

A Private Homecoming and a Public Miracle

Sermon 45 in the Matthew Series

Matthew 14:1-21

I. Confusion concerning the Identity of Jesus 14:1-2

II. The Fall of Herod Antipas 14:3-12

A. The Account Itself 3-12

B. The people were angry about the execution of John the Baptist. (v. 5)

C. Background on Herod Antipas

Herod the Great was the ruler when Jesus was born.

Herod Antipas was his son.

Herodias had been the wife of Herod Antipas' half-brother, Philip.

It is interesting what happened about 10 years after executing John.

Gaius Caesar – Caligula – 37-41AD had promoted Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:1) – the brother of Herodias to the title of King – something Antipas never officially received.

Herodias was jealous of her brother's title and demanded that her husband go to Rome and seek to be made king of his territory. At first Herod refused to go.

Agrippa sent letters to Caligula – claiming Herod Antipas was conspiring against the Emperor – something that wasn't proven – but couldn't be disproven by Antipas.

So – Antipas was sent into exile – to Lyons in Gaul.

He lost his entire territory and it was given to Agrippa.

In consideration of her brother (Agrippa) – Herodias was not exiled – but she decided to stay with Antipas and go into exile with him.

III. The Contrast Between John the Baptist and Herod

A. Two very different men.

Austere and simple vs Flamboyant and ornate

Righteous and just vs Debauched and arbitrary

Immense moral courage vs a Coward living for his own pleasure

A Man of great conscience vs A Man who dared to go against his own conscience

B. Herod Antipas is an example of the captivating power of lust.

C. Regarding Herodias – what kind of mother would have her daughter (Salome) put on this kind of shameful and degrading display for her step-father and his wicked guests.

D. The Conscience of a Lost Man

John 10:26 -- “But, you do not believe, because you are not of my sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

IV. Observations on the Feeding of the Five Thousand – Matthew 14:13-21

1. The mercy of Christ v. 14
2. He is the God of the impossible 15-17
3. God uses means v. 17-18
4. The disciples could only distribute what had been given to them. V. 19
5. The miracle was probably not fully understood by the multitudes. V. 19-21
6. We must trust God in every circumstance.
7. No problem is too big for God.
8. A similar miracle occurred in the ministry of Elisha. 2 Kings 4:42-44
⁴² Then a man came from Baal Shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly ripened grain in his knapsack. And he said, “Give *it* to the people, that they may eat.”
³ But his servant said, “What? Shall I set this before one hundred men?”
He said again, “Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus says the LORD: ‘They shall eat and have *some* left over.’ ” ⁴⁴ So he set *it* before them; and they ate and had *some* left over, according to the word of the LORD.
9. God delights to use small, weak and what the world considers insignificant things to show forth his glory.
10. Jesus is the Bread of Life – John 6