

## Four Criminals Associated with the Death of Christ

*Luke 23:34-43*

Four prominent evildoers were connected with the Saviour's death. First, there was Judas. Not only was he the greatest traitor (*Luke 6:16*) in the history of the human race, but he also was a thief. He carried the money bag for the disciples, who apparently trusted him, but he was guilty of taking some of it for himself (*John 12:6*). What man had ever been so close to the Lord whose heart was so far away (*Matt. 7:6*)?

Second, there was Barabbas. He was a prominent insurrectionist and murderer headed for the center cross, a despised enemy of Rome. When Pilate asked the frenzied crowd which prisoner to release, they chose Barabbas and condemned Jesus. Thus Barabbas gained his freedom. Christ was indeed his Substitute; Barabbas knew what it meant to have someone die in his place. Sadly, there is no record that he ever put his faith in the Savior. Like Barabbas we all stand condemned—guilty, vile and helpless! God in His great mercy provided a Substitute to pay the full price of our iniquities (*Isa. 53:6*).

Finally, there were two other criminals crucified with Jesus. Initially, both men joined the mocking chorus (*Matt. 27:44*). One of these evildoers continued to reject the Son of God right to the moment he took his last breath. He refused to look to the One, just feet away from him, who could save his soul for all eternity. He represents every lost, unrepentant sinner.

Something caused the other malefactor to change. His eyes were opened to the glory of the Person next to him. He recognized Him as both Lord and King. His faith was great, believing that a dying Jesus would indeed have a kingdom! He called upon the name of the Lord (*Luke 23:42*): "Lord, remember me!" and was gloriously saved. He gave hope to all the other guilty evildoers like us!

~George Zeller: [www.middletownbiblechurch.org](http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org)



## Four Criminals Associated with the Death of Christ

*Luke 23:34-43*

Four prominent evildoers were connected with the Saviour's death. First, there was Judas. Not only was he the greatest traitor (*Luke 6:16*) in the history of the human race, but he also was a thief. He carried the money bag for the disciples, who apparently trusted him, but he was guilty of taking some of it for himself (*John 12:6*). What man had ever been so close to the Lord whose heart was so far away (*Matt. 7:6*)?

Second, there was Barabbas. He was a prominent insurrectionist and murderer headed for the center cross, a despised enemy of Rome. When Pilate asked the frenzied crowd which prisoner to release, they chose Barabbas and condemned Jesus. Thus Barabbas gained his freedom. Christ was indeed his Substitute; Barabbas knew what it meant to have someone die in his place. Sadly, there is no record that he ever put his faith in the Savior. Like Barabbas we all stand condemned—guilty, vile and helpless! God in His great mercy provided a Substitute to pay the full price of our iniquities (*Isa. 53:6*).

Finally, there were two other criminals crucified with Jesus. Initially, both men joined the mocking chorus (*Matt. 27:44*). One of these evildoers continued to reject the Son of God right to the moment he took his last breath. He refused to look to the One, just feet away from him, who could save his soul for all eternity. He represents every lost, unrepentant sinner.

Something caused the other malefactor to change. His eyes were opened to the glory of the Person next to him. He recognized Him as both Lord and King. His faith was great, believing that a dying Jesus would indeed have a kingdom! He called upon the name of the Lord (*Luke 23:42*): "Lord, remember me!" and was gloriously saved. He gave hope to all the other guilty evildoers like us!

~George Zeller: [www.middletownbiblechurch.org](http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org)

