

# Mark 6:14-29

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[ 0 : 00 ] Turn with me to Mark chapter 6. As most of you know, we have been studying through Mark's Gospel, and we've already seen some really, really remarkable things! surrounding the life of Jesus Christ.

And he's been traveling, for the most part, in and around a village called Capernaum. It's a fishing village on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. We've seen him casting out demons, he's healed sick, he's performed all kinds of miracles.

And we learned last week that he sent his disciples out in pairs. So word of Jesus has been spreading very quickly all over this region. Between Jesus and his closest followers, they've been shaking things up in the area, and word's begun to spread all over Galilee, and indeed, even to the local Roman government officials, as we see in this passage, a man named Herod.

And this is where we find ourselves in Mark chapter 6, verse 14. And I have to warn you before we jump into this passage, this is not a light-hearted passage.

Some of you have already mentioned this to me yesterday at the picnic, and you mentioned how you're excited to see how we're going to actually go through this passage.

[ 1 : 17 ] It's not an easy passage by any means. There's a lot of feel-good passages in God's Word, and this is not one of those. There's a lot of passages that we like to quote.

We like to put them around our homes for good reasons. We like to post them on Twitter. This one, however, is not likely to go on your Facebook status anytime soon. So what we're about to read is one of the most gruesome displays of human depravity that we find in the New Testament.

So if you're ready, if your stomach is ready, read along with me, starting in verse 14.

And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death, but she could not.

For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe.

When he heard of him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.

[ 2 : 51 ] But an opportunity came when Herod, on his birthday, gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. For when Herodias' 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. And he vowed to her, Whatever you ask me, I will give to you, up to half of my kingdom.

And she went and said to her mother, For what should I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she immediately came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on the platter.

And the king was exceedingly sorry. But because of his oath and his guests, he did not want to break his word to her. And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head.

And he went and beheaded him in the prison. And brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl. And the girl gave it to her mother. And the disciples heard of it.

[ 4 : 02 ] They came and took his body and laid it in a tomb. How's that for a happy ending?

For a good, light-hearted Sunday morning passage? I wish I could say there was more to this passage. But there really isn't. And Nathan told me to stop there.

So I had to stop there. In reality, I kind of feel like I should be preaching a funeral right now. Rather than a Sunday morning sermon. This is really the biblical version of Braveheart.

Instead of William Wallace, it's John the Baptizer. Instead of Longshanks, it's Herod Antipas. And instead of paving the way for Scotland's freedom, it's John the Baptizer paving the way for Christ, who would bring freedom from our sins.

Most of us know a good deal about John the Baptist. He was essentially sent by God as a forerunner to Jesus. He was born miraculously against all odds to an aging couple named Zachariah and Elizabeth, who was the cousin of Mary, mother of Jesus.

[ 5 : 12 ] One of the interesting things about John the Baptizer is that he's included in many of the Messianic prophecies that we see in the Old Testament. He was the one who was coming to prepare the way. Someone who was coming and preaching in the wilderness.

And indeed, that's what he did. He's described as a man who wore strange clothing. He wore skins, and he looked much like an Old Testament prophet. He ate locusts, amongst other strange things. And people thought he was a little bit different. People thought that there was something a little bit strange about John. In the words of Christian rock legend DC Talk, they have a verse in one of their most popular songs that many of you have probably heard.

In their verse, it says, With skins on his back and hair on his face, they thought he was crazed by a locust T8. You see, the Pharisees tripped when they heard him speak until the king took the head of this Jesus freak.

Wes, if we could do that. Where's Wes? If we can do that as a closing song today, that would be perfect. His primary ministry centered around the Jordan River, where he baptized followers and prophesied about the coming Messiah.

[ 6 : 21 ] He was in an important, integral role of what Jesus did. And as strange as he may have been to the people in that day, what possibly made him the most unique was that he had the privilege of baptizing the Son of God.

No one else can hold claim to that, except for John the baptizer. And Jesus also spoke well of him, saying, Among those born of women, there is not risen anyone greater than John the baptizer. And this in and of itself should be enough for us to pay attention to this man's life. By the way, I made the distinction between Baptist and baptizer because there's some apparent confusion in some circles that John was the first Southern Baptist.

If you study Baptist history, you see that Baptists don't come until well after the Reformation. I know people, including people who are related to me, that I won't mention their name because this is going on the internet at some point.

But they believe that John the Baptist was the first Baptist. And he was the first baptizer. But in our context today, Baptist means many different things, including the title of the convention to which we as a faith family belong.

[ 7 : 35 ] But just to be clear, John's no more a forerunner to our denomination than Paul, or any of the apostles, or than Jesus himself. But he did play an important role in preparing the way for Jesus, the coming Messiah.

And we, as a church, and as a denomination, still baptize in the way that he baptized, which is through immersion. We hold that to be very important here in this faith family.

We see a stark contrast, however, in the other important man in this passage, named Herod. We should not confuse him with his father, who is Herod the Great, who was responsible for the deaths of thousands of firstborns around the time Jesus was born.

See, his father was trying to quell any type of prophecy that could have come true in his time. So he killed off many firstborns. This is Herod the Great's son, known as Herod Antipas.

And when Herod the Great died, his kingdom was divided into four different parts. And Herod Antipas was ruler of the Galilee region. He therefore wasn't technically a king. He was a tetrarch, which literally means the ruler of a fourth part.

[ 8 : 43 ] But although he wasn't a king, he still made his followers call him king. This is the kind of person he was. And he was actually banished in 39 AD for asking or requesting of Rome that he be made a king.

So this is the type of egocentrism that surrounds Herod's life. Jesus, in contrast to what he says about John, summed up the character of Herod Antipas by once calling him a fox in Luke 13, 32. So Herod decides to take on a wife named Herodias. It's important to note here that Herodias was Herod's half-brother's daughter. She was also, to complicate the family tree even further, she was also married to one of Herod's brothers, divorced Herod's brother, in order to become Herod's wife. So Herodias relates to him as niece, as sister-in-law, and as wife. In the Jewish culture, that didn't bode very well. It wasn't a good thing for that type of thing to happen.

In fact, it was forbidden by the law. And so straight shooting John, preaching the gospel of righteousness and the gospel of repentance, tells them only what he finds in his own law, in his own truth text.

[10:05] And he tells them, in verse 18, it's not lawful for a man to marry his brother's wife. And that John, he was just so close-minded, wasn't he?

Isn't that what people tell us when we hold to our truth text? I'm surprised that people are surprised that we want to hold to our truth document. And that was certainly the attitude of this royal couple who decided to get married against what John was teaching them and preaching to them.

And this, for very personal reasons, Herodias nursed a grudge against John. She wanted to have him killed, but she couldn't because there was something about John and something interesting happened.

When John was arrested and was in the depths of the dungeon, Herod began to form a relationship with John. It's interesting. I believe this text really indicates to us that Herod and John were actually fairly close.

I don't know how much they interacted, but we see that they interacted some. We see that Herod favored John in some way. And so, in verse 20, it says, when he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.

[11:23] And it's safe to say that John was a pretty direct person. He didn't beat around the bush. He told the gospel truth as it was. He was direct and to the point. It didn't matter who it was. It didn't matter who he was teaching to.

It didn't matter how much it offended them. He was going to say it. And it says, he feared John. Why would a man like Herod Antipas, a man who esteems himself as king, though he isn't, and wants all his followers to call him king, he's an egocentric type of person, and why would he, Herod, be afraid of a man like John the Baptist?

And I think that it has something to do with John's righteousness. In other words, when you're living in a state of unrighteousness and you encounter a righteous character, there's something intimidating about that.

And Herod distinctively recognized John's moral excellence. And so Herod is perplexed because he's uncomfortable in his fear. Yet Herod somehow is drawn into John's character.

And I think it's because something about righteous character does one of two things with those who practice unrighteousness. Either one, they hate them. They turn away from them in bitterness and hatred and rejection of that person.

[12:43] We see this in Herodias in this passage. Or, they have a sort of reverent respect for the person. This is what we see in Herod Antipas. Herod feared John because he recognized something in him.

He recognized justice and righteousness and holiness. And he admired a man in whom he saw those things. He listened to John. He continued to listen to him preach gladly.

But the ultimate problem with Herod was that while he feared John, he never quite looked to John's master. He never quite saw Christ in him.

He never quite saw God in the person of John the Baptist. And John was a man who was preaching Christ as Messiah and a message of repentance. But there was no repentance in Herod's heart. He was under the dreadful sway of sin. And his heart was hardened by his own lust for power, for wealth, and for all things of this world. This is the same man who would later mock the Savior as he stood trial before him.

[13:53] I want you to see the contrast between these two men in this passage. One, revered by Jesus, preaching repentance. He was a little strange. Yes, indeed. He was very strange.

But he was unashamed by the message that God called him to preach. His very character shouts righteousness. It proclaims truth. He looked different than the world because he understood that this world was not his home.

He's the picture of what God desires is to be radically different than the culture. Not for his own sake, but to glorify God with his life. Was John perfect?

There's no way. He was still human. But his mistakes are certainly not highlighted in Scripture. On the other hand, we have a man who is a picture of the prodigal.

a man who lived his life lavishly, squandering away his life for the sake of no one but himself. He was a man who slew a preacher whom he respected.

[ 14 : 59 ] And ultimately, he lost his power only to go down in history, known mostly for his infamy and not for anything good. He was a picture of human depravity.

And he's only part of the picture of human depravity in this text. Because there's a woman here and her name is Herodias. And if there was ever a black widow, she was it.

She is the woman your mom warned you about. Okay? You would do well to stay away from this type of woman. She is conniving.

She's cruel. She's the epitome of evil. And she harbored hatred for John. Not just a little kind of heartbreaking type of hatred. It was horrible hatred that leads and just ate her up on the inside. And she had been waiting for a moment that she could kill John the Baptist or see him killed. And so this is what's happening in this text. Herod's party is advancing on into the evening.

[ 15 : 59 ] And it wasn't uncommon for people to be drinking heavily during these types of parties. He's invited all the important people and all of Galilee are here. His military leaders are here.

All kinds of people are in this group, this party that he's got going on, this feast. And the party's advancing on. They're probably getting a little bit inebriated.

And the text says, For when Herodias' daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests. This, by the way, was a type of entertainment that was set aside for harlots and prostitutes. It was unheard of for someone of Herodias' daughter's stature and place in life to do this type of dance. And I think it's safe to say this dance was sensual.

There was something sinful about this dance. And so Herodias sends her young daughter in to dance in front of many men.

[ 17 : 03 ] We don't know how many are there, but many men who are possibly intoxicated to watch her do a sensual dance. So this whole thing, this whole scenario is conceived by sin.

And this is exactly why Herod liked it. It was an unusual thing. It was unusual to see someone of nobility dancing in this way. And his guests were pleased as well.

And Herod falls right into the trap. And he offers her anything in this kingdom, up to half of the kingdom. And so she goes away, the daughter goes away, leaving everybody else to guess what she might ask for.

This is a generous offer, by the way. This is an offer that any of the people in that room would have loved to have received. And so they're all wondering what in the world is going to happen.

What in the world is she going to ask for? She goes away, and in verse 24 she asks her mother, for what should I ask? And she said, the head of John the Baptist.

[ 18 : 07 ] And she came in immediately with haste, immediately with haste, to the king and asked saying, I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist.

And in her own little evil conniving way, on a platter. mother, like daughter.

We find suddenly that Herod is sober. He didn't want this to happen. He didn't want this to be her request. And he is truly distressed here in this passage. I believe the text indicates that.

In verse 26 he says that the king was exceedingly sorry. The language here indicates a very deep sorrow. This word *perilupos* in the Greek means surrounded by sorrow.

And it's only used a handful of times in the New Testament. One being when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane about to face an arrest that would ultimately lead to his death. A time when Jesus would sweat droplets of blood.

[ 19 : 15 ] He was under such distress. Same word used there in the Garden of Gethsemane as it is here in our text this morning. And so I have no doubt that Herod was indeed sorrowful.

But what was he going to do? What would his friends think if they were to go back to their areas of nobility and tell everyone in all the land that Herod is a man that goes back on his promises?

And so Herod began to fall into the temptation of being afraid of man. The problem was really that Herod had no backbone. He was the ruler of that land. He may not have been a king, but he was the ruler of that land.

And anything that he said goes, and he could have told her anything that he wanted to, including what probably all of us in here are thinking, and what maybe most of us would have told her, being people of God's word and people who are redeemed, that girl, that is sick.

you shouldn't be asking for stuff like that. Young girls are supposed to like dresses and closets full of shoes or wardrobes full of clothes or jewelry.

[ 20 : 25 ] She asked for the head of John the Baptist, but Herod buckles under the pressure and he gives the order to do the unthinkable.

And I want you to see something here that is pathetic and astounding at the same time. Because Herod's conscience has kind of become to be awakened in a sense through the person of John the Baptist.

He had had his eyes open or begun to have his eyes open to righteousness or at least begun to respect righteous character. He may have even begun to consider some of his own depravity. There was a little life and then it was all crushed because he was afraid of what people might think about him. You know there are a lot of people today that do just the same thing. How many people do you know that have had their eyes open to eternal things? Maybe through something that you shared with them? Maybe through something that another believer shared with them? Or maybe they came across a Bible passage and they began to understand something about their condition of their heart.

[ 21 : 31 ] They began to understand something about the sin and the debt that they owe to God because of this sin. They become aware that they have a deep-seated problem with sin and maybe they learned something about the atonement.

They began to think about it and then it became known to their friends that they were thinking on these topics and on these issues. And then there was a little smirk. Or maybe there was a little sneer.

Or, you a Christian? No way. I want to have all hope crushed from beginning to think about it and then for them to turn away, to never return again to that thought process simply because they're concerned about what other people think about them.

If you don't know anybody like this, then you can just think about our politicians today. Over the past 20 to 30 years. This is as if they can't make a decision on their own without taking a poll or without asking or trying to figure out if somebody's going to be offended by their stance.

And so you see politicians who are going against their biblical faith. Because they don't want to take a stance for a biblical marriage. Or they don't want to take a stance that might lead their polls to drop.

[ 22 : 49 ] If people or will the people elect me if I take a stance on this issue? Will my party agree with me if I don't agree with everything that they hold to you?

And this tragic mentality has worked its way into the Christian life as well where born again believers don't truly live for God. They live for fear of what man might say to them.

And little by little they begin to look more and more like the world and less and less like the redeemed. They begin to look more like Herod and less like John the Baptizer.

And this is what happens when we fear people over our great sovereign creator God. And in my counseling experience one of the greatest struggles I see people facing is this very issue that we're talking about here.

Where we think too much of man and too little of God. God being the greatest being in the universe and everything, literally everything in the universe having been created for His glory, to glorify Him.

[ 23 : 56 ] We know this from Colossians 1 16, all things have been created through Him and for Him. He deserves the affections of our hearts, but in our minds, in our hearts, we often get it backwards and we tip the scales the wrong way.

And God becomes less than man and we fear man over God. Instead of God being the center of our affection, the desire of our hearts, instead of us being focused on what other people think about us.

And well-meaning believers, whether they realize it or not, are concerning themselves more with what people think about them than what God thinks about them. And this mentality, by the way, is everywhere in our society.

You see it in our public school systems where principals and teachers will say things like, you know, we just really like to focus on high positive self-esteem. this might come as a surprise to some of us in here, but self-esteem is an unbiblical concept.

Scripture teaches us to humble ourselves before the Lord, not to esteem ourselves. In 1 Peter 5, 6 and James 4, 10, I could give you some more references, but I think two should suffice for this morning.

[ 25 : 10 ] There's more places that talk about humbling ourselves in Scripture. Scripture teaches us that there's nothing good about us apart from Christ. What Scripture does teach is that our hearts are wicked.

Our righteous acts are as filthy rags before a holy God. According to Isaiah 64, Romans 3, 12 says, no one does good, not even one.

There's absolutely nothing esteemable about us because of our sin condition. So Kyle, are you saying that we should all walk around with low self-esteem?

Absolutely not. On the contrary, I'm saying that we shouldn't esteem ourselves at all. This low self-esteem is still focused on the self and still glorifying man in the self.

And when you get this concept, it'll blow your mind because what happens is when we put God as preeminent in our lives and in our hearts, when we concern ourselves about Him and His thoughts and His desires, how we esteem ourselves becomes a non-issue.

[ 26 : 17 ] It doesn't matter if we have low self-esteem or high self-esteem, we esteem Christ and Christ alone. So self-esteem, no matter high or low, it no longer matters.

Whether other people think about you, it no longer matters. Whether you were invited to the party or not, it no longer matters. Whether people make jeering statements or hiss or make smart remarks about your faith, it no longer matters.

matters. Because the only thing that matters is that Jesus paid it all on the cross for your sins. So that we may be righteous in Him. Not of anything that we can boast about in and of ourselves.

But if we are to boast, it's to boast in the sacrifice that He paid. That we are righteous only because of Him. And that our lives may shout His glory and His praise.

Proverbs puts it best. The fear of man lays a snare. It entraps us. But whoever trusts the Lord is safe.

[ 27 : 23 ] Proverbs 29, 25. And that is just it. If we fear man, we live in the self-entrapment and the self-deception of conceitedly thinking that we are somehow important.

And we're not. But Christ in us is important. And when we place our trust in Him and His goodness and we lean on His righteousness, our identity is no longer wrapped up in this world.

Our identity is now wrapped up in Christ. And we experience freedom from this world. It's a freedom, by the way, that Herod Antipas would never know.

I don't know if Herod slept well that night. I don't know if he could have slept well that night. Maybe he did, maybe he didn't. I wouldn't have been able to sleep well that night if I had done what he did.

I don't know if John ever crossed his mind after this time. I think probably he did. I think probably John's memory slowly faded from Herod.

[ 28 : 30 ] And he probably eventually thought, well, what was the big deal about John anyways and all of his preaching and all of his righteousness? Meanwhile, word of Jesus is being spread all over Galilee.

Great miracles have taken place. Things are being moved and shaken up a bit in the land. He's commissioned his apostles on a missionary journey. And people are being healed.

And word of Jesus is beginning to creep inside the palace walls. This is where we get to in verse 14 through 16, which introduce our passage. And it tells us what happens.

In verse 14, Herod, heard of it for Jesus' name, had become known. Some said, John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. And that's why these miraculous powers are at work in him.

But others said, he is Elijah. And others said, he is a prophet like one of the prophets of old. But when Herod heard of it, he said, John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.

[ 29 : 28 ] This language is so graphic here that this I and this passage should stand out to us. John, the man I beheaded, I did this.

It's on me. And suddenly he remembers his evil deed as though he had buried it away and it had risen back up into his mind when he hears about Jesus.

Even though this was not the man, Jesus was not the man that he beheaded. His conscience is bringing it back to light in his mind. And you may have experienced something similar to this, where maybe possibly you did something atrocious, committed an atrocious act or a sin, possibly even before you became a believer in Jesus Christ and something happens in your life.

You thought that you had buried it away, you had buried it deep in the depths of your heart and you thought that it was over and you didn't have to think about that anymore, but then suddenly something happens in your life, an event takes place, maybe you heard a sermon, maybe you had a friend in your life that had something similar happen to them, and something all of a sudden begins to come up and you remember this deed that you did in the past.

And these things happen to us because God gives us, he has built into us a conscience to know whether we've done right or wrong. And when these things happen, it's God's way of leading us to repentance.

[ 30 : 48 ] And so if you have dealt with sin, then you're going to have these feelings rise up from time to time until we deal with these things. And this is what's going on in Herod's heart right now. He's feeling a bit guilty because of what he's done in the past.

He hears of the miracles and the righteousness of Jesus and falsely assumes that it must be John the baptizer raised from the dead. And it shouldn't come to surprise us that Herod believes that people could be raised from the dead because he was not a regenerate believer.

He was certainly not repentant. He likely had little contact with his righteousness people and he had no idea how to deal with this thing that was going on in his heart. This conviction that was going on in his heart.

And it was tearing him up on the inside. And the reality is that Herod needed a new heart. That only comes through the gospel of Christ and the regenerate heart of a believer.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed and the new has come.

And so we understand his regeneration and it helps us to understand our sin for what it really is and it helps us to turn away from that sin and to run toward righteousness.

[ 32 : 06 ] But for Herod, it was not so. He had little understanding of what his depravity meant. And this is demonstrated no greater than in the last New Testament recording of Herod Antipas in Luke 23.

Starting in verse 8, it says, when Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad. By the way, this is when Jesus is going before Herod in trial. He's already gone to see Pontius Pilate, Pontius Pilate, sends him back to Herod, finds out Herod's in this region.

So he goes and finds out that he's from Galilee and sends him on to Herod. So Herod's glad of this happening for he had long desired to see him. Of course he did. He thinks this might be the man he murdered, the man he beheaded.

He thought this man, he'd heard of his miracles and his signs and his wonders and of course he thought that he wanted to see him because he had heard about him and he was hoping to see some sign done by him.

Herod was looking for some sort of spiritual pleasure in this meeting with Jesus, maybe something of a magic show, so to speak. That's probably how he was viewing it at least. Verse 9, so he questioned him at some length but he, Jesus, made no answer.

[ 33 : 23 ] The chief priest and the scribe stood by vehemently accusing him and Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then arraying him with splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate.

You see, Herod was looking for some sort of spiritual entertainment. He was hoping to see some sort of sign in Jesus, but there is no repentance here. In fact, Herod remained in front of the Son of God perfectly dead in his heart.

Here, Herod stands before God himself, righteousness incarnate, absolute perfection, and there is nothing, there is nothing going on in his heart that day.

And what might be even more terrifying, even more bone-chilling, is that Christ sees nothing in him. He won't even reply to him.

The Son of God standing before Herod has nothing to say to him. He is spiritually dead before the Son of God, and it is a tragic day. God tells us in Ezekiel 33, as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.

[ 34 : 43 ] There is no rejoicing going on in heaven in that moment. You see, it's possible for someone to stand before the Son of God, and for nothing to happen in their hearts.

And I think the primary message in our text today is twofold. Kind of two primary messages going on here. First is for non-believers, and we know that you're here. We know that you're among us. In a room this size, there are non-believers here. If Jesus has been moving in your heart, whether a friend has shared something with you recently, whether you've heard something through a sermon recently, or maybe you've been flipping through Scripture at some point recently, but maybe you've come to see that there's a sin problem in your life.

There's a gap between you and God. And you've come to see that Christ is the answer to that sin problem, as the perfect Son of God, a sinless human sacrifice, the only sacrifice, by the way, that can atone for your sins.

The application for you this morning is to repent, to turn away from your sin, and to run towards righteousness. He's already completed the work.

[ 35 : 55 ] Christ has already done it. He's completed it. It is finished. All you have to do is to repent and to turn away from your sin and believe. There's a stark message for believers this morning as well.

I feel like I need to remind you in a sense this morning that you're recipients of the greatest blessing known to man. You're recipients of this blessing.

And God didn't intend for that to be kept secret. Go proclaim Him to the nations. Go live as the redeemed should live which means that we go out and we proclaim this message.

We go out from these walls and we proclaim Him to the nations. Do you think that John the baptizer would have made an impact if he was afraid of what other people thought about him? No, he wouldn't have. He boldly taught truth.

He boldly preached the gospel. He wasn't afraid of who it was or how he might offend them. Are we going to be ridiculed for our faith?

[ 36 : 59 ] Yes, we will. If we're doing what we're called to do, we're going to be ridiculed. Are you going to be rejected? Yes, you're going to be rejected. Are people going to hate you because of the message that you teach?

Yes, people will hate you. Jesus said in no uncertain terms, you'll be hated by all for my name's sake, but the one who endures to the end will be saved.

We should not be surprised when there are haters and mockers. What should surprise us is if we're not experiencing any sort of persecution or any sort of resistance at all because it probably means we're not doing a lot for the kingdom.

And so we press on through the hate and through the persecution because there are some who will believe. And so it's time for us as we walk away from this building this morning, it's time for us to go be the church, to be great commission believers, and to go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

You see, there's a reason why we call it the great commission and not the great suggestion. It's not a suggestion for us. It is a commission. Christ has commissioned us all as believers to go and preach the gospel and to make disciples.

[ 38 : 19 ] Let's go be the church. You see, we have to make a decision this morning whether we're going to be individuals and whether we're going to be a church who either sits on the sidelines or whether we're going to be part of God's redemptive history and to go out and proclaim him to the world.

So my hope is that as you walk out of this building this morning, that you have someone on your heart, at least one, maybe many, but at least one person on your heart that you want to begin to pray for and to begin to boldly teach the gospel.

And my prayer for you is that as the Spirit leads you, that you will go and preach gospel truth boldly into their lives this week and next week and for the rest of your life as you go out and live out the gospel.

That's what John did. John has an excellent example of someone who preaches boldly in our lives. Let's go and preach gospel truth boldly into North Georgia and to the ends of the earth. Let's pray together.