



5 Day Devotional

This five-day devotional will be taking a deeper dive into [the sermon from this weekend](#). Each day will explore key themes and questions that challenge us to reflect on whether we are disciples of the self or of the Savior.

Day 1

Mark 6:14-29

14 King Herod heard about it, because Jesus's name had become well known. Some[a] said, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that's why miraculous powers are at work in him." 15 But others said, "He's Elijah." Still others said, "He's a prophet, like one of the prophets from long ago."

16 When Herod heard of it, he said, "John, the one I beheaded, has been raised!"

17 For Herod himself had given orders to arrest John and to chain him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he had married her. 18 John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." 19 So Herodias held a grudge against him and wanted to kill him. But she could not, 20 because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing he was a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard him he would be very perplexed,[b] and yet he liked to listen to him.

21 An opportune time came on his birthday, when Herod gave a banquet for his nobles, military commanders, and the leading men of Galilee. 22 When Herodias's own daughter[c] came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I'll give it to you." 23 He promised her with an oath: "Whatever you ask me I will give you, up to half my kingdom."

*24 She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?"
"John the Baptist's head," she said.*

25 At once she hurried to the king and said, "I want you to give me John the Baptist's head on a platter immediately." 26 Although the king was deeply distressed, because of his oaths and the guests[d] he did not want to refuse her. 27 The king immediately sent for an executioner and commanded him to bring John's head. So he went and beheaded him in prison, 28 brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. 29 When John's disciples heard about it, they came and removed his corpse and placed it in a tomb.

As we begin this devotional, we are confronted with the stark contrast between two disciples: Herod, a disciple of the self, and John the Baptist, a disciple of the Savior. This passage highlights the grave consequences that arise from a life centered on selfishness, power, and image. Herod's choices illustrate how the pursuit of self can lead to a tragic downfall, while John's life exemplifies the beauty of commitment to God's calling, even unto death. The question posed to us today challenges our own lives—are we living with our own interests at heart, or are we truly following the path set by Jesus, marked by sacrifice and service? Reflecting on this can help us identify the idols that may be controlling our decisions and leading us away from God's true purpose for our lives.

- What areas of your life are you prioritizing over your commitment to Christ?
- In what ways can you shift from self-centeredness to a focus on service?
- How is your understanding of sacrifice being challenged through this passage?
- Pray for strength to let go of self-indulgent desires and commit to following Jesus wholeheartedly.
- Ask God to reveal any areas of your life where you are acting like Herod.

Notes:

Day 2

Mark 6:20

20 because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing he was a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard him he would be very perplexed,[b] and yet he liked to listen to him.

We learn that Herod was intrigued by John and enjoyed listening to him, but he never committed to the truth John shared. This is a powerful reminder of how one can be captivated by truth yet live in rebellion against it. The tension between admiration for what is right and the reluctance to commit to it is a struggle that many face daily. As we evaluate our own responses to God's teachings, let us consider how often we may admire the words of Jesus but fail to

apply them in our lives. This day invites us to not simply be hearers of the Word but doers, recognizing that true discipleship requires action and submission to Christ.

- Are there teachings of Jesus that you admire but struggle to apply?
- What convictions have you overlooked due to fear or pride?
- In which areas of your life do you need to move from listening to obedience?
- Pray for the courage to fully embrace and live out the teachings of Jesus.
- Seek God's guidance on areas of your life needing deeper submission to His will.

Notes:

Day 3

Mark 6:26-27

26 Although the king was deeply distressed, because of his oaths and the guests[d] he did not want to refuse her. 27 The king immediately sent for an executioner and commanded him to bring John's head. So he went and beheaded him in prison

The narrative reaches a tragic climax in verses 26 and 27, where Herod's fear of losing face leads to the execution of John the Baptist. This chilling account serves as a poignant reminder of what it means to prioritize image over integrity. When we focus on how we are perceived by others, we may make choices that contradict our values and cause harm to those around us. In contrast, John the Baptist's unwavering commitment to truth, even in the face of death, inspires us to live authentically. Are we willing to sacrifice our comfort for the sake of truth? This day challenges us to examine what we fear losing and whether it aligns with our call to follow Christ wherever He leads us.

- What fears hold you back from standing firmly for the truth?
- Have you ever compromised your values for the sake of others' opinions?
- How can you ensure that your commitment to Christ outweighs your concerns about appearance?
- Ask God to help you prioritize His truth over the approval of others.
- Pray for wisdom in areas where you struggle to speak the truth boldly.

Notes:

Day 4

Mark 6:18

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

John's confrontation with Herod serves as a bold reminder of the responsibility that comes with being a disciple of Christ. Instead of being silent or complacent, John proclaimed what was right in God's sight, regardless of the consequences. His willingness to speak truth to power exemplifies the role of a true disciple who sees beyond personal safety. Today's reflection encourages us to consider how we can speak out in our own spheres of influence. It prompts the questions of where God may be calling us to stand firm in our faith. Are we ready to proclaim the good news and address injustice, even when it's uncomfortable? Discipleship demands a voice that advocates for truth and compassion.

- Where is God asking you to stand firm in truth?
- Are there situations where you have been silent when you should speak up?
- How can you courageously embrace your role as a spokesperson for God in the world?
- Pray for the boldness to declare God's truth in your community.
- Ask God to open your eyes to injustices that need addressing and give you the courage to respond.

Notes:

Day 5

Mark 6:30-31

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all that they had done and taught.

31 He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a remote place and rest for a while." For many people were coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.

In the final moments of this narrative, we are reminded that amidst the chaos and suffering, Jesus provides rest and refreshment to His followers. After enduring the trials of being disciples, it is paramount to retreat and refocus our hearts on Jesus, the source of our strength and purpose. As we conclude this devotional, let's contemplate our own call to discipleship. What

could it look like to place our burdens at the feet of Jesus and allow Him to renew our spirits?
This new week, may we recommit ourselves to following the Savior with hearts wide open to His leading and grace.

- What burdens do you need to lay at Jesus' feet today?
- How can you intentionally seek rest in Christ amidst your responsibilities?
- What steps will you take this week to deepen your commitment to discipleship?
- Pray for a fresh outpouring of Jesus' grace in your life.
- Ask God to provide moments of rest and renewal as you seek to follow Him faithfully.

Notes:
