

Mt 14:1-12, Mk 6:14-29, Lk 9:7-9 – Death of John the Baptist

Introduction

1. Luke 16 – The rich man and Lazarus
 - a. Abraham points to the sufficiency of the Word of God
 - b. Even one raised from the dead would not be enough to convince
2. John the Baptist (JTB) preached repentance, faith, the truth of God
 - a. He had courage, unafraid of titles or power
 - b. He pointed to Christ as the Lamb of God
 - c. He confronted Sin – He called out Herod Antipas' sin
 - i. Herod seized JTB and imprisoned him (**Luke 3:19-20**)
 - ii. JTB was the forerunner of Jesus' public ministry and forerunner of Jesus' death
3. The Markan Sandwich
 - a. Example: **Mk 4**: Parable of the Soils → Purpose of Parables → Interpretation of the Parable of the Soils
 - i. The middle portion describes/explains the soils – the crowds do not hear the mysteries of the Kingdom, while the disciples do
 - b. **Mk 6**: Jesus sends out the 12 → death of JTB → the 12 return
 - i. Following Christ on mission could mean martyrdom; taking up your cross (an instrument of death) is the reality

Chief Thought: Holiness and godliness does not gain popularity in this world. In fact, there is a connection between following and obeying Christ with hatred from the world that could mean more than being maligned for being a Christian; it could mean martyrdom.

Herod's Haunting, Superstitious Rumor (Mk 6:14-16, Mt 14:1-2, Lk 9:7-9)

1. Mark fills in the gap after the arrest of JTB by Herod in Luke 3: John has died and his death disturbs Herod Antipas
2. Herod Antipas, Tetrarch over Galilee of Perea
 - a. His father, Herod the Great ruled from 27 BC-AD 4 (he is the ruler who ordered the deaths of infants when Jesus was born)
 - i. After death, his kingdom was split between his sons
 - b. His brother, Aristobulus had a daughter named Herodias
 - c. His brother, Philip was married to Herodias
 - i. Antipas was married to the daughter of Aretas IV, of Nabatea forming a political alliance
 - ii. Antipas desired Herodias; they both divorced their spouses and married one another
 - iii. AD 39 – Nabatea attacked and Herod Antipas died
3. Jesus' fame had spread and Herod was convinced Jesus was JTB raised from the dead
4. Only a remnant believed Jesus was the Messiah: rumors abounded that he was Elijah, a prophet, or JTB (**see Matthew 16:13-17**)

The Voice Spoke Truth to Power (Mk 6:17-20, Mt 14:3-5)

1. JTB confronted Herod Antipas' unlawful, adulterous marriage
 - a. Antipas' marriage to Herodias was unlawful (**Lev 18:16, 20:21**)
 - i. Our culture needs to learn this lesson: You cannot create a human law to make what is unacceptable to God acceptable
 - b. Antipas desired to put John to death, but he feared both John and the people – he feared an uprising and respected JTB
 - c. Antipas refused to listen to the Word and repent of his sin
 - i. The wages of sin is death (**See also James 1:14-15**)

Herodias, That Wicked Jezebel (Mark 6:21-23, Matthew 14:6-7)

1. Antipas' pride was on display and a day of opportunity arose for Herodias – He threw a celebration for his birthday inviting the elite politicians, military leaders, and social leaders
 - a. Salome, Herodias' daughter, was sent in by her mother to seduce the men and lead Herod Antipas to kill JTB
 - i. The word used in Greek for *daughter* is the same word used for Jairus' daughter who was no older than 12
 - ii. She danced erotically and Herod and the men were pleased
 - iii. Herod made a rash vow: he would give anything to her, up to half his kingdom (which was not his to give)

The Captive Voice (Luke 4:18-19, Matthew 11:2-6)

1. Jesus' first sermon in Nazareth quoted the prophet Isaiah
2. When JTB sent his disciples to inquire about whether or not Jesus was the Messiah, again Jesus quoted Isaiah, but left out the part where the Messiah would set the captive free
3. JTB would remain imprisoned; he would die there

The Voice Silenced (Mark 6:24-29, Matthew 14:8-12)

1. Herod is caught in a trap
2. Herodias tells Salome to ask for JTB's head: Antipas would have to choose between what is right & his pride; he ignores his conscience
3. JTB suffered a cruel, barbaric death – Salome asks for JTB's head on a dish – The heart is desperately wicked (**Jeremiah 17:9**)
4. We groan at this narrative for we know that these evils exist in our own hearts: We have held grudges, had lust, and hated others
 - a. We have a heart that needs
5. Herod Antipas, Herodias, Salome, and the men dishonored JTB's body – His disciples stood in stark contrast to this company taking the body and putting it in a tomb; JTB died – the voice was silenced

Herod's Interest in Jesus (Luke 9:9, 23:8-12)

1. Herod finally sees Jesus before the crucifixion – He mocks the Lord
2. Jesus remains silent with Herod (He answered Pilate, but not Herod)
3. Herod Antipas refused the Word of God; his heart had grown harder and wouldn't believe even if one raised from the dead told him