

- 1) What we are about to read is what we might call an interlude.
- 2) As you may recall, last time, we finished with Jesus sending out his disciples by twos to preach and heal.
- 3) Mark relays an incident that is triggered by what King Herod thinks when he hears of the success of Jesus and the disciples.

Mark 6:14-29 (NIV)

- 1) This is a record of a guilty conscience.
- 2) This is Herod Antipas – Jewish ruler whose father Herod the Great had tried to kill Jesus at birth.
 - a) Herod the Great died in 4 AD and Herod Antipas inherited part of his father’s kingdom after the Roman emperor Augustus adjusted his father’s will.
 - b) Of course, this was Galilee, a minor principality in the Roman Empire, in northern Palestine, and Peraea, east of the Jordan River and Dead Sea.
 - c) He ruled throughout Jesus of Nazareth’s ministry.
 - d) In Luke (13:32), Jesus is reported as having referred to him with contempt as “that fox.”
- 3) Herod heard about Jesus and the disciples and the impact they were having. That is the “this of verse 1.

12 They went out and preached that people should repent. 13 They drove out many demons, anointed many sick people with oil, and healed them.

- 4) Herod was convinced that John the Baptist whom he feared and had beheaded had come back to life and was the one doing all this.
- 5) One thing that jumped out to me here that I had not really noticed before was that John had a bit of a political side.
- 6) When you think of John’s roll in heralding the arrival of the Messiah, you think of him as this isolated, almost wild man, out in the desolate places of the country.
- 7) In that context, we would assume he had a single message.
- 8) However, I think we tend to forget that despite this image, there was still a man that needed to eat, sleep, and function as an otherwise normal human being.
- 9) This probably meant that he was exposed to the culture by being around others and therefore, knew of the goings on in the country.
- 10) Obviously, he did in this case because he knew of the situation with Herod and Herod’s wife enough to call them out (we assume publicly) on their sin.
- 11) It is easy to see that Herodias had a large influence over Herod because, she was the reason John was arrested.

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- 12) It should be noted here that in those times, a king had the power to arrest anyone for any reason. In fact, for no reason at all.
- 13) At any rate, we know the story of how Herod basically falls victim to his lust as his step daughter Salome danced for him and his guests.
- 14) Then evil and hate take over and Herod is forced, because of the rash promise he made, to behead John.
- 15) It doesn't take much to see why Herod, because of his guilty conscience, would think that it was John raised from the dead.
- 16) One might ask at this point, why did Mark insert this account here?
- 17) I think perhaps it was because this is a clear indication of how people saw Jesus at this time.
- 18) They were more willing to believe virtually any thing that could explain Him (His message and power) other than face the fact that He was the Son of God and the Messiah.
 - a) Prophet like prophets of old. (400 years since the last true prophet)
 - b) Elijah returned to earth.
 - c) John the Baptist raised from the dead despite his severed and missing head.

Why were they unwilling to accept Jesus for what He was?

Why are people unwilling to accept Him for what He is today?

Mark 6:30-32 (NIV)

- 1) As is the case in many of Mark's narratives, he leaves out much of the detail but clearly makes the point required.
- 2) We must assume I think quite naturally, that the disciples did not all come back at the exact same time.
- 3) Most likely, the pairs returned several days apart.
- 4) I personally think the idea here is that as each pair of disciples returned, they excitedly told Jesus about their mission and all that had happened.
- 5) This was probably an ongoing conversation that was held as each pair returned
- 6) Obviously, they would not only want to share with Jesus but also the other disciples all that they were able to see and accomplish while on their individual missions.
- 7) However, once they were all back, and things were back to the press of everyday ministry, Jesus sees the need for them to have some special time away from all that and get some rest.
- 8) LABC comments:

“Capernaum had never proven to be a place where Jesus and his disciples could find solitude. Indeed, so many people were coming and going that Jesus and the disciples did not even have time to eat. Jesus knew that his disciples were weary from their

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trip, so he kindly suggested that they all go away to a deserted place and rest a while. The disciples needed to be away from crowds and busy distractions in order to rest and regain their strength. Doing God's work is very important, but Jesus recognized that to do it effectively we need periodic rest and renewal. Jesus and his disciples, however, did not always find it easy to get the rest they needed. But they certainly wouldn't find it in Capernaum.”

- 9) Though Jesus and the disciples could possibly have walked from Capernaum to their chosen place of rest crowds would probably have continued to press them and follow them.
- 10) Taking the boat would have been more restful and they thought prevent the crowd from following – rest is the objective.
- 11) As we will see shortly, this is not going to be the case.

How does the need for rest and renewal apply to us in our Christian walk? – or does it? (do we do enough to need rest?)

Mark 6:33-34 (NIV)

- 1) The intension was to go away for some rest – that obviously did not happen.
- 2) Instead, Jesus “reads the crowd” and cannot refuse to help them.
 - a) The expression “reading the crowd” is used by Disc Jockeys to mean looking at the crowd, picking up on what they want musically and giving it to them so they can have a good time.
 - b) Another idiom of today is “reading the room”. It is a sales jargon that means to be or become aware of the opinions and attitudes of a group of people that you are talking to.
- 3) When Jesus reads this crowd, He sees something very much different.
- 4) Mark says “they were like sheep without a shepherd”.
- 5) Jesus was neither trying to entertain these people or sell them anything.
- 6) Instead, He was moved with compassion for them because He saw in many of them the need for God as a guide in their lives.
- 7) I think it is interesting here that Mark makes a point of Jesus’ compassion being on the fact that needed his teaching – not just healing or demon removals.
- 8) Obviously, this is not to say that he did not heal during this time only that that is not the emphasis.
- 9) One commentary said “the people needed a true Shepherd who could teach them what they needed to know and keep them from straying from God”.
- 10) This was something they were not getting from the religious establishment of the time.
- 11) The only way to help them – to give them what they needed – was to “teach them many things”

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12) Obviously, many things here would mean the good news and how they were to live because of that good news.

What are the reasons we come to church each Sunday?

Most important?

Least important?