

# The Church Must Resemble John The Baptist

by Scott Hynds

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*This sermon focuses on the life of John the Baptist, highlighting his selflessness and unwavering commitment to speaking the truth, even in the face of danger. It emphasizes the importance of the church resembling John in these last days, standing firm in faith and speaking God's truth amidst a changing world. The repercussions of speaking truth are discussed, urging believers to remain faithful to God's Word despite potential persecution and opposition.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 14:1, Leviticus 18:16, Ephesians 4:25, 1 Corinthians 16:13, Revelation 3:8, Colossians 3:16

**Topics:** "Courage in Truth", "Faithfulness in Adversity"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Matthew chapter 14 and we shall read from verses 1 to 12. A few weeks ago I did speak on the first few verses and we looked at the miraculous, the gift of miracles. I want to just look at John the Baptist's life this morning.

You know, often I see posted on Facebook, you know, pictures of biblical characters as if people knew what they look like. Ever see that? Pick your top three, you know, and you've got all these biblical characters and I've always been fascinated with John the Baptist. For me, he probably is number one or co-number one when it comes to characters within the Bible because of his selflessness.

John was a man as we know that could have sold out. He had the crowds and he could have sat at Herod's table. He could have been a wealthy man, etc, etc, had prestige and he had fame, but he didn't.

And when the lamb came, he pointed his own to the lamb. He must increase, but I must decrease. And that just fascinates me, this man who wouldn't be bought, couldn't be bought by any silver.

He was all out for the Lord indeed. And when I think of John the Baptist this morning, I think of us as the church, as the remnant of God and how we must resemble John in these last days. Let's read Matthew 14 verses 1 to 12.

At that time Herod the Tetrarch heard the report about Jesus and said to his servants, this is John the Baptist. He has risen from the dead and therefore these powers are at work in him. For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.

Because John had said to him, it is not lawful for you to have her. And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude because they counted him as a prophet. But when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod.

Therefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. So she having been prompted by her mother said, give me John the Baptist's head here on a platter. And the king was sorry, nevertheless, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he commanded it to be given to her.

So he sent and had John beheaded in prison and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl and she brought it to her mother. Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it and went and told it to Jesus. Heavenly Father, we thank you, Lord, for the gospel.

We thank you, Lord, for the scriptures, the sacred scriptures. We thank you, Lord, that indeed that your word leads us, guides us, instructs us. And I pray, Lord, that you would instruct us even today through the holy, infallible word of God.

And Lord, that you would help me to be able to convey your message to your people, that I will be a man that would truly rightly divide the word of truth. In Jesus' name, amen. And dear friends, that is my heart, that I would be a man that would seek to rightly divide the word of truth.

Endeavor to always do that. I'm not saying I'm going to get it right all of the time, but it truly is my passion, my heart endeavors to honor the word of God. And as we were singing there this morning, I thought about that.

And I thought about how we can pick up a magazine or pick up a newspaper and we can perhaps spit on our fingers to prise the pages apart and just skim through it. I thought about that. And then I thought about how at times perhaps we have saw on television some documentary where someone is handling an old book.

It's not like, you know, handling a newspaper or a magazine. Sometimes we see the person that's handling the book wearing white gloves. Isn't that correct? Because what is before them, it's special.

It's a special thing. It's a valuable thing. And I do believe, alas, that there are so many that just treat God's word like the newspaper, like the magazine.

It's not valued in their eyes. But oh, how God is calling his people, his remnant in these last days to highly value this book more than ever. The precious word of truth.

John was a man that spoke out and spoke truth. He only ever spoke truth. Look at verse four in our reading.

John speaks out, John speaks truth on the issue of marriage. He would not be dumb. He would not be silent.

He would not sit back when he saw a flagrant violation of the law of God, of the holy law of God. In Leviticus 18 and verse 16, the scripture says, you shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife.

It is your brother's nakedness.

Herod had married his brother's wife. His brother is still alive. And Herod had put away his own wife, divorced her.

He is now with this woman. And John is the prophet of God. John, the holy man of God, would not sit by and not call that out, not address what was going on, a flagrant violation of the law of God.

And dear friends today, it should be the same with us. It should be the same with the church today with the remnant of God. When it comes to the issue of marriage, we cannot be silent.

We cannot be dumb when there is a flagrant violation of the law of God. Today in the world and even in the church, Ephesians 4:25 says, speak every man truth with his neighbor, not just to the person beside you in the church, but to the common man. We are to speak truth, God's truth, not man's truth, but the truth of God, the word of God.

We have to speak and preach in these last days. God's truth and not man's. Do you know what man's truth is like? Man's truth is always changing, forever changing.

As the world changes, man's truth will change with the world. Let me give you an example. As an ex-soldier, I can remember for my years as a soldier, I did wear two uniforms daily, two types of uniform daily.

Firstly, while in Northern Ireland and England, I did wear a khaki uniform. That was my main daily uniform every day in Northern Ireland, every day in England, because you're blending in with the terrain. So that's the type of uniform you wear.

But then things changed. My uniform had to change. Why? Because in the last months of my soldiering, I went to Cyprus.

Cyprus is a different place, a different terrain. It has a desert terrain. So the uniform had to change.

I had to wear then a desert type uniform. You see, we had to change to blend in with the terrain. And again, that's a little bit like man's truth.

Man's truth will always seek to blend in with the world as it changes to be contemporary and to be relevant, et cetera, et cetera. That's what great numbers of the church are doing, changing the word of God, diluting the word of God in order that they might blend in with the terrain of the world indeed today. I heard an assistant bishop in the Church of England, the Anglican Church, say there recently, we do our theology as to how the world changes.

Imagine that, as to how the world changes. The church's theology is not shaped by the world, but by the word, by the word of God. I heard another, I believe perhaps retired minister to Buckingham Palace say, when it comes to gay marriage and the Anglican Church, it has been on the agenda for a long time.

A long time, not a short time, but a long time. I'm sure some of you are aware that we have saw recently how the bishops of the Church of England have formally apologised, apologised to the gay and lesbian and transgender community, all those letters which I can't remember. They have formally apologised to them if there has been any hostilities and homophobia.

I thought about that and I thought, well, did they apologise to the drunks? Did they apologise to the druggies? Did they apologise to them? Because I'm sure there were certain hostilities towards them folk in times gone by, but I'm sure not. Did they apologise to sinners as a whole? And I'm sure again some of you are aware that they got together, the bishops, and they have decided that they will remain, as it were, conservative in one way, that they won't marry. They will not marry homosexuals, lesbians.

They will continue not to marry, but here's the compromise, but they can receive a blessing in the church. They can come to us. We won't marry them, but we will bless them.

We will speak blessing over them. What's the difference? What is the difference here? Whether they marry or not, if they're speaking blessing in the house of God, as it were, in the sanctuary over these people, it's an abomination. That's what it is.

You see, Proverbs 14, 12, a scripture we know quite well, there is a way which seems right on the man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. There is a way which seems right on to man, and there is a way at this particular time which seems right in the eyes of men, but not in the eyes of God, not according to the Word of God. Jeremiah 23, verse 1, God says, Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pastor, saith the Lord.

Zephaniah 3, verse 4, her priests have profaned the sanctuary. It's amazing. The Bishop of London, she said with regards to the blessing of same-sex, it's a joy.

That's what she said. I heard it from her lips. It's a joy.

It's wonderful. Encouraging all those to come for the blessing. But dear friends, today it's not a joy according to God's Word.

It's not something wonderful. It's an abomination. John called out that which was contrary to God's Word, contrary to the law of God.

And again, the church needs to speak. There's a time to be silent, but there's a time indeed to speak. There's a time to speak up.

There's a time to rise up indeed and to speak forth God's holy and infallible Word. Dear saints, 1 Corinthians 16 and verse 13 says, Stand firm in the faith. That's God's calling to us right now.

Stand firm in the faith. Stand firm in the faith of God. Stand firm means to persist, persevere.

And we must, we must persist and persevere in the Word of God and what God's holy Word says. We must, we cannot deviate from His Word. Amen.

I think again of what the Lord says to the church of Philadelphia in Revelation 3.8, You have kept my word and not denied my name. You kept my word. The Lord commended them because they kept His Word.

They didn't change His Word to adapt to the ever-changing culture. No, they kept the Word of the Lord. They did not deny the Lord's name.

Some would say that perhaps they were being brought before magistrates who were seeking to, for those folk to renounce the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, but they would not do so. They would not renounce the name of the Lord. They would not deviate from the Word of God.

You know, Charles Hearst in Belfast, Belfast, it's the biggest dealer. He's the biggest dealer of cars in Northern Ireland. I'm sure a lot of us have went up there and many different branded showrooms within the compound of Charles Hearst.

You've got Reynolds, you've got Peugeot, you've got Land Rover, you've got even Ferrari. Ferrari, as we know, it's at the top, the top of the luxury brand of cars. And I would probably say that over the years, all that's ever went into that showroom has been Ferraris.

All that's ever went in and came out, Ferrari, Ferrari, Ferrari. Let's say for talk's sake, some of us were to go up there this week and go into the showroom and there in the middle of the showroom was a Renault Clio. I mean, we would be baffled by that, would we not? There in the midst is a wee Renault Clio, like Josh's Renault Clio.

All these supercars, but yet in the middle we have this other car. And we would probably say to ourselves, that thing in the middle is just detracting from the beauty of the others. It's just not right.

And I don't know what the manager has done, why he has come to this decision, but he has decided to remove something from that showroom and add something else inside it. To remove and to add. And because he has removed, I don't know what his intentions may have been, but because he has decided to remove and add something different, it just does not look right.

And any change in God's Word, any taking away of God's Holy Word, and any adding to God's Word, it doesn't look right. It just makes it not look right. John spoke out.

He would not waver. He would not deviate. He spoke out and spoke truth.

The second thing in this portion of Scripture that I saw, and because he spoke out, because he spoke the truth, as a result of this, there was a plot against him. There was a plot. We can see in Mark's account of this story in Mark 6 19, therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, John, and would have killed him, but she could not.

This woman had hatred in her heart towards the man of God. This woman was probably consumed day after day after day. How can I get rid of him? How can I see his demise? How can I see his death? What can be done? Consumed, I'm sure, in heart and in mind.

How can I stop the truth teller? How can I cut him off? As one commentator puts it, she lay in wait to take the first opportunity of dispatching him. She lay in wait, just like a predator, just like the enemy. She lay in wait.

And there are many today, friends, that lie in wait, seeking opportunity to dispatch us as the remnant people of God, plotting and scheming behind the scenes to see our demise. And here's the thing, the plotters are all over. The plotters sit in music studios around the world, composing, composing songs, popular songs that speak against God, that speak against the word of God.

The plotters are heads of Hollywood studios that endorse movie-making scripts, again, that speak against God, that speak against the word of the Lord. There are plotters in the houses of Parliament in Westminster at this time, plotting and scheming to see the church completely eradicated. There are even plotters in mansions and rectories.

Anglican ministers or Methodist ministers or other ministers or pastors' homes, and they're plotting and they're scheming against God's word, against the true children of light. It makes me think of the master in Matthew 26, verse 59, the scripture says, now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus, that they might put him to death. They plotted and they schemed.

Do you know the amazing thing about this scripture here? It doesn't say that the drunkards were plotting and scheming to see the Lord die. It doesn't say the tax collectors were plotting and scheming. No, it says the priests, the priests, the ones that should have recognized who was before them, the ones that should have come alongside indeed the Lord, but they were moved with envy and they were moved indeed with jealousy.

And dear friends, I'd say this, yes, we have to look out. We have to look out. The enemy is outside, but even more so in these latter days, the enemy is within.

The enemy is wearing the priestly garments, no doubt in the church today. You know, when I was thinking about that, I was thinking about the Jews during the, you know, the Second World War and concentration camps and there are certain Jews that had to do ghastly things, ghastly things to, when it came to their own people. But they did those things.

Why? Because if they don't, they're going to be shot themselves. They will be put in the graves themselves. So under duress, they did what they had to do.

They did what they had to do in their eyes. But it could have, could have been these latter days that certain priests will be moved, moved against the remnant even more so. Not because their lives are threatened, but because they might get their government funding removed indeed, their grants removed, their money removed and other petty issues.

But they will be moved to see the true truth tellers of God, to see them diminish. The third thing that I see within this portion of Scripture is this, that there are repercussions to speak in truth. No doubt about that.

And the repercussion for John was that he lost his life, he lost his head. I'm sure John knew the dangers, but again, he was not going to remain silent. For John, speaking truth cost him his life.

I read this quote today and with regards to where we are now as a church within the United Kingdom, and someone said this and this resonates, it seems inevitable that the minority who hold to authority teaching will find public life less hospitable. We are the minority, the remnant, because we hold to orthodox teaching when it comes to the Bible. We hold to the commandments of Christ.

We hold to what God's word says on marriage and abortion, all of these things. We believe God's word, we stand upon God's word, but it will become even more hospitable for us in public life the longer we hold on to the truths of God's holy and infallible word. For we know people are being arrested today for street preaching in these aisles.

We know that even a Catholic woman was arrested for praying in her mind outside an abortion clinic in the UK. What nonsense! People are being sacked for wearing a cross. People are being sacked because they misgendered a child.

Dear friends, this may not be North Korea at this time, but could it be that in years to come if the Lord tarries that it does morph into something like North Korea where Christians and pastors are executed.

Christians are being cursed at today, hated today, sacked even in our land, but could it be executed in the not too distant future. The master said in John 15 18 that the world hates you.

Know that it hated me before it hated you. The world hates you. However the tide turns, dear child of God, we must remain faithful to God's holy and infallible word.

Colossians 3 16 and closing, let the word of Christ dwell in you. Let his word and his word alone dwell. If the word does dwell then we will be well.

If the word does dwell and continue to dwell in the hearts of the remnant then we will be well regardless of the storms, regardless of the persecution. We will be able to say it as well with my soul because of I have an anchor. Christ is my anchor.

His word I am embedded in. The word of Christ seeks not a temporary dwelling. The word of Christ doesn't seek to tarry for a night but a permanent residence in our hearts.

Let's remain faithful. Let's keep his word in these days of apostasy. These days of compromise.

You know I heard the archbishop of Canterbury say this here which was quite shocked by that. He said the reformation was a tragedy. It wasn't.

It was a triumph. It wasn't a tragedy. He doesn't have a pair of eyes.

He's looking through. It wasn't because he in his opinion see it caused a great schism between the the Christian church. You know according to his opinion but it wasn't.

It was a triumph. It was a triumph. You know why? Because of the value that those reformers placed upon this book and the teachings of this book.

And dear brother, dear sister, let's imitate all of us. Those men and women of God that would not compromise in times gone by but would rather go to the grave. Would not deny his word or his name but they stayed faithful on to the end.

Let's pray. Hallelujah. Heavenly father we thank you today lord for uh we think of the this man this this this prophet of God John the Baptist.

This man that lord that wasn't a he wasn't a mouse. He he wasn't a coward. Lord he was a lion.

He was God's lion. He was God's lion that roared. And lord I I would probably presume lord that that John maybe knew by his calling out that that he perhaps would would end up dead.

I I don't know but lord it didn't hold him back and he addressed and he lord what needed to be addressed. He he called out what needed to to be called out. And lord I ask that you would continue to give us backbone.

That you would continue to give your remnant lord backbone. That they would continue lord to speak out and to speak forth your word. Lord the the the terrain is ever changing.

And lord there are even more lord that are being persuaded to change and adapt to the terrain uh outside lord in the world uh today. But lord we look to you. We look to you lord to to preserve us in these end days.

Lord we lord want to remain as a people in a constant lord place of humility. Humility looking on to the lord and looking on to his word to keep us and to guide us. And so lord we thank you lord.

We thank you lord God for your word. We thank you lord that heaven and earth shall pass away. But lord your word your words shall never ever pass away.

They shall never pass away. And so lord we thank you that indeed that you are the lord Jesus is the head indeed of the church. Is indeed the head of the remnant of God.

Who shall never who shall never be destroyed by satan by the hordes of hell. Because great is the victory of the lord. Hallelujah.

And so lord we thank you again for the word of Christ that is rooted in our hearts and in the name of Jesus we pray amen and amen.

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