

Herod

by Edwin Fesche

The sermon highlights the importance of repentance and faith in responding to God's truth, using the example of King Herod's rejection of Christ.

Duration: 10:11

Scripture: Judges 16:4-21, Matthew 2:16, Matthew 14:4, Mark 1:15, Luke 13:31-32, John 3:3, Acts 16:31, Romans 6:16

Topics: "Herod"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of our actions leading up to making important decisions. He urges the listeners to reflect on their past actions and allow the word of God to guide them towards righteousness. The main command is to repent and believe in the gospel, specifically in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. The preacher uses the example of King Herod, who initially heard the word of God but succumbed to his lusts and made the decision to marry his brother's wife. This decision ultimately led to the beheading of John the Baptist, who had boldly confronted Herod about the unlawfulness of his actions. The sermon highlights the power of the word of God as a catalyst for revealing the true intentions of the human heart.

Transcript

We'll read in St. Matthew's Gospel, and Herod, with his men of war, set Christ at nought. It is this particular King Herod that I wish to speak to you about this morning, for there are many lessons that come out of his life that might have their application in you that is listening. We notice that the Word of God is something like a catalyst.

It steps up and brings out the actions of the human heart. For instance, you have a bottle of peroxide that was very active a year ago, but now you have used it and found it as inert as water. Something has happened over the twelve months to that chemical.

Whereas you could buy a fresh bottle of the same peroxide and put an ordinary penny in it, and what has taken ordinarily a year to take place could be stepped up and transpire in two minutes. So would the human heart. You may not know the antagonism that resides there against God's truth until you are brought into contact with God's truth.

Then the action of the heart is stepped up. It acts as a catalyst. We find this to be true in the case of King Herod.

The first opportunity that Herod had of hearing the Word of God was through the lips of John the Baptist. And we read that he heard him gladly and did many things. But Herod had not pondered in his heart, like the Virgin Mary, the things which he was hearing.

He had not considered deeply the pros and the cons. He was just emotionally stirred and led to momentary action. But when the real test came, and he found it was to be a decision between his own lusts and obedience to the Word of God, we find that his lusts became the master.

And so he pounced upon his brother's wife and had the audacity and the suntury to marry her. This immediately brought the preacher again on the scene. And John the Baptist, bold though defenseless, went before that king and said, and he had the authority of God's Word behind him, it is not lawful for you to have her.

This immediately brought a tightened lip from that ambitious woman. She clenched her fist and became the prime actor behind the scenes. Although ostensibly Herod was the one to give the orders.

John is immediately thrown into prison. I'm wondering how many preachers today have the boldness that we find evinced in John the Baptist. He did not care which side his bread was buttered.

Truth was at stake and he was going to stand by his guns. And there he is left to rot in an eastern prison. All the time this ambitious woman is scheming and waiting for her day of delightful revenge.

The next we notice King Herod having a party. Not an unusual thing for men of this world. And often we can discover the character, the type of the individual by the guests that he chooses.

We can be quite sure that Herod in this instance chose the cronies that would in turn re-invite him and perhaps advance his political schemes. At any rate it was a grand gala affair. And the climax of the party was when his stepdaughter came forward and danced probably in a very voluptuous manner.

There was a string of applause and King Herod in order to show his appreciation offered this girl all that was in the power of his hand to give. Immediately the girl went to her mother and the request was give me the head of John Baptist. And we read of the Baptist being beheaded and his head brought before that party.

Here we find then that King Herod who had heard the word of God hadn't the stamina, the courage and the conscience sustained by it and has come under the power of one whom he has yielded his passions to. Watch out my friends. Just like Samson who said she pleases me well found himself in the lap of Delilah eventually and completely under her control.

We may think that we are the master of our fate that we are giving vent to our passions and are the master of the situation but we will soon find ourselves in very deed and fact the slave of sin. A little later Herod hears that Christ with his disciples has entered his domains and immediately sends a delegation almost to pick Christ up on a vagrancy charge. And he commands this group to command Christ out of his domains otherwise he will apprehend him.

And we find Christ saying go tell that fox Herod and so on. The only time our Lord ever had an aspersion against an individual was in this case. He always with the utmost respect and courtesy treated all men sinners and disciples alike.

But here he gives the appellation fox to King Herod. Here's a man that is using machinations. Here's a man that is purely considering his political career and own ambitions and not the cause of truth.

Well the months roll by and Herod finds himself in Jerusalem and no small stir is witnessed in the city. And Herod learns that this Jesus Christ has been brought before Pontius Pilate and Pontius Pilate has now commissioned him to also stand before King Herod. And King Herod has the day that he had long waited for.

The presence of Christ before him. And now he wishes that Christ would perform some miracle. But no Christ stands and is mute.

We notice that our Lord never performed miracles just as a conjurer as one to attract attention. There's an economy to divine miracles. What man can do like roll away the stone, fill the water pots with water.

Man must do. God does the miracle part. And that's so with salvation.

We must repent. We must believe and leave the new birth to Christ. Fill the water pots with water.

Fill them to the brim. Do exactly as he tells you. Leave the miracle to him.

But our Lord is not going to answer questions or perform miracles just to satisfy mere idle curiosity. And so Herod was rebuked with no response from Christ. And seeing that he had been so treated, he treats Christ merely as a vagrant, as a lewd prisoner, not to be esteemed.

And we read that his soldiers and himself set Christ at naught. My friends, I'm wondering what you're doing with the Lord Jesus Christ. Maybe you're not so blatant, so active in your rejection of Christ, but nevertheless, deep down in that heart, you have no room for the Savior.

All my friends, consider Herod and his reckless career. How climatic his life was until finally he was brought to the place where he was face-to-face with Christ and rejected. You may hear the gospel and your previous experiences and attitude toward truth may be a contributing toward your decision right now.

It's very important in our actions, before we come face-to-face with the decision, what have we been doing in the past which is going to lead up now to ours climatic decision. We pray as you hear this message that you will ponder these things in your heart and allow the word of God to be a catalyst for righteousness and not to bring out that which is evil. Repent is the plain command and believe the gospel.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and not set him at naught. And my friends, although no physical miracle will reach your eye, you will be the recipient of a spiritual miracle. If you receive him and claim the saving shelter of his blood, you will be transformed.

You will be born again. You will be a new creature passing from death unto life.

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