

ANATOMY OF A TERRIBLE DECISION

Mark 15:1-15

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BACKDROP

- ▶ Today's message covers the sham trial and sentencing of the Lord after He had been:
 - betrayed by Judas (Mark 14:10–11, 43–46);
 - forsaken by his “closest friends” (Mark 14:50); and
 - denied by Peter (Mark 14:66–72).

BACKDROP

- ▶ Jesus goes from halls of Pilate to the cross in just a few hours.
- ▶ Sometimes we keep individuals on death row for decades.
- ▶ Pilate had a choice to make.
- ▶ In a convenient season of appealing to the masses, he clearly made the wrong decision – a very poor choice.
- **Barabbas over the Lord of Glory**

When presented with various options, I have always been instructed to “CHOOSE WISELY” and “MAKE GOOD DECISIONS”.

WHY → Because the trajectory and quality of our lives and the lives of others (wife, children, business associates, etc.) may very well hang in the balance!!



Many times, we may incur huge opportunity costs when making decisions.

Opportunity cost?

Making a choice renders the selection (opportunity) of any other course unavailable (cost).



AT THE CORE OF PILATE'S TERRIBLE DECISION

1. ENVY
 2. “POT STIRRING”
 3. CROWD PLEASING
 4. FEAR
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1. DISCARD ENVY (Mark 15:8–10)

*Then the multitude, crying aloud, began to ask him to do what he had always done for them. But Pilate answered them, saying, “Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?” For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of **envy**.*

- ▶ Envy clouds judgment and forces one to make irrational and irresponsible decisions.
 - ▶ Instead of pursuing mercy, justice and humility, the focus is destruction.
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2. STAY AWAY FROM POT STIRRERS (Mark 15:11)

*But the **chief priests stirred up the crowd**, so that he should rather release Barabbas to them.*

- ▶ Life is littered with people who do nothing but cause dissension
- ▶ Their chief aim is to put people on edge and increase strife and division
- ▶ Such persons destroy unity
 - *These six things does the Lord hate, yes seven are an abomination to Him One who sows discord among brethren. Proverbs 6:16, 19*

3. DON'T BE A CROWD PLEASER (Mark 15:15)

*So Pilate, **wanting to gratify the crowd**, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to be crucified.*

- ▶ Crowd pleasers tend to be followers
 - ▶ World is littered with followers
 - ▶ Do something grand – break from the herd and excel!
 - ▶ They are the ones who are remembered.
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So You Recognize These Guys?

- ▶ Shammua
 - ▶ Shaphat
 - ▶ Igal
 - ▶ Palti
 - ▶ Gaddiel
 - ▶ Gaddi
 - ▶ Ammiel
 - ▶ Sethur
 - ▶ Nahbi
 - ▶ Geuel
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They were contemporaries of Joshua & Caleb

- ▶ Recognize them now?
- ▶ See Numbers 13:3-16

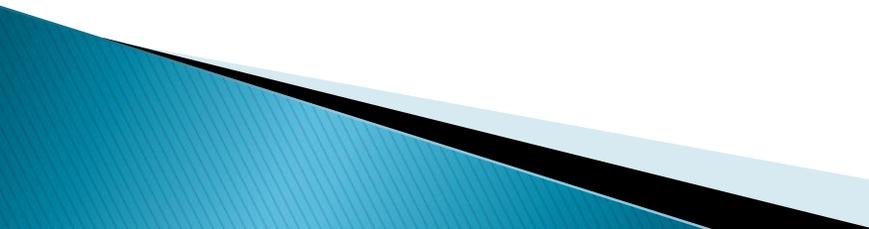
4. DEVELOP FORTITUDE (COURAGE)

John 19:12

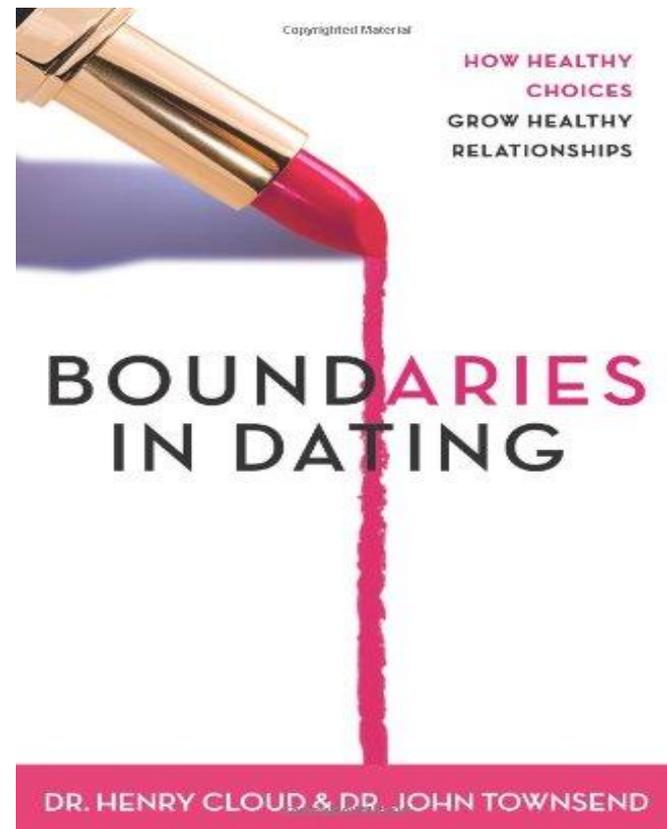
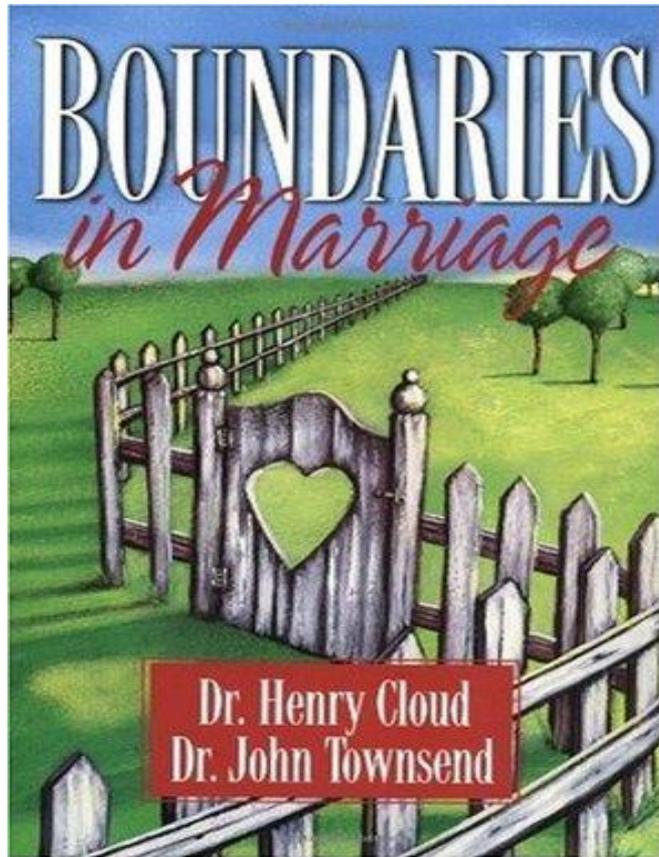
*From then on, Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, “**If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar’s friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.**”*

What shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Romans 8:31



A PATH TO MAKING BETTER DECISIONS



TWO-FOLD PURPOSE OF BOUNDARIES

▶ Insulation

- Protection from external forces
- Keeps contaminants from seeping in

▶ Restraint

- Mechanism for internal controls
- Protection from self – puts a governor on our own passions

- ▶ MAKE THE DECISION BEFOREHAND
 - ▶ PRELIMIT YOUR SELECTION
 - Before hanging out or dating
 - Establish activities to engage in
 - Determine places to go
 - Prior to going to the mall
 - Set spending limits
 - In advance of choosing a mate
 - Envision the type person with whom you want to spend the rest of your life.
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REMAIN TEMPERATE AND STEADFAST!!!



DECISION TIME

JESUS, the Lord of Glory, or

Barabbas (life outside the Lord)

Lord's Invitation Extended to All

- ▶ **Be added to the Lord's body**

Hear the gospel (Romans 10:17)

Believe (Acts 15:7, Hebrews 11:6)

Repent (Acts 2:38)

Confess (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10)

Be baptized for the remission of sin (Acts 2:38); or

Lord's Invitation (cont'd)

- ▶ **Be reconciled unto the Lord (1 John 1:8–9); or**
- ▶ **Desire prayer (James 5:16).**

May GOD'S richest blessings be yours!