

Mark 6 – Death of John and Right Rest for Right Work

Mar 6:12 So they went out and preached that people should repent.

Mar 6:13 And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.

They preached a message of repentance, and the miracles authenticated their message. This commission was limited to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It is not the pattern for today. Repentance is part of the gospel message, however; it is contained in the command to believe.

The record of this incident is longer in the Gospel of Matthew, and we go into more detail in our study of it in that Gospel. The fame of Jesus had spread throughout that area. Not only the common people but even Herod on the throne had heard of Jesus. Now we find this strange reaction on the part of King Herod. The murder of John the Baptist had taken place sometime before. I think it is recorded here to explain Herod's strange and superstitious reaction. – McGee

If the original disciples were commanded to cast out demons, heal, and proclaim the Kingdom of Heaven, does this not apply to us?

The Death of John the Baptist

Mar 6:14-16 Now King Herod heard of Him, for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." Others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is the Prophet, or like one of the prophets." But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!"

We can see that this man Herod was very superstitious. But there was a great deal of mingled reaction among the people about the Lord Jesus as to who He was. There is that same reaction today, by the way. We find that different people have different viewpoints and different explanations of the person, the presence, and the power of the Lord Jesus. So, there was this confusion, and Herod was definitely afraid. – McGee

When news reached **King Herod** that a miracle-worker was traveling through the land, he immediately concluded that it was **John the Baptist ... risen from the dead**. Others said it was **Elijah** or **one of the other prophets**, but Herod was convinced that the man **whom** he had **beheaded** had risen. John the Baptist had been a voice from God. Herod had silenced that voice. Now the terrible pangs of conscience were stabbing Herod for what he had done. He would learn that the way of the transgressor is hard. – Believers Bible Commentary

Mar 6:17-18 For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. Because John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

The murder of John had taken place previous to this point in the ministry of Jesus. Notice that John boldly denounced sin in high places. He had denounced Herod for taking Herodias, his brother's wife. This enraged her and caused her to plot John's death. – McGee

Do you have the confidence to speak truth to power regardless of the consequences?

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Mar 6:19-20 Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not; for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

The narrative now switches back to the time of John's execution. The Baptizer had reproved Herod for entering into an unlawful marriage with his brother Philip's wife. Herodias, now Herod's wife, became furious and vowed to take revenge. But Herod respected John as a holy man and thwarted her efforts. – Believers Bible Commentary

McGee asks, "Did Herodias keep Herod from God?" How about you? Is there someone in your life that is keeping you from God?

Mar 6:21-22 Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee. And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you."

Herodias had asked her daughter to dance before him because she knew what a lecherous, lustful old man he was. He gave the daughter a blank check and she could ask anything she wanted. – McGee

Jeffery Epstein maybe the most famous pedophile of our day, but he was not the first as the passage shows us.

Sin will take you places that are very dark and you will not want to go in your right mind!

Mar 6:23-25 He also swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom." So, she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!" Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

Finally, her chance came. At Herod's birthday party, with local celebrities attending, Herodias arranged for her daughter to dance. This so pleased Herod that he promised to give the girl anything up to half his kingdom. Prompted by her mother, she asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

Ok, the evil of this mother is off the charts. She actually set this up using her own daughter to satisfy her murderous rage at being called out for her sin.

Mar 6:26-28 And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother.

The king was trapped. Against his own desires and better judgment, he granted the request. Sin had woven its web around him, and the vassal king was victimized by an evil woman and by a sensual dance. – Believers Bible Commentary

Another weakness of Herod is revealed here. He was afraid of what his friends might think and say. He had a false sense of values about an oath. This is cold blooded murder. – McGee

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Are you careful with your words? Have you ever been trapped by a careless commitment or oath and too prideful to recant and turn back?

Conscience

I. The facts of conscience.

1. We have a discernment of the difference between right and wrong.
2. We approve of one and we disapprove of the other, as of good and bad laws.
3. We condemn ourselves for what conscience disapproves of in our states and acts.
4. We are impelled by conscience to do what is right, and deterred by it from what is wrong.

II. Of this mysterious power the obvious characteristics are-

1. That it is independent of the understanding and will.
2. It is authoritative.
3. It does not speak in its own name. The authority which it exercises is not its own.
4. It is avenging. Remorse is a state produced by conscience.

III. Our duty in regard to conscience.

1. To enlighten it.
2. To obey it.
3. Not only to obey it in particular cases, but to have a fixed and governing purpose to permit it to rule.

The ground of this obligation to obey conscience is-

1. The authority of God in whose name it, speaks.
 2. Respect for our own dignity as rational and moral beings. (C. Hedge, D. D.) – Biblical Illustrator
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Mar 6:29 When his disciples heard of it, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

When John's faithful disciples heard what had happened, they claimed his corpse and buried it, then went and told Jesus. – Believers Bible Commentary

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

Mar 6:30 Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught.

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The apostles had just returned to Capernaum from their first preaching mission (see vv. 7-13). Perhaps they were flushed with success, perhaps weary and footsore. Recognizing their need for rest and quiet, the Lord took them by boat to a secluded area on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. – Believers Bible Commentary

Mar 6:31-32 And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.

We often hear, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while" used to justify luxurious vacations for Christians. Kelly wrote:

It would be well for us if we needed thus to rest more; that is to say, if our labors were so abundant, our self-denying efforts for the blessing of others were so continual, that we could be sure that this was the Lord's word for us. – Believers Bible Commentary

It is impossible for us to understand how really busy the Lord Jesus was and how great the demands were upon Him. He had to withdraw to an uninhabited place in an attempt to rest and let His apostle's rest. – McGee

Rest and work

- I. There is no true rest which has not been earned by work.
- II. The duty of resting has the same reasons as the duty of working.
- III. Solitude is the proper refreshment after public work, and preparation for it.
- IV. The spirit can never be at leisure from compassion, sympathy, love. (E. Johnson, M. A.)
 - Biblical Illustrator