentence again. Let it sink in. This is great news! This is the great exchange. The perfect and completely righteous Jesus become unrighteous by taking our sins upon himself. He takes our unrighteousness. We get his righteousness. This is all accomplished by being, “in Christ.” That is the reality of the great exchange, by grace and through faith – we are united with Jesus of Nazareth in his death and resurrection so that what was true for him becomes true for us; what happened to him, happened to us. We die. We rise from the dead. We are made new creations in him, by him and for him. 1 Peter 2:24 puts it this way: “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.” Christ bore our sins on the cross that we might “die to sin and live to righteousness.” The triune God, through Jesus’ salvific work in the great exchange and the Holy Spirit’s regenerating, empowering and equipping work changes everything for a disciple of Jesus. Our lives are no longer ours alone but ours in Christ. We are no longer to live according the weakness of the flesh but according to the power of the Holy Spirit in us to live as witnesses of Jesus and his kingdom here on earth both verbally by proclaiming the great news of the great exchange and visibly by living for Christ Jesus, daily, hourly, every moment, every situation, every conversation, every encounter as new creation who embrace the powerful love of God for us as described in the glorious truth of the great exchange.

My friends. Let’s be clear. We are Barabbas. I am Barabbas. You are Barabbas. Jesus goes to the cross on our behalf, my behalf, your behalf. He suffers on our behalf, my behalf, your behalf. He is the sinless, spotless lamb that is sacrificed for the forgiveness of sins. He is God and therefore was able to remain perfect and make the full payment. He was man and therefore qualified to be the substitute. But unlike Barabbas, we are not just forgiven of our sins as wonderful as that is; we are also declared righteous. That is, as if we never sinned. Jesus’ perfect life replaces ours and our sinful life replaced his. Not fully of course. But sufficiently. The prison doors are not just opened, but we walk out with no legal baggage over our heads. All charges are dropped on us and committed to Jesus. He takes all the guilt. He takes all the condemnation. He takes all the punishment. He takes all the wrath. He takes it all so that he can give all back – all grace, all mercy, all love, all forgiveness, all acceptance, all belonging in Christ, by Christ and for Christ. Yes, we are Barabbas, but we are also more – new creations in Christ so that we might live for him, who for our sake died and was raised. Hallelujah! What a Savior!

### **Communion Meditation**

*Professing:* (Apostles Creed)

**We believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.  
We believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
Born of the virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
Was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose and ascended to heaven  
Where he is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come to judge the living and the dead.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
The communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**



**Proclaiming:** 1 Corinthians 11:23b-25 (Paraphrased)

On the night of his betrayal, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it saying, "this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." After the meal he took the cup of wine and pouring it out said, "this wine is my blood, a new covenant of grace poured out for the forgiveness of sins."

**Remember and believe that the body & blood of Jesus was given & shed for the forgiveness of sins.**

**Song** – Build My Life -- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=9&v=QZW4\\_8\\_zCBE&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=9&v=QZW4_8_zCBE&feature=emb_title)

*Worthy of every song we could ever sing  
Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring  
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe  
We live for You, we live for You*

*Jesus, the Name above every other name, Jesus, the only One who could ever save  
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe, we live for You, we live for You*

*Holy, there is no one like You, there is none beside You  
Open up my eyes in wonder and  
Show me who You are and fill me with Your heart  
And lead me in Your love to those around me*

*Jesus, the Name above every other name, Jesus, the only One who could ever save  
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe, we live for You, Oh, we live for You*

*Holy, there is no one like You, there is none beside You  
Open up my eyes in wonder and  
Show me who You are and fill me with Your heart  
And lead me in Your love to those around me*

*And I will build my life upon Your love, it is a firm foundation  
And I will put my trust in You alone, and I will not be shaken - 2X's*

*Holy, there is no one like You, there is none beside You  
Open up my eyes in wonder and  
Show me who You are and fill me with Your heart  
And lead me in Your love to those around me*

*And I will build my life upon Your love, it is a firm foundation  
And I will put my trust in You alone  
And I will not be shaken*

**Sending as Disciples of Jesus:** Matthew 28:18-20 (Paraphrased)

May we walk in the truth of the great new of the great exchange. May we be humble in status and gracious in posture and generous in attitude, looking to build others up with lovingkindness as God has done for us in and through Jesus of Nazareth.

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**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus. Therefore, as we are sent into the world by him, let us make disciples of all, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that Jesus has commanded us. And let us remember and treasure that Jesus is with us always, even to the end of the age. Amen!**