

# A Wheat Street Bible Study

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## Respect Yourself: Don't Let Someone's Else Grudge Get You In Trouble with God

As we come to Mark 6:14-29 we have to back track to Mark 1:14. In Mark 1:14, Mark mentions the arrests and imprisonment of John and just leaves the reader hanging. He comes back to this story in Mark 6.

Mark 1:14

**14** Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God,

Who is this Jesus? How powerful is our witness?

Mark 6:14-16

**14** King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him." **15** But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It 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."

King Herod is trying to figure out who this Jesus is. The people are whispering about the things that Jesus is doing. The people are following Jesus and his ministry and teaching is making a difference. What we want at Wheat Street is that our ministry is making such a difference in the lives of those in our community and our church that people begin to talk about us. We want them to talk about what Jesus is doing at Wheat Street. Jesus' ministry was so powerful that people were talking about what he was doing. We have to ask the question: what are we doing that is worthy of being talked about outside the walls of the church? What are we doing that is news worthy? What are we doing that would make someone want to join us here as seek to follow and serve God? Churches that are making a difference become the difference maker that people want to be a part of. Jesus' ministry was making a difference.

## A Flashback: A King's Respect for God and Fall from Grace

Mark 6:17-20

**17** For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her.

**18** For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

**19** And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not,

**20** for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him.

## **Herod the Compromised**

Herod didn't want to do what he did but because he had compromised his authority because of his wrong he couldn't stand for right. One of the lessons here is maintain your integrity. When you allow yourself to be put in a position where you can be bossed and bought you have lost your ability to be obedient to God's call. Herod sent men to arrest John because he had married his brother's wife. Because he had compromised his position and literally slept with the devil he couldn't do what he wanted to do.

## **John the Prophet**

On the other hand John was willing to speak truth to power knowing there were consequences for his actions. He called Herod and Herodias out for their sin. John was going to tell the truth. This is what prophet are called to do. They are called to speak truth not as a tool of condemnation but rather as an instrument of liberation. As one hears the truth one can decide to respond with retribution or they can decide to act on the truth and be set free because the truth sets you free. The quandary the prophet finds themselves in is that people don't always want to hear the truth. People prefer to hear lies and are sometimes looking for someone to consign rather than tell them the truth. This is why Paul wrote these words to Timothy:

## **2nd Timothy 4:1-5**

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: **2** proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. **3** For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, **4** and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. **5** As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.'

## **Herodias with a Grudge**

It is interesting in this passage as it says, "John feared Herod, knowing he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him." While John didn't like what he was saying John found himself listening to Herod and willing to learn from Herod. This was definitely linked to Herod's powerful witness and I also suppose this was linked to Herod's willingness to speak truth to the King. Leaders need people who are willing to be honest with them. Leaders need to hear critique from those who have heard from God. The pastor is not the only one who hears from God. John was one of God's messengers and he was called to speak to Herod. The text is clear as it says, "Herod liked listening to him." Leaders who love God and love the people want to hear the truth. They want to hear what you hear from God. Now, this doesn't mean they want to hear gossip but what it means is that they want to hear what God is saying to you and what God has told you to share with those in leadership.

While Herod respected John Herodias had a different agenda. She had a grudge. When people have grudges and they will not allow God to move them there is nothing you can do to win them over. When people have made up in their mind that they are

going to get you, you have to let them alone and let the chips fall where they may. Now, while she got John, she is going to pay someday for killing God's anointed. We don't have to get balled up people back for their sins will find them out. We might suffer in the interim but it is the cost of doing ministry. John had no ill intentions toward Herod or Herodias, he was only trying to lead them in the right direction. When people don't want to do right and you are trying to lead them right, don't stop trying, keep on being and doing what God has called you to be and do and let them make up their own mind.

People with grudges wait to get you. They plot against you and you can't stop their plotting. John couldn't worry about Herodias it was just a matter of time. She waited for the time to get him and here it comes.

### **Got Cha: Herodias Kills John at the Hand of Herod but the Gospel Still Lives Mark 6:21-29**

**21** But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. **22** When his daughter Herodias 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." **23** And he solemnly swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." **24** She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the baptizer." **25** Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." **26** The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. **27** Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, **28** brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. **29** When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

This is all wrong!!! We have to call out the dance. What was that all about? Why would the king be moved by the dancing of his daughter to the point that he would make such a promise? That is one issue.

The second issue goes back to John's compromised position and the grudge that Herodias was holding on to.

Herod- had so compromised his position and so lost his way that he was making bad decisions. Ironically the only one we see advising him in a Godly way he is now about to kill. Now remember, we start this passage off with Herod thinking that Jesus was John brought back to life, so he isn't over what he had done. Back to the story though we see a compromised leader in a bad relationship that is only going to lead to more bad decisions.

You have to watch who you are in relationship with. When you sleep with people like Herodias and get so close to them that they are like family you are in trouble. Her grudge led to the King being a murderer of Godly man. He was under the spell of one

who had a grudge to avenge and she used him and her daughter in the process. People with grudges will use you to do their dirty work. She had been waiting for an opportunity to kill this man. When the opportunity presented itself she used who ever she could to get her goal accomplished.

The daughter was so under the spell of the mother she didn't even question the mother's request to murder John. We have watch who we allow to have power over us to the point we are under their spell and we don't question what they are trying to do to us or how they are trying to use us for their stuff. While the text says the King was grieved he felt obligated to be a man of his word even in this wrong doing. It is interesting that his respect for John as a holy man and a wise man didn't persuade him not to kill him.

In the end God's plan to spread the gospel continues. Herodias in all of her evil couldn't stop the plan of God. We have to conclude at the end of the ball game that evil people with grudges can hurt us but they can't stop what God has planned for God's Kingdom.