

Discussion Guide

Week of January 13, 2013

Mark 6:14–29

Passage Overview:

In Mark 6 we see Jesus rejected by the world despite the fact that he is the King ushering in God's kingdom. He tells his disciples that as they live out the gospel on mission they should expect to be rejected as well (v11). And Jesus' forerunner—John the Baptist—is not only rejected, but executed (vv27–28). The rejection of Jesus and his followers is normal. Indeed, the execution of John anticipates the fate that Jesus himself will later face.

Understanding God's Word—Read Mark 6:14–29.

- In verses 14–29, why does Herodias want John imprisoned and killed?
- Why does Herod want John kept alive?

Living and Applying God's Word

- What are the similarities between John the Baptist and Elijah? Think about:
 - Their prophetic style (Mark 6:1–6 and 2 Kings 1:8).
 - The people they spoke to (1 Kings 16:30–33).
 - The influence of royal wives (1 Kings 19:1–2).What is Mark telling us by highlighting the similarity between Elijah and John? See Malachi 4:5–6.
- Herod was curious and fascinated with John's message. Despite how uncomfortable and confused John's preaching often made Herod, he still loved to listen to it (v20). However, Herod was also desperately afraid of displeasing his wife, so he imprisoned John (v17). And he was desperately afraid of losing face to his party guests, so he decided his pride was more important than John's life or honor (vv26–27). Herod is an example of someone who was not willing to take any "heat" for the truth, and, as a result, John's life was ended and Herod's own soul was ruined.
 - In what ways do you fear other people?
 - In what ways do you fear rejection or public embarrassment?
 - How do these fears prevent you from laying hold of the truth of the gospel? How does this run counter to the way of Jesus who faced rejection and humiliation on behalf of his people?
- Why should Christians be prepared for persecution and rejection?

Turning to God in Faith and Repentance

- John called Herod to repent in no uncertain terms: "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife" (v18). He told the truth and, therefore, attracted the hatred of Herod and especially his wife, Herodias (v19). How is a Christian witness repulsive to non-believers? Have you experienced this in your relationships? Why or why not? What can we learn from John's example?
- John was not only repulsive to non-believers, he was also attractive to them. His compassion, character, and earnestness demanded their respect (v20: "Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man"). Why is a clear Christian witness BOTH attractive and repulsive? What can you do to have a more balanced Christian witness?

Prayer:

Like Herod and Herodias, we too formerly rejected the kingship of Jesus. Read Titus 3:3–7 and thank God for his goodness and loving-kindness in saving you. Pray also for MercyMed as they provide healthcare to those who cannot afford it in Columbus.

Announcements

- "One Another" Member Meeting (Jan. 13, 6–7:30 p.m.)
- Ladies' Lunch (Jan. 15, noon) (sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com)
- Missions Conference (Jan. 25–27)
- Water Baptism (Feb. 10) (wayne@insidecrosspointe.com)
- Starting Pointe (Feb. 22–24) (robert@insidecrosspointe.com)