

Beheading in the Bible: Are You Ready to Lose Your Head for Jesus?

by Jason Cooley

The sermon challenges listeners to consider whether they are willing to lose their head for Jesus, and to examine their faith and its significance in the face of persecution.

Duration: 50:50

Scripture: 1 Kings 18:4, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 14:8, Acts 20:22, Acts 21:13, Revelation 20:4

Topics: "Persecution"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of making a daily decision to serve Christ and live for Him. He challenges the audience to abstain from evil and be separated unto God. The preacher highlights the reality that people have lost their lives for the cause of Christ and warns that the day is coming when Americans will have to choose whether they are willing to die for Jesus. He urges the listeners to spiritually prepare for persecution and be ready for a time when they may not be able to gather in churches. The sermon references Revelation 20:4 and Acts 21:13 to emphasize the significance of being willing to give up one's life for the witness of Jesus and the word of God.

Transcript

It's a good question, yeah, it's a good question to ask yourself here. And I'm going to ask you, are you ready to lose your head for Jesus? I want you to think about that. Are you ready to lose your head for Jesus? And we're going to talk about beheading in the Bible and see how it was used in the Bible.

Now it's going to be used in the end times, the Bible says. Alright? And now, we need to be thinking about these things. Amen? We should be thinking, are you willing to lose your head for the Lord Jesus Christ? It's a good question to ask yourself.

You know, really, another way you could ask is, how real is your faith? Amen? How real is your faith? Revelation chapter 20, verse number 4, And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

I think a good companion verse to this is Acts chapter 21, and verse number 13. Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. Let's pray.

Father, help us, Lord, to be sober and serious about this, and understand the magnitude of this, Lord. Understand how it's an important question. Lord, it's important for us to understand the Bible on these matters, and understand that these times are getting dark.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. You know, when you think about this, it's not like a popular thing to think about everything.

I don't go around wanting to think about that every day. Am I going to lose my head for the Lord today? Amen. Not very soothing or comfortable in that sense to understand that, but our forefathers always lived in an atmosphere that that was possible.

Why should you and I be any different? Why should you and I be any different? Why should we think that we are better than that, or that we are above that in some way? That you and I wouldn't lose our heads, or could not lose our heads for Christ's sake. Well, number one, beheading was a popular way of killing in the Bible. Turn to Judges 7, please.

I'm going to go through some of these references here, and show you how beheading was a popular thing in the Bible. I can be louder than that. Right, Nate? Move the flowers over.

Hold down your children. We've got a big fan in here. All right? All right.

Judges 7, verse number 25. And they took two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeb, and they slew Oreb upon the rock Oreb, and Zeb they slew at the winepress of Zeb, and pursued Midian, and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeb to Gideon on the other side of Jordan. They took their heads, brought them as a trophy.

1 Samuel 5, verse number 2. When the Philistines took the ark of God, and they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashton arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. And they took Dagon and set him in his place again.

And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord. And the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold. Only the stump of Dagon was left to him.

Amen. Well, that's some important symbolism there, isn't it? Did you notice the head was gone? The head was gone. 1 Samuel chapter 17, verse number 46.

This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand, and I will smite thee and take thine head from thee. And I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day into the fowls of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands.

What happened here? David was taken the head of Goliath. He was going to kill Goliath. And what did he do? He took his head.

He took his head off. It's kind of brutal, isn't it? Think about that. It's kind of brutal.

How about Saul? We know he had his head cut off, didn't he? 2 Samuel chapter 4, verse number 7. For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, and they smote him and slew him and beheaded him. There were some men that turned against the house of Saul. And what did they do? They killed the man in his own bed, and they chopped his head off.

It's pretty gruesome to think about, isn't it? It sure is. But I guess in these end times that we see things in Revelation chapter 20, I guess we better be thinking about some of these things. I guess we better be thinking about the possibility of those things.

2 Samuel chapter 20, verse number 21. The matter is not so, but a man of Mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Birchai, by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David. Deliver him only, and I will depart from the city.

And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall. Pretty gruesome, isn't it? We'll chop that guy's head off. We'll throw it out there.

We don't want the whole city to die. I want you to think about something, though. Because there may come a time where those people want to put the people of God to death because they don't want their city destroyed.

So they'll be willing to give up the people of God. They'll be willing to destroy the people of God. They'll be willing to take the heads of the people of God.

You know, we live in this American experiment of a couple hundred years of religious liberty. I mean, I guess somewhat you could go back to the Magna Carta times and things like that, but Baptists didn't have liberty in those times at all. Amen.

In 1 Kings 18, verse number 4, For it was so when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord that Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifty in a cave and fed them with bread and water. Then he wrote a letter a second time to them, saying, If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye the heads of the men of your master's sons and come to me to Jezreel by tomorrow this time. Now the king's sons, being seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, which brought them up.

There were seventy sons. Seventy sons. And they chopped all their heads off.

They were with the great men of the city that raised them up. And what did they do? Took all their heads. And it came to pass when the letter came to them that they took the king's sons and slew seventy persons and put their heads in baskets and sent them to Jezreel.

And there came a messenger and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps in the entry of the gate until the morning. Yeah.

All seventy of them. 2 Samuel 20, verse number 22. Oh, we talked about that one already.

We'll leave that one. Matthew 14, verse number 8. We find John the Baptist losing his head, right? Doesn't look very good for us if John the Baptist lost his head, right? Matthew 14, verse number 8. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John the Baptist's head and a charger. And the king was sorry.

Nevertheless, for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meet, he commanded it to be given her. And he sent and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was brought and a charger and given to the damsel.

And she brought it to her mother. You know, all through the Bible, we see that people lost their heads. And some lost their heads for the faith.

In Revelation chapter 20, we see that those, they were beheaded for the sake of Christ. And I guess you really have to ask yourself, is Christ worth dying for? You know, we've never been in a position, really, where we had to answer that as believers. But I really believe the Holy Ghost is preparing us for a time, if we live that long, for a time when that will be an issue, where you and I will have to decide, is He willing, or is He worth dying for? Am I willing to die for Christ's sake? You know, I think about the boldness of preaching and everything, and what I think about sometimes is these people that are in China and other countries around the world, in Pakistan and other countries, and they're being persecuted for the faith.

How can I not be bold when I have liberty here to do it? How come so many pastors in America are such pansies? Such babies? They're more scared of the women in their church. They're scared of the government. And they don't even live in tyranny.

But my brethren and sisters around the world are being mutilated and murdered and martyred and butchered. So how can I not stand up? How can I not stand up and preach then? How can I not be bold? What right do I have to withhold and not be bold as I should be? You and I can walk in the streets and we can preach, and last night, one church was down there for 49,000 people. One church.

Think about it. We have liberty. You're not going to be arrested on the spot for walking out in the public and preaching.

Matter of fact, we had six officers that were standing around there that waived some pretty good protection for us. But one church. One? One church.

And you're going to tell me these same people will be willing to be beheaded for the cause of Christ? That they will stand up? That they will stand for Christ? When they can't even stand against 501c3? When they can't even stand against the tax-exempt status? And you don't even have to make a stand against it. All you've got to do is not sign the paperwork. And they can't stand against contemporary Christian music in the assembly? Come on, folks.

Who are we fooling here? We live in such a pampered age. We think it's suffering for Jesus if the room is hot. Yeah.

And we're not suffering. Right? This isn't bad. This is nothing.

I mean, you know, they're not dropping our babies off of the tops of mountains yet. Throwing them over cliffs and bashing their brains against the ground. We're not losing our head yet.

But I ask you, is He worth it? Is Christ worth it? Ask yourself that question. Is Christ worth me losing my head? Is He altogether lovely and precious to you? Is He worth it? Better ask yourself that question. Yeah, we think we have some special dispensation that we're going to be covered, that we're not going to have to suffer anything.

And by the way, your average pastor's not helping it by not preaching against what's going on out there. He's leaving people in deception. And they're falling all around us.

We're seeing them fall all around us. Fall to the world. It's hard for me to believe that these same people would lose their head when they're afraid to lose their pride to say something about Jesus Christ.

Tell you what, I had somebody I knew yesterday. And I was walking downtown there and I had my Scripture signs and we were all walking there. Somebody's known me for years.

Christian. Preacher even. He barely wanted to walk up and shake my hand.

Kept walking the other way. Out of shame, he shook my hand and came back. Because he felt ashamed.

Because he didn't. And that's what brought him back because he was ashamed. He knew that it was dishonoring God by him not doing it.

You're supposed to greet your brethren like that. Especially if they're not unruly. Amen? I mean, obviously we understand if somebody's in sin, there's a different, you know, there's a problem with that.

I'm not going to go out of my way to cause an argument with somebody. If I know I have a disagreement, I'm not going to go pull them out of a crowd and talk to them. But, you know, you just think about it.

Number two, in history, many Baptists and Anabaptists were beheaded. Many of our Baptist forefathers were beheaded. Concorde, a deacon of the city of Spolota, he was beheaded for refusing to sacrifice to the image of Jupiter.

I'm going to tell you what that man thought when they showed him that image of Jupiter. What do you think he thought? He thought it was the image of jealousy. He thought it was that antichrist.

Didn't he? And he said, I ain't bowing down to that. That's that image in Revelation chapter. In the book of Revelation, I'm not supposed to bow down nor serve it.

You see, there are antichrists that come in every generation. Now, they are not the antichrists that will come, but there are antichrists and there are false prophets in every generation. Every generation must make their stand.

And they must stand against wickedness and evil. Every generation. This man, this Concorde, I guarantee you, he was thinking, no way, I'm not bowing down to that image.

I know what that is. That's idolatry. That's that antichrist image.

I'm staying away from that. Fabian, a bishop of Rome. Fabian, he was a bishop of Rome for 14 years and he organized the city of Rome.

When the emperor began a persecution of Christians, probably the first one that was waged simultaneously in all parts of the empire, Fabian was one of the first to be put to death, setting a courageous example for others. He was beheaded AD 250 during the reign of Decius. There's many others, and we'll get to some dates, different dates, but then the Jesuits, they organized the killing of Louis XVI and beheaded him.

It was a revenge for the Jesuits being thrown out of France by the French monarch. He's the Bourbon king, the grandson of Louis XVI. The Jesuits then beheaded Marie Antoinette, and she's the Habsburg queen, the daughter of Maria Theresa.

It was a revenge for Maria Theresa expelling the Jesuit order from Austria. Took their head off. That same antichrist spirit, when it's done against the believers of God, you can see it.

You can see that antichrist, that hate for them. In 1528, in Rattenburg, Leonard Schimmer, he was beheaded. These are all Anabaptists.

1528, May 11th, at Weinhorn. Hans Ido was beheaded. By the way, these were beheaded by Roman Catholics and Protestants.

The Lutheran movement. Luther's movement beheaded these in Germany and other places. Protestants.

1614, September 30th. Hans Landis in Zurich, he was beheaded. 1571, Hans Hasselbacher.

What a name, huh? He was beheaded. 1531, a man named Schneider was beheaded. 1560, Hans Leitner Landshut, he was beheaded.

By the way, these were all beheaded for their faith. These all lost their head for their faith. For what they believed and what they practiced.

Not for what they said they believed, but wouldn't practice. See, that's where the rubber meets the road right there. Whether you'd be beheaded for Christ, for the sake of Christ.

Because see, if you're a phony, you don't want to be beheaded for Christ's sake. If you're not living for God now in liberty, why would you live for Him under tyranny? If you can't make a stand now in liberty, why would you make it in tyranny? Ask yourself that question. Is Christ worth you being beheaded? Is He worth it to you? It's a very sobering question to ask yourself, isn't it? A man named Meier Meiter was executed together with Wolfgang Huber.

Man, that's a name right there. Or Huber Wolfgang, sorry. And 75 other Anabaptists.

75 others beheaded. I'm just wondering something, Brother Russ. You think they thought the Antichrist was there right there? You think they thought... Hey, they were losing their head for the cause of Christ, and they figured the man of sin was there, because they thought the Pope was the man of sin.

That's what they thought. They were losing their head for the cause. And they were losing their head for the cause of Christ.

But they thought, hey, I'm facing the Antichrist right here. And every generation will face that Antichrist spirit. See, but sometimes it's more subtle than others.

Maybe it won't be beheading in some generations of our past in America. Maybe it was other things. It was the compromise.

It was another spirit that was brought in. But there's always a battle for every generation. And God raises up men to fight those battles.

And I'll tell you, some of the older men don't understand that. They don't understand the battles that are there. And God takes those men usually home to be with the Lord.

Because they're done. Their work is done. By the way, it's important to note that these people, they were beheaded.

Ullman was beheaded along with 10 other Anabaptists. Their wives were drowned. They drowned them.

And they directed the children out of the country. Took the husbands' heads and drowned the wives. And sent their children off by themselves to another country.

It's important to note, though, that these people were beheaded by religious heads of the state. Dominionism. Damnable is what it is.

It's damnable. And you've got a bunch of guys out there that are pushing this dominionism. Be they Reformed or Catholic, whatever they are.

But they're pushing this dominionism. And this control with the state. With religion.

And it brings persecution. It always has. Baptists were always persecuted.

Baptists and Anabaptists alike, they were always persecuted. By the Protestants and the Catholics. Because they both ran states.

And everybody's fine when you follow their religion. But if you didn't, then the Protestants and the Catholics, you'd lose your head or your life. One way or another.

Anabaptism was made a capital crime. Prices were set on the heads of Anabaptists. To give them food and shelter was made a crime.

The Duke of Bavaria in 1527 gave orders that the imprisoned Anabaptists should be burned at the stake. Unless they recanted. In which case they should be beheaded.

So instead of burning them, he figured, I'll have some mercy on them if they recant. And I'll just take their head. Yeah.

Yep. See, you know with beheading, there's no pain. It's over.

It's over pretty quickly. You lose your head. But to be burned alive at the stake, takes a little while.

But is he worth it? Ask yourself, is he worth it? Still want to be a Christian? Still want to follow the Lamb with us wherever He goes? Amen? You better ask yourself. I'm going to tell you something right now. You can't live on Mommy and Daddy's faith.

You better have your own. You better understand that right now. You can't live off the strength of your mother and father's faith.

You've got to have faith. And you've got to have the faith of Christ, and the power of God, and the grace of God. In Lutheran and Zwinglian states, Anabaptists were generally executed by beheading or drowning.

Oh, they're such nice people, aren't they? Those nice Protestants, they wouldn't do that to us today, would they? Brother Russ, they wouldn't do that to us, would they today? Those Protestants and Catholics, they wouldn't do that to us, would they? Yeah, they'd do it for something they can't even defend in the Scriptures. Infant baptism. Show me one of them, you liar! Show me one of them! One! Infant baptism.

One! You can't show it. Because it's the badge of Antichrist. That might cause some division.

Well, I intended it to. Because the truth always does. By the way, they not only knew Christ was worth dying for, they knew their public profession of faith, that baptism, they knew that was a death sentence.

How do you think they found Him? They couldn't see what was in their heart. They seen what came out. They waited for those baptisms.

Zwingli's favorite way of killing Him was to drown Him. And you have Baptists that go over to those countries and they laud Zwingli. And they look right over there, like Brother Beller said, and there's a plaque for the martyred Anabaptists, or I mean a stone in the stone, it's just a stone for the martyred Anabaptists, while they're lauding this statue of Zwingli.

These Baptists are lauding this statue of Zwingli, stomping on their brethren! What's that, brother? Yeah, I know they're not. Lutheran and Zwinglian states Anabaptists were generally executed by beheading or drowning. The Anabaptists saw the church as being composed of transformed believers, who were committed to Jesus and each other in a covenant community.

Well, that sounds familiar, doesn't it? Does that sound familiar to you? Let me read that again to you. The Anabaptists saw the church as being composed of transformed believers, who were committed to Jesus and each other in covenant communities. Both Protestant and Catholic leaders viewed this as a threat to the established church.

See, little local assemblies governing themselves? Those are a danger to the standing order. Why? Well, because it's easy to push the... I mean, all of them believe the same thing. They're all together.

Independent bodies that are self-governed? Not the same. Not the same at all. So the Catholic leaders, they viewed this as a threat to the established church.

As a result, they imprisoned and severally persecuted many Anabaptists. More than 4,000 were drowned, beheaded, or burned at the stake as martyrs of their faith. That was just in one spot.

That wasn't the whole. I mean, there were millions. It's estimated anywhere from 50 to 100 million.

50 or 100 million. You see, we Baptists, Anabaptists, we're a danger to Protestants and Catholics. By the way, we're still a danger to them.

Are you ready to lose your head for Christ's sake? Are you? Because I'm going to tell you what, folks. It'll be a challenge for you when you see that. If Christ is real in you, if you are facing that, well, listen, you can go free.

See, I'm pre-trib. I don't have to worry about it. Folks, I don't care if you're pre-trib or post-trib.

Judgment can come here right away. Tyranny can come here right away. Your country can be infiltrated right away.

Guillotines can be set up, and Christians can be, well, they're already here, but you can lose your head right here. You don't have to have a time of tribulation yet. That doesn't even have to be the case before that happens.

You say, can you prove that? Yeah, look at all these guys. I can prove it through the Bible first, and I can prove it through history. Look at history.

All of them lost their heads, and it wasn't the tribulation? We just think we're special, right? That's that American exceptionalism, right? God wouldn't do that to his bride, right? Well, what did he allow to happen to the 50 million Baptists and Anabaptists that were drowned, burned at the stake, beaten, raped, children cut out of their wombs, his own disciples? In various provinces, an imperial provost marshaled by the name of Berthold with his assistants, put many Anabaptists to death. On Christmas Day, 1531, he drove 17 men and women into a farmhouse in Wittenberg, in Württemberg, and burned the building together with the inmates. 350 Anabaptists were executed in Palatinate before the year 1530.

In Ennesheim, the slaughterhouse of Alsik, as it was called, 600 were killed within a few years. Within six weeks, 37 were burned, drowned, or beheaded at Linz in Austria. Fellenberg the Hutterite said this.

He said, we are accused also of condemning all who are not of our mind and who act not as we do, that we deny. We condemn no man, but we show to men their reprobate life and warn them of condemnation. And this we do in accordance with the word of God that cannot lie.

No human being can condemn another. Judgment is in the hand of the Lord. But sinful, evil works are what condemn a man when he has not left them in accordance with the word of God and brought forth honest fruits of repentance.

You mean they killed him for that? He was beheaded for this, for his faith, July 10th, 1560. Wait a minute, that's the same thing you believe! Yeah, it is. Listen folks, I don't believe they're going to like try to repeal the first or second amendment or anything like that.

That's not what they're going to do. They're going to use the UN and treaties and mandates to override it all. You know why? Because God's people didn't care about his book.

And people in America didn't care about his book. So God said, if you don't care about my book, I don't care about your stupid constitution either. Number three.

As we look at the end times, we see beheadings. Very popular. Ask yourself, am I ready to lose my head for Christ's sake? By the way, the Waldensians, they lost their heads.

They were waiting for the coming of the Lord and lost their heads. They thought it was right there. They thought Antichrist was on the scene.

Right? These and other Anabaptists and Baptists lost their heads. By the way, John the Baptist lost his head like we talked about. Christians have and are being martyred all over the world.

As these end times approach and we see this becoming very popular, we're starting to see this, we're starting to see this hate for Christians in America more than ever. Real Christians. Not the hybrid Christianity that's sold in America today.

But real Bible Christians. Their positions are being hated more and more. They are being hated more and more.

And I saw thrones and they just sat upon them and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus. Look at that.

For the witness of Jesus. And for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, either his image, either received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

You know, we're seeing this end times beheading becoming popular. Now, listen what a federal appeals judge issued a blistering dissent in a death row case on Monday, declaring that an execution system that relies on drugs is doomed and the guillotine will be better. NBC News.

He said, the guillotine is probably best, but it seems inconsistent with our national ethos. Russ, what's an ethos? You know what that is? Nate, do you know what an ethos is? Oh, what is that? Oh, ethics. I didn't hear you.

I'm sorry. Okay, ethics. All right.

Your ethics. We have ethics in this nation? Yeah. Some have reported that the USA has stockpiles of those in army bases and FEMA camps.

You ever heard that? I can't verify any of that, but I've heard it. Right? There's reports of that. What's that? Muslims have swords.

Yeah, they do. Is that right? Isn't that unbelievable? Either way, the Bible shows us that beheading is part of the end times. It's part of the destruction.

It's part of the martyrdom of the saints. They were beheaded for the witness of Jesus Christ and for the Word of God, for the witness of Jesus Christ. How about that? Is he worth it? Are you ready and willing to lose your head for Christ's sake? Ask yourself that question.

Does he mean that much to me? Does Christ, the sinless Son of God, the God-man Christ Jesus mean that much to you and I? That we'd be willing to have our head lopped off or for the testimony of Jesus Christ and His Holy Word? By the way, you'll notice that it says for the Word of God. What's that mean? It means you're not taking our Bible. Amen? Would you fight for the Word of God? We're going to take your Bible.

No, you're not. No, you're not. No.

We're going to fight for it. When you have it. Yeah.

Hey, let me ask you a question. Do you think I believe that most Christians would die for the Word of God when they don't even believe they have it? They don't even believe they have the Word of God. They don't believe it's perfect, inspired, infallible, preserved.

How can you die for something you don't even believe you have? Come on, give me a break, folks. They don't even believe they have it. It's not going to happen.

You're going to see the falling away. These people wouldn't lose a hangnail for Jesus, let alone their heads. Listen, all those people I see walking out of that concert last night, some of them claim to be Christians.

Naked, drunk Christians, right. Reminds you of when Israel had a rock concert, doesn't it? Remember that sermon when Israel had a rock concert? Same thing. But you think about it.

You think those people right there are sober, and I don't mean not with alcohol, I mean not intoxicated with the affairs of this life. You think they're going to be willing to die for Jesus' sake when they won't even stand up for Him against the wickedness of sin? No. No.

No, I don't believe that. I don't believe they would. Doesn't matter what I believe in that sense, but I really don't believe that they would.

And which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. Are you willing to die with the faith that you have? Is He precious to you? Is He worth it all? Is He worth you losing your life? Is He worth you losing your head? God gives dying grace, we know that. He gives grace for any situation you're in.

You think right now, I don't know, I mean, am I strong enough to do that? If you have faith in Christ Jesus, He'll give you the grace you need when the time comes. He'll give that to you. Listen to this.

In the Asia Minor city of Smyrna, persecution broke out against Christians, and some were put to death for their faith, but the agitated mob wanted to cut off the church there by getting rid of their leader, the now-aged Polycarp. The believers hid Polycarp in a farmhouse. The leaders there taught that one should not seek out martyrdom, but neither should it be avoided if there was no choice, and it meant denying Christ.

The authorities found the farmhouse and came to arrest the old man. He welcomed his captors as if they were old friends and gave them food and drink. He asked for an hour to pray before being taken to the arena.

They relented. The hour stretched into two hours. The officers overhearing his prayers began to wonder what they were doing arresting an old man like this.

Well, Nate, they're just obeying orders. It's not their fault, right? They're just obeying orders. Polycarp was brought into the arena.

Instead of Polycarp begging for his life, we find the proconsul pleading with this aged bishop to just curse Christ so he would be released. Polycarp's reply was loud and clear. He said this, 80 and 6 years have I served him, and he never did me any injury.

How then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior? He was burned alive. The Christians present said there was a joyful radiance on Polycarp's face as he died. Believers were allowed to bury his remains on February 22nd, probably in the year 155.

Churches near and far from Smyrna observed this date in years to come and drew strength from the testimony of this old man who would not deny Christ no matter what it cost him. That's right, he was a

disciple of John. Is he worth it to you? It's a good question to ask, isn't it? Is he worth it to you? Would you die for him? Well, if you're not willing to live for him now, I don't believe that you would die for him.

If you name the name of Christ and don't depart from iniquity, if you name the name of Christ, I do not believe that if you are not willing to live for him, that you would be willing to die for him. I don't believe that. By the way, all of these martyrs that were martyrs of the faith, they all lived for Him.

They were holy, righteous, separated people. That's why they were a mark for the Antichrist to go after. That spirit to go after.

That's why. That's why they were the mark. Come on, if you just blend in with society and you continue to live your life in wickedness and evil, and you continue to live like the world does, there's not even going to be a question in the mind of people around you.

But the testimony of these men and women were so strong. Why? Because they were pious people. They loved the Lord.

They lived for God and they separated. And they loved not their lives unto death. But too many people today, they love their lives.

You have to ask yourself this question. Is Christ worth me losing my head over? Is He? Is He worth it? Is He precious to you? Is He all the world to you? Is He everything you need? Kind of puts life into perspective, doesn't it, a little bit? Kind of puts things into perspective a little bit. I think about the little things that you and I go through on a daily basis, and they really don't amount to anything.

But one day, I mean, the decision is presented to you every day. Choose you this day whom you will serve. The decision is presented to you every day if you will serve Christ, if you will follow Him, if you will live for Him every day while you're alive.

If you will abstain from all appearance of evil, if you will stay away from evil and wickedness, if you will be separated unto God, if you will obey Him and follow Him. And you're telling me if you can't turn off a television, you're going to lose your head? You're telling me if you can't turn off rock music, if you can't turn off wicked music, if you can't turn off a lascivious lifestyle, you can't turn those things off that you're going to die for Him? You really believe that? If you cannot deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Him, that you're actually going to lose your head for Christ's sake? God's people need to sober up. Those that name the name of Christ really need to sober up.

They are intoxicated with this world way too much. We're going to talk about that a little bit in the next message. They go hand in hand today with that.

We will talk about that, but ask yourself this question. Is He worth it? Your friends and your family, do they understand that? Do they understand the gravity of the situation? No, because they're not around sober-minded Christians that are going the way of the cross and they are following the Lord. They are not around people like that any longer.

We have so many pseudo-churches that are everywhere, and they're not preaching the truth of that. They're not preaching the soberness of what's going on around us. Yeah, this is real, folks.

This isn't a fairy tale. This book is real. It's not a fairy tale.

It's real. Everything in it is real. And people really lose their lives for the cause of Christ.

And the day is coming when Americans will. And they're going to have to choose. Ask yourself this question, am I willing to die for Christ? Would I lose my head for Jesus? Take all the fun and the games and everything else out of it.

Take all of those things. You look at the average churches today, and they're playing gospel games. What are they preparing for? Nothing.

I'm not talking about being a doomsday prepper. I'm talking to you about spiritual matters. I'm talking to you about spiritual matters.

I'm saying spiritually. Are you prepared for persecution? Are you prepared when we can't meet in a place like this anymore? Where our churches will be underground? Are you prepared? Think about it. When we have to go underground, when it gets serious? Oh, that's not going to happen.

We'll be gone before then. You know? They're too busy playing games. Too busy playing games.

You know? It's time to get real, folks. I think about our families and our friends, and even our fellow brethren. I had a brother tell me, talked to him yesterday.

Historic Baptist. We just took our sign off our door, off our meeting house. You know why he did it? So we took our sign off, because this is a private assembly.

You know? It's a private assembly. We took our sign off the door. Now if a lost person comes in, we're not going to be unkind.

You know? But we understand what the church is, and who the church is, and what it's for. I'm telling you, folks, we better understand what's going on here. And I'll talk about that the next hour.

Father, Lord, we just pray you'd bless us now. Pray, Lord, that you'd help us to understand this truth, and the importance of it. Oh God, please be with us and strengthen us.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/27/SID27517.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jason-cooley/beheading-in-the-bible-are-you-ready-to-lose-your-head-for-jesus/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net