

Overcoming an Upside Down World

Mark 6:14-29

I. Intro

- A. This is an evil story with evil characters.
- B. Mark this:
 - 1. when you stand for Biblical truth, it will cost you.
 - 2. When you compromise and fail to stand on Biblical truth, it will cost you more.
- C. The Characters in this story will remind us of this truth, but lets also be reminded that following Christ comes with eternal rewards.
- D. There will be no limit to our days in eternity, though our days in this physical world will be marked with trouble with glimpses of blessings along the way.

II. Text

- A. Characters:
 - 1. Herod:
 - a) The name itself signifies "heroic," a name not wholly applicable to the family, which was characterized by craft and knavery rather than by heroism. ISBD
 - b) This is Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great
 - c) He is a slimy politician of an individual, always coddling whichever side he needs to impress.
 - d) Herod was considered King of the Jewish people by Rome, but was still under the authority of Rome.
 - e) Hierarchy of rulers over the region:
 - (1) The Roman Empire: With Caesar as Emperor
 - (2) The Roman Provincial Governors: Pontius Pilate
 - (3) Client Kings and Tetrachs:
 - (a) Local rulers who were loyal to the empire of Rome
 - (b) These rulers were Romes way of keeping some semblance of local culture, while still being in control
 - i) Herod the great was ethnically Edomite and not Jewish, but practiced some Jewish culture
 - ii) This was good enough for Rome, but not for the people of Judea
 - (4) So, under Rome's authority, there were two separate rulers of the region overseeing different aspects of life to keep the peace:
 - (a) Pilate had power over life, death, and taxation
 - (b) Herod was to keep things culturally harmonious
 - (c) An uprising would have made both branches look bad before Caesar.
 - 2. Herodias
 - a) Herod Antipas and Herodias married in complete disregard of Jewish law, culture, and consequences.
 - b) Politicians at that time, seemed to not be keen on following the rules for themselves.
 - c) Herodias was the wife of Antipas's brother Phillip, and the daughter of his half brother Aristobulus. (So he married his sister in law and niece)
 - 3. John the Baptist
 - a) Jewish law forbade incest and adultery, and John called it out
 - b) Antipas put him in jail but did not immediately execute him do to the potential political fallout
 - c) But then, Herod Antipas, after a night of inebriation, made an oath and executed him.
 - d) John the Baptist was doing more than preaching "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." He was also pointing out the vile practices of those called on to lead.
 - 4. Jesus

- a) The works, signs, and wonders had caused people to think Jesus was John the Baptist raised from the dead.
- b) Keep in mind here:
 - (1) They expected a forerunner of messiah to show up and prepare the way.
 - (2) They were not shocked by the forerunners appearance or unique behavior
 - (3) The voice crying out in the wilderness was prophecy fulfilled, and they expected him to be like Elijah
 - (a) [Isa 40:3 ESV] 3 A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
 - (b) [Mal 3:1 ESV] 1 "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.
 - (4) They did not expect Jesus to overthrow roman rule from a spiritual aspect rather than a physical aspect.
 - (5) Their expectation of Messiah was a grand warrior coming to win a battle against Rome, He won in a more permanent way.

III. Point

A. We Will Overcome Evil

- 1. [Jhn 16:31-33 ESV] 31 Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? 32 Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. 33 I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."
- 2. You will overcome evil only through faith in Christ.
- 3. We are living in a fulfillment of Romans 1:
 - a) [Rom 1:32 ESV] 32 Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.
 - b) The celebration of sin, and the demand of approval of a chosen sin is rampant in our culture
- 4. It is important that we do not back down from truth, but also that we declare truth in an effective way.

B. The Upside Down World

- 1. [Act 17:4-7 ESV] 4 And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. 5 But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd. 6 And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, 7 and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus."
- 2. The disciples were not turning the world upside down, they were turning an upside down world right side up
- 3. When those in this world who embrace evil are confronted with truth, they might feel their world is being turned, but reality is it is a fallen world and hasn't been right since sin entered the world.

C. The Response of a Believer

- 1. [1Jo 2:1-6 ESV] 1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. 3 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his

- commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 5 but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: 6 whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.
2. KEEP ON WALKING IN TRUTH
 3. You will not keep this fallen world from making life difficult here, but you are not held by the power of the world.
 4. You are HELD and KEPT by the power of God, and that brings great peace.
 5. Make your impact in this world with the truth
 - a) But don't be a jerk
 - b) Let the truth do its work
 - c) Let it come from a motivation of restoration
 - d) Be right before God, and live right before men
 - e) Yelling TRUE statements from a motivation that desire to win an argument misses the point.
 6. Application:
 - a) The best man that ever lived other than Jesus, lost his head for speaking the truth.
 - b) Why do we expect everything to go our way and get frustrated with God when we have to wait a minute for a prayer to be answered.
 - c) Jesus is preparing his disciples for the cross being a way of life...
 7. Honor Jesus, Live for Truth, Grow in Faith, Show respect to people created in the image of God.

IV. Close

- A. Mark this:
 1. when you stand for Biblical truth, it will cost you.
 2. When you compromise and fail to stand on Biblical truth, it will cost you more.
- B. Eternity is only secure in Christ!

[Mar 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.