



# THE GOSPEL OF MARK

## Seeing Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God



Part 16

*"The Feats of the Apostles & the Fate of John the Baptist"*

6-13-21

### Introduction

Throughout Mark's gospel, the disciples have been portrayed as those who were called by Jesus in order that they might be "with" Him. Because of this unique relationship to Him, they received insight into His teaching (4:10-20) and witnessed powerful miracles as they journeyed with Him (4:35-5:43). All of this prepared them to be sent out by Him in His authority and power in order that they might participate in the mission that God the Father had entrusted to Him (6:7-11). Although the success of their ministry would certainly have been an encouragement to them, opposition to the work of God remained.

**Key Point:** The accounts of the disciples' ministry success and the arrest and execution of John the Baptist convey the extremes of what it can mean to be a \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus

### The Nature of Discipleship – Mark 6:12-30


"As Jesus' mission began after John's imprisonment (1:14), the disciples' mission begins after John's death. These two events may appear unrelated to each other, but Mark deliberately links them together."

—David E. Garland, *A Theology of Mark's Gospel*

### The Success of the Disciples' Mission (6:12-13,30)

- Mark frames the account of John the Baptist with the description of the apostles being \_\_\_\_\_ out from and then \_\_\_\_\_ to Jesus.

Mark 6:12-13,30—<sup>12</sup>So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. <sup>13</sup>And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them...<sup>30</sup>The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught.

#### Observations

1. The apostles were sent out by Jesus in order that they might expand the reach of His mission.
2. In carrying out their mission, there remained a clear distinction between their works and those of Jesus.
3. By returning to Jesus to report all that had happened, they apostles demonstrated their recognition of His authority.

**Key Point:** Having proclaimed the words of Jesus and done similar works to Him, the apostles must have been greatly encouraged (and perhaps overly confident) because of their \_\_\_\_\_.

"The missionary success of the Twelve has 'nothing to do with the skill, training or virtue of the disciple, a point the disciples themselves have forgotten in 6:30, but depends upon Jesus appointing them to be closely associated with His person.'"

—David E. Garland, *A Theology of Mark's Gospel*

### The Arrest & Execution of John the Baptist (6:14-29)

- Mark's account of the fate of John focuses on the Tetrarch ("king") of Galilee, \_\_\_\_\_ Antipas, and his actions in relation to the Baptizer.

Mark 6:14a—<sup>14</sup>King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some said, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him." <sup>15</sup>But others said, "He is Elijah." And others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old."

⇒ The powerful words and works of Jesus had become known within the region and were perhaps magnified through the successful ministry of the apostles. These verses summarize the general views of Jesus among the wider populace:

*He is John the Baptist risen from the dead!* →

*He is Elijah!* →

*He is like an OT prophet!* →

- **John had initially been arrested by Herod (Antipas) because he had condemned the king's \_\_\_\_\_ marriage.**

Mark 6:16-18—<sup>16</sup> But when Herod heard of it, he said, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.” <sup>17</sup> For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, because he had married her. <sup>18</sup> For John had been saying to Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.”

⇒ As the favored son of Herod the Great, Antipas had sought to be named king. He had divorced his wife and eventually married his brother Philip’s wife (Herodias) who had divorced her husband contra the Law (Lev. 18:16).

Observations (6:16-20)

1. The account implies that John confronted Herod’s sin both directly to his face and indirectly within the community.
2. Herod’s willingness to hear John and to keep him safe showed that he had some understanding that God was at work through him.

- **John’s execution came as a result of Herodias taking advantage of an \_\_\_\_\_ situation.**

Mark 6:21-24—<sup>21</sup> But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. <sup>22</sup> For when Herodias’s 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.” <sup>23</sup> And he vowed to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom.” <sup>24</sup> And she went out and said to her mother, “For what should I ask?” And she said, “The head of John the Baptist.”

Observations (6:21-29)

1. The extravagance and immorality of Herod’s lifestyle is intended to contrast with the simplicity of the man he had executed.
2. The weakness of Herod in allowing a righteous man to be executed serves as foreshadowing.
3. The details of John’s death and burial are intentionally highlighted.

**Key Point:** The arrest and execution of John stand as stark reminders of the potential cost of \_\_\_\_\_ carrying out the mission of God, foreshadowing what was ahead for Jesus and the apostles.

## Seeing Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God

1. Mark wants his audience to recognize that these two accounts illustrate a major transition in the plans and purposes of God.

⇒ *John is the last of the OT Prophets*

“All prophets from Elijah to John the Baptist share a common message of judgment on the self-sufficient and of the hope of all who long for God’s kingdom. Hence, we may think of John...as the last cataract in the prophetic stream.”

—Willem A. VanGemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word*

⇒ *The apostles are the first of those who will bear witness to Messiah and to the Gospel.*

2. Mark wants his audience to recognize that participating with Jesus in the work that God is doing in the world could also mean the experience of suffering.

## Concluding Thought

- **For believers, the issue is not whether or not we will suffer, but instead \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are we suffering?**

Phil. 1:27-30—<sup>27</sup> Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, <sup>28</sup> and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. <sup>29</sup> For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, <sup>30</sup> engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.