

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 27TH-28TH, 2020 // BOOK OF MATTHEW

JOHN'S DEATH (MATTHEW 14:1-12) REMEMBER JESUS' FORERUNNER?

Way back in chapter 3 we talked about John the Baptist that prophesied about Jesus. We know from chapter 11 that John was arrested for opposing the governor, Herod Antipas.

- V1-2 is a flashback. Herod had a fear of John based on superstition. He felt guilt for the death of John and saw his "ghost" everywhere.

NOW WE LEARN HOW JOHN'S DEATH HAPPENED

John followed the pattern of most prophets in the OT. He confronted civil rulers and called them out on their immorality. In this case, it was Herod's adulterous relationship with his brother's wife. Because of this accountability, John was arrested.

- Herod would've killed John immediately, but he feared the backlash of the people.

THE DANGER OF EXCESS AND LUST

At his own party, Herod let his guard down by indulging in excess and sexual seduction. Herodias, Herod's wife and former sister-in-law, hated John without any fear of God or people, and she set the stage to have John killed.

- **There is a reason the Word tells us not to be materialistic, drunk, and to flee from lust. When our minds aren't sharp, we will fall.**

WE ALSO CARE TOO MUCH ABOUT POPULARITY

Not only was Herod drunk and lustful, he also cared too much about how people thought of him. While being seduced, he makes a promise to behead John and give it to his niece.

- Herod realizes that what he promised was wrong, but **he cared more about impressing people than doing what was right. Have we fallen into this trap?**

REPORTING BACK TO JESUS

After the execution, John's head was brought to Herodias and his body was taken by his disciples and properly buried. Then John's disciples reported back to Jesus.

- This sounds extreme, but **OpenDoors.com reports 11 people a day are martyred while the CSCG claims almost 246 a day.**

5,000 (MATTHEW 14:13-21)

"...HAD COMPASSION ON THEM"

Jesus wanted some alone time after the death of John, but the crowds followed Him. Instead of losing His cool, He saw how much they needed Him and He "healed their sick" and taught them the Good News.

- **People are exhausting and selfish, but this comes from a need to be saved, healed, and shepherded.**

WE ARE NOT JESUS

Though Christians are called to follow Christ, we must know our limitations. We are to be sacrificial, but God knows that if we don't have times of rest and solitude, we will implode.

- **Loving others must be done with wisdom and balance. We must make sure we are filled with the Spirit and rested or there is nothing to pour out for others.**

DON'T THESE PEOPLE NEED TO EAT?

As the people were listening to Jesus teach the gospel, the disciples interrupted and asked Jesus to tell them to go eat. Jesus responded with, "You give them something to eat."

- Jesus was setting up a lesson in discipleship training: **1. The gospel is top priority. 2. We must trust and respond to Jesus. 3. Disciples are servant leaders.**

5 LOAVES, AND 2 FISH

The disciples told Jesus they only had enough food for maybe 2 men. Jesus told them to "Bring them here to Me," then He told the crowds to sit and He blessed the food.

- Jews always thanked God for their food, but this blessing was more. **Jesus was showing that He would provide the needs for everyone that would listen to Him.**

15,000+ PEOPLE

So, Jesus miraculously multiplied the food to feed "five thousand men, besides women and children." This would've been around 15,000 "satisfied" people. And, there were leftovers.

- **It doesn't matter the size of the crowd, it matters if Jesus is present. If Jesus is present and the crowd is hungry, we will get more than we can ingest.**

TRULY YOU ARE (MATTHEW 14:22-33)

"IMMEDIATELY HE MADE THEM GET INTO THE BOAT"

Right after the feeding of the 5000, Jesus told the 12 to get into a boat and meet Him on the other side of the Sea of Galilee because He wanted some time to be alone.

- The Sea of Galilee was about 8 miles across and could get very turbulent. Matthew writes that they were "battered by the waves."

THE 12 DIDN'T HAVE MATURE FAITH YET

The disciples hadn't shown much faith with the feeding of the 5000, so Jesus was going to test them more.

- Around 3-6am when the storm was at its worst and the disciples were far from land, Jesus "came toward them walking on the sea." This "terrified" the disciples and they "cried out in fear."

"IT'S A GHOST!"

Fatigue, superstition, and a **lack of faith** caused the men to respond with **fear** when they saw Jesus walking on the water.

- Jesus is a compassionate teacher. He responded with 3 important statements: **1. "Have courage" 2. "It is I," and 3. "Don't be afraid." Our hard times need to be met with the same truths.**

PETER TAKES A STEP OF FAITH

Though Peter wasn't full of faith ("if it's You"), he at least had the guts to take a step out of the boat. Peter was impulsive and immature, but his faith would eventually transform him.

- When Peter walked on the water, his faith started to revert back because of the "strength of the wind" and he cried "Lord, save me!"

WE CAN ALL IDENTIFY WITH PETER

There are so many lessons in this passage. **We must have faith to take a step into the unknown, we must trust that God is in control even though it may not look like it, and we will all sink at times and we must call out for Christ to save us.**

- Peter encapsulates the Christian experience.

NOW, THEIR FAITH WAS MATURING

When the "wind ceased" and they reached shore, "those in the boat worshiped Him and said, 'Truly You are the Son of God.'"

- **Though doubt would cripple the disciples again, their faith had matured to the point that they would devote their lives to Christ and His mission.**

HEALED (MATTHEW 14:34-36)

"...CAME TO SHORE AT GENNESARET"

When Jesus and the 12 got to the territory of Gennesaret, the people quickly realized Who had come to town and the word spread.

- The people from that area brought all of their sick in hopes that they could just touch His garment (the tassels on His robe) and be healed.

THE POINT OF THIS SMALL DETAIL

The fact that Jesus rubbed shoulders with normal everyday people would have been appalling to the religious leaders of Jesus' day.

- **We are reminded again that Jesus will interact, eat with, grow in a relationship with, and save anyone who is willing to get to know Him.**

THE ENEMIES OF FAITH

- **Approval of man over God, fear, fatigue, distraction, materialism, control, and lust** will kill genuine faith in Jesus.
- If we give in to these temptations, we will hurt others and become stagnant, or possibly ambivalent, to our relationship with Jesus. **We will sink.**

3 THINGS WE MUST REMEMBER

- **Have courage:** Be strong and willing to face the challenges of life. We must want to do what is right.
- **Know the real Jesus:** We must know the biblical Christ and what He has done.
- **Don't be afraid:** When we learn Who Jesus is, we also learn who we are in Him. Fear leaves in the presence of God.

1 JOHN 4:16-18 (CSB)

It is a distance from pure love (God) that leads us into fear, hatred, and hopelessness.