

Be Reformed – Open the bible: study, dig and ask what the main point of the passage is

Be Charismatic – Expect the Holy Spirit: ask God to speak, minister, build up and lead us to maturity

Be Community – Love God's people: share vulnerably, apply, pray and build each other up

Be Missional – Win the world: apply lessons to outreach, make content accessible to non-Christians

Matthew 14:1-13

1 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus, 2 and he said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead; that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him." 3 For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, 4 because John had been saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." 5 And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet. 6 But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company and pleased Herod, 7 so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. 8 Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter."

9 And the king was sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given. 10 He sent and had John beheaded in the prison, 11 and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. 12 And his disciples came and took the body and buried it, and they went and told Jesus. 13 Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns.

Study Guide 10 July 2011 – Doing Right in a World gone Wrong



Summary

John the Baptist was a righteous prophet of God. Herod was the adulterous, incestuous ruler over Galilee and Perea, who eventually put John the Baptist to death.

We see from this account that the result of Herod's way of life was a troubled conscience, fear, and loss of self-control. John, on the other hand had courage and confidence, the honour of the people and he left a lasting legacy. However, John the Baptist meets a cruel death at age 34, while Herod seems to get away scot-free.

This is a seeming injustice, until we realize that there is a judgement yet to come, when Christ returns. There, all the wrongs of history will be set right, and true justice will finally be served. Hence, though we work towards seeing justice done on earth, we are rested even when we see injustice seeming to prevail. God will have his way. We also realize that while Herod was indeed more evil than most of us, the very same root of evil, which is sin, dwells in all our hearts. John's rebuke of Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have her", applies to us to. And we realize that the rebuke is also an invitation to receive the gift of righteousness that Jesus Christ has won for his people by dying on the cross on their behalf.

Key points

To do right in a world gone wrong, we need to set our eyes on the judgement that is to come and the cross that Jesus bore.

Questions

>>Have there been times in your life where you have experienced a sense of injustice? Where others have wronged you? Share that experience if you feel free to.

>>Does the knowledge that there will be a final judgement help you to make sense of that injustice?

>>Have there been other times that you have wronged others? Has that left you with a troubled conscience?

>>How does the knowledge that Christ has taken that sin to the cross affect you?

Final thoughts

Let us consider everything we have and are worth sacrificing in exchange for the Kingdom of Heaven and the Lord who has brought His kingdom to earth.