

BIBLICAL MORALITY AND THE SWORD

Pastor Lucas Almeida—Central Baptist Church—February 19th, 2023

- **Mark 6:14-29**
(ESV)

[14] King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some said, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him." [15] But others said, "He is Elijah." And others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." [16] But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised." [17] For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he had married her. [18] For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." [19] And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death. But she could not, [20] for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.

[21] But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. [22] For when Herodias's daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests. And the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it to you." [23] And he vowed to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom." [24] And she went out and said to her mother, "For what should I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist." [25] And she came in immediately 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." [26] And the king was exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her. [27] And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison [28] and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. [29] When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

INTRODUCTION

Death is always victory for the believer, and it's never defeat.

"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." –Tertullian

John the Baptist

- Jesus' cousin
- "The greatest born of a woman."
- The last of the Old Covenant prophets.
- John's function was to prepare the way for Jesus.

John stands as a reminder for us today that to die because of the truth is better than to live by lies.

Following Jesus will cost you everything—including your life.

Matthew 16:24–25—[24] Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. [25] For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

HEROD'S FALSE RELIGION

King Herod

- Herod Antipas
- Son of King Herod the Great
- Governor (tetrarch) under the Roman Empire in the northern part of Judea

False religion downplays the nature of Jesus.

False religion displays an apparent acceptance of the gospel.

Ezekiel 33:30–31—[30] *“As for you, son of man, your people who talk together about you by the walls and at the doors of the houses, say to one another, each to his brother, ‘Come, and hear what the word is that comes from the LORD.’ [31] And they come to you as people come, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear what you say but they will not do it; for with lustful talk in their mouths they act; their heart is set on their gain.*

False religion is marked by immorality.

Colossians 3:5–6—[5] *Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. [6] On account of these the wrath of God is coming.*

Matthew 3:7–8—“You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? [8] *Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.*”

JOHN’S VICTORY IN CHRIST

Death for John was his victory.

Philippians 1:21—*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

Matthew 16:18—*And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

John was committed to the truth.

John 8:31–32—[31] *So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, [32] and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

John was committed to biblical morality.

Romans 1:18—*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.*

Romans 1:26–27—[26] *For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; [27] and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.*

John was committed to God to the point of death.

Christ’ death gives us purpose in life and confidence in death.

If Jesus died for us, death therefore is victory.