

# Mark 6:14-29

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, everyone. It is indeed a pleasure and an honor to be able to share God's word with you.

! And I've always known after becoming a Christian that God would hold those in this position. And I've always known after becoming a Christian that God would hold those in this position.

He would hold us accountable for how we share truth or don't share truth. And so we will give an account. And that's always something that is stuck in my mind.

And because we will stand before him, each and every one of us, and give an account for our life as to how we live that life.

And it's not to determine whether or not we go to heaven, but it is for rewards. When I was in Bible school, I was mentored by a gentleman.

[ 1 : 09 ] And, you know, we all kind of, I think, we all kind of form in our minds what the Apostle Paul looked like. What Peter looked like.

What John looked like. And I always had this kind of idea in my mind that when you'd see John, he'd walk up kind of humbly, an older man, and he'd say, Oh, my beloved, let us pray.

And anyhow, he spent in his church seven years years going through the Gospel of John without repeating a message.

And he was deep. You know, I think God wants every one of us not just to hear a message, but to take that message and really think it through and apply it to our hearts.

Because if we don't apply it to our hearts, it's only data. It's only something that goes in here and we might remember little bits and pieces here and there.

[ 2 : 27 ] I ran into a young guy when some years ago I shared at a teen conference and my sermon was basically on you win or lose by how you choose and every one of us makes, whether we realize it or not, probably a thousand decisions every day.

If not, a lot more. You win or lose by how you choose. And this young man came up to me and he said, do you remember me?

And I'm generally fairly well with faces and I stood there and looked at him and this was some years later. He says, I remember your message at the conference in Colorado.

And I said, you do? He said, yeah, you win or lose by how you choose. And he said, and that really hit me because I realized that I have a choice to make.

that we all do. So we make our choices every day on how we're going to use that 24 hours that God has given us this day to draw closer to him.

[ 3 : 49 ] Whether at work or wherever it may be, we have opportunities to live out Christ. and sometimes like the missionary that went to Russia, he asked one of the Russian people over there, he says, as a Christian, how do you share the gospel?

He said, it's illegal. but we choose to live in such a way that people are compelled to ask us what makes you different.

Again, it's a choice. Well, we're in Mark chapter 6. As most of you know, we've been there a little while.

And I will be looking at some verses in there, and this is where John the Baptist gets beheaded. But my focus this morning isn't just on John being beheaded, but the whole system that they lived under.

This is the ministry of Jesus and it was bound to attract attention. Just like in a sense we could say we're little Jesuses.

[ 5 : 20 ] We're not gods. But if we are developing the character of Christ, they're going to see something so different in you that they'll be compelled to ask.

And his ministry attracted people by virtue of his miracles, even those done by his apostles. In Mark chapter 6, verses 12 and 13, it says, and they went out and preached that men should repent. You don't hear that word very often anymore.

But that repent is to turn around. I'm heading this way. I'm the boss of my life. I make the decisions for my life. And we turn around and we say, whatever you will, God.

Whatever you will. Dubuque was the last place I wanted to come after I finished school. Believe it or not.

Born and raised here. This wasn't my thing. Everybody else, or most people that I went to school with, they're living in different parts of the country.

[ 6 : 38 ] And I thought, boy, it'd be great to live out in Colorado or California at that time, which I wouldn't go there now for nothing. listen. But, it says, and they went out and they preached that men should repent.

And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick and healing them. And eventually, as they went out, King Herod heard about it.

Things like this, that kind of news travels fast, especially if you've got some kind of a physical ailment, you've got cancer or something, and you hear that this guy can heal you without medical procedures.

You're going to travel however far you have to to get to him. And Herod heard about it and in verse 14 of chapter 6, King Herod heard of it for his name had become well known.

And people were saying, John the Baptist has risen from the dead. And that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him.

[ 7 : 55 ] In the text here, Mark shares with us some information about King Herod. And this is one of the things I'd like to hopefully connect with you on that you can see how their system worked.

And it says there in verses 14 to 16 his reaction to what he heard. And it said, And King Herod heard of it for his name had become well known.

And people were saying, John the Baptist has risen from the dead. And that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him.

But others were saying, he is Elijah. And others were saying, he is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old. But when Herod heard of it, he kept saying, John, whom I beheaded, has risen.

Put yourself in that position. If he is somehow or another risen, what might he say or do to me, the one that took his head?

[ 9 : 16 ] How would people react? But we'll see more of that here shortly. And the events led up to the king's execution of John the Baptist.

In verse 29, it says, We will look at the events leading up to... We will look at the events. This is my saying, not the scriptures.

We will look at the events leading up to the king's execution of John the Baptist. And you can see that in verses 17 through 29. And I'm not going to read it all this morning due to time.

But in doing so, Mark shows us a sad picture of weakness in power. Weakness in power.

It's a picture born out of... out by secular history as well. This is well documented outside of the scriptures that he was a weak man.

[ 10 : 27 ] Even though he was in a position of power. Herod as the king, his position as a tetrarch, which by the Romans, that was to be a ruler of an independent state or states, inferior to an emperor.

Those are some big words, aren't they? Herod the Great and Philip, son of Herod the Great and also Lysanias of Abilene are given that title in Luke 3.1, which is more accurate than king as it states in Mark 6.14.

So these men in a sense were like governors today in our economy or in our order of things here in America.

You have governors that are over states or over a single state and some of these were over a number of states. But this was another position of power.

He is generally known as Herod Antipas. His father was Herod the Great from Idumea ruling and he was ruling when Jesus was born by the way.

[ 12 : 15 ] Idumea is the Greek name for the land of Edom and we know what the scriptures said about Edom in the Old Testament and everything. But he was he was the ruler if you will or the Greek name here for him was for Idumea was for the land of Edom and after 586 BCE Edomites

began to move into Judea multiple heard multiples heard of all that he was doing and came to him again you hear the works of this man and you got to go for him if he can heal somebody that's sick maybe he can heal a marriage maybe he can heal somehow or another a rebellious teenager maybe maybe maybe and so they started to flock to where he was in

Matthew chapter 2 verses 1 3 and 19 now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod king behold Magi from east arrived in Jerusalem and when Herod heard of it he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him but when Herod was dead behold an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt saying go back that's how that's how Joseph and Mary got back to if you will where they were and how the Savior came into the world Herod's mother was Malthas a Samaritan the fourth of Herod's ten wives that still blows me away the fourth of Herod's ten wives and bear with me here I lost my place okay I got it he was educated in Rome together with Archius and Philip now he is not to be confused and this is one of the things we read through and we hear of Herod and Herod and Herod and we don't know which Herod is Herod okay so it would be like somebody saying we have a Gary church which one well there's Gary this Gary that Gary this other and you have to be able to identify him to understand the context in which they're talking or who they're talking about and so

Herod the Great is not to be confused with Herod Agrippa the first who was his nephew who killed James the brother of Christ in Acts 12 1 and 2 it says now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church in order to mistreat them and he had James the brother of John put to death with the sword remember James and John they were called the sons of thunder you could almost see them riding into Jerusalem with the leather vests on or camel hair vests on and they got those vests on they riding their camel they look like a couple of well the worst of the worst of motorcycle gangs sons of thunder just kind of makes you wonder what they look like then there was

Herod Agrippa the second who was a grand nephew before whom Paul appeared in Acts 26 1 and it says and Agrippa said to Paul you are permitted to speak for yourself then Paul stretched out his hand and proceeded to make his defense and so this is what Herod Agrippa the second was kind of known for and when Herod the great died in 4 BC his kingdom was divided up into four parts we kind of remember how that happened with Russia when they went kind of downhill a while back and they had these different sections that if you want to call him broke off or whatever but Herod the great his kingdom was divided into four parts and it says in

[ 17 : 52 ] Luke 3 1 now in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea and Herod the tetrarch of Galilee and his brother Philip was stretched or was tetrarched of the region of Ituria and Trachonitis and Lysanias the tetrarch from Abilene now Abilene would be today part of Syria okay so that was a part of Syria and that person did something here but we'll get to it Arceus the full brother Judea Edema Samaria which was later ruled by Pontius

Pilate this this was one kingdom if you will and then there was Antipas who was in charge of Galilee and Perea Philip II half brother Aeturia and Tronchitis and Lysanias of Abilene or Syria so this these are the four kingdoms that got divided at his death now consider his accomplishments King Herod as the tetrarch he governed Galilee and Perea for 42 years from 4 BC to 39 AD he built the cities of Sephorus Tiberias and oversaw other projects he was imprinted or he imprisoned and executed John the Baptist in 6 chapter 6 verses 14 to 29 which is all part of that text if you read that whole thing which again due to time I'm not going to read the whole thing today I figure you've got a week you can read it if you can't call me and I'll come and read it to you but anyhow they sought he sought to kill Jesus who described Herod as that fox can you imagine going up and saying that to the president even though we have free speech I don't know what you think but I don't think that the outcome of that would be really too good but he called him that fox and!

Jesus responded in Luke 13 verses 31 and 32 he says just at that time some Pharisees came up saying to him go away and depart from here for Herod wants to kill you and he said to them go and tell that fox behold I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow and the third day I reach my goal later they mocked he mocked Jesus prior to his death which led to his friendship with Pilate Pilate wanted him dead also and so when he killed him or when he saw what was taking place and the ones that were against

Jesus and Pilate was one of them they became friends and worked together later they mocked he mocked Jesus prior to his death that led that friendship and it says in Luke 23 verses 7 to 12 and

when he learned that he being Jesus belonged to Herod's jurisdiction he sent him being Jesus to Herod who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time so here I could see possibly where I don't want to carry that responsibility for killing this man because I just don't understand him he's doing works that no man does he's different in every way shape and form so

[ 23 : 05 ] I'll send that responsibility this way because I can and I thought how many times when we're afraid to make a decision on something we pass that on to somebody else so that they're responsible before God but anyhow Annapus had the potential and the position to be a great man but those in positions of power often have personal failings and this was surely true of Herod Annapus Herod as a man he was superstitious he initially thought Jesus was John the Baptist in Mark 16 verse 14 and Herod heard of it for his name had become well known and people were saying John the Baptist had risen from the dead and that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him and then in Luke verse 16 he was believing that John had been raised from the dead and he says and when Herod heard of it he kept saying John whom I beheaded has raised from the dead and such was his attempt if you will to explain away the miracles he had heard not only was he superstitious but he was immoral he first married Thelias daughter of King Arthus the fourth of Nabata he divorced her to marry

Herodias in Mark 6 verse 17 for Herod himself had sent and had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias the wife of his brother Philip because he had married her and so we see his immorality there you know taking his brother's wife in marriage because he could divorce and his other wife now this was his half niece that he married okay this was his half niece who was married to his brother half brother I might say Philip they had fallen in love while they were in

Rome together you see that happened a lot out in Hollywood don't you people go on a set to film a movie and they end up divorcing their wives so they can marry somebody they were in the show with and that happens again and again and number of marriages keep adding up they agreed to divorce their spouses and marry one another no grounds for divorce no grounds for divorce and yet they broke the law the common law okay it wasn't just that Christians held on to this but it was a common law for people knew in their hearts instinctively that to leave your wife and take somebody else's life just was not right this was an unlawful marriage even though

Antipas was not a Jew so he had nothing in that respect that was his guidance! the Jews all understood the law of God to limited degrees and in Mark 6 verse 18 it says for John had been saying to Herod it is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife this sort of irritated him a bit and it irritated him because it was simple if you want to call it simple adultery Leviticus 20 verse 10 says that if there is a man who commits adultery with another with his friend's wife the adulterer and adulteress shall surely be put to death and in Romans 7 2 and 3 it says for the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living but if her husband dies she is free from the law and so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man also because of the prohibition against marrying a brother's wife in

[ 28 : 46 ] Leviticus 20 21 if there is a man who takes his brother's wife it is abhorrent he has uncovered his brother's nakedness and they shall be childless and I think I probably need to stop here because we're a bit over but I will say I'll have a tablet out in the foyer out there if anybody wants a copy of the notes on this so you can go through and try to position everything on your Bible map and understand who those individuals were I'll have that available to you so before we break for Harold to come up let's bow our heads for a word of prayer our holy father we we come before you and we ask that you would open our eyes help us to understand a little bit of how the governance of that time worked in

Rome and surrounding areas father give us eyes to see and ears to hear and father may we humble ourselves before your throne and ask the God of all mercy to cleanse us help us lead us that we may glorify you with our lives with our bodies with our speech and with our mind and we thank you in Jesus name