

Herod's Troubled Conscience

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[0 : 00] I wish to extend a very warm welcome to everybody this morning, and it's good that you're able to join with us. We pray that our worship today will be meaningful and that it will be blessed of God to all our souls.

We're going to begin by reading a few verses of God's Word from Matthew chapter 14. And we read here, At the time Herod the Tetra heard about the fame of Jesus, and said to his servants, This is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him.

For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Because John had been saying to him, It is not lawful for you to have her. And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people because they held him, that is, John, to be a prophet. But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company and pleased Herod, so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask.

Prompted by her mother, she said, Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter. And the king was sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests, he commanded it to be given.

[1 : 19] He sent and had John beheaded in the prison. And his head was brought in a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother.

And his disciples came and took the body and buried it, and they went and told Jesus. Amen. May God bless to us that reading of his holy word.

We're now going to bow in prayer. Lord our God, we pray to bless us today as we gather before you on another day that you've given to us. We give thanks for the Lord's Day.

It is a very special day, a day where we're able to draw aside from all the other duties and demands and come to know you more and more. Help us to remember that our relationships in this world are developed through spending time with people and getting to know people.

And it is important for us also to realise that our relationship with you strengthens and develops the more time that we spend with you, listening to your word and reading your word and studying your word and talking to you.

[2 : 29] Because as we come to your word and study it and hear it and read it, this is you speaking to us, and in prayer we speak to you. And so we give thanks for this tremendous privilege and that we're not governed by particular hours as to when we can come to you and when we're forbidden or not permitted to.

That we can come day or night, inside or outside, irrespective of where we are, whether we're seriously ill in a hospital bed or whether we're in full strength on top of a mountain.

It doesn't matter the situation or circumstances. We are invited to come to you. We're invited to come to a throne of grace. The throne reminds us that a king is there.

And so we come before the king. But grace is that undeserved favour. And so we realise that although we're not worthy of it, you are the God who bestows upon us great and wonderful blessings.

And so we pray that we might come with hungry hearts, with outstretched arms, seeking riches and blessings from you. We give thanks for all your goodness and mercy towards us.

[3 : 40] We give thanks, Lord, for your kindness to us and your love to us. We give thanks for the kindness and love of so many people in this world, one towards another. Although so often our news is, we hear so much of what is evil and wrong and of all the heartache and brokenness.

We could also put a news out every day where it would be filled with all the good things that people do for one another, for all the gifts that are given, for all the tokens of kindness that are shown.

And we give thanks, Lord, for all these things. We give thanks, Lord, for the great love and kindness of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave us life as a ransom for many, who gave himself in order that we might be saved, who took upon him the sin that deserved our death.

But he died in our place in order that we may live before you and come to live forever in your presence. And so we pray that you would bless every single one of us.

We pray, Lord, for our Lord, for those who mourn. And even just in this, we're always facing bereavements and sorrows. We remember those amongst us who have experienced the loss of loved ones.

[4 : 58] And we ask, Lord, that your tender, gracious healing may be in them and upon them, and that you will bind up the broken heart. Tears are part of this world.

But we give thanks that a day will come if we are brought into your presence, where God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. Tears will be no more.

What a wonderful thought. And so we pray, Lord, that even as we live out in this world, that you will dry up the tears and that you will help us as we go along.

We pray for those who are ill and laid aside at this time. Ask that your healing hand might be upon them, that you might do them good. We pray for our young people during holiday time. We pray that there will be a time of refreshing for them and keep them safe and sound during the holidays and when they go back to school.

We pray for our teachers, head teachers. We pray for all who are in authority over us. And with all the challenges they face, we ask, Lord, that you grant them wisdom and strength and help and blessing.

[6 : 02] We pray, Lord, that you will be with our NHS. We give thanks for all that we receive from them. We give thanks for their dedication and their care and their commitment, which goes beyond so often just duty, but it comes from hearts full of love and devotion.

And so we pray, Lord, that you would bless each and every one. We ask, Lord, that you would help those who are trying to deal with all that they've had to deal with personally through the COVID-19 because many of the workers have been exhausted mentally and physically through the challenges that they faced.

Lord, may they recuperate and may they know your healing and blessing. Be with every broken heart because at this time it has been so difficult dealing with the deaths of loved ones where separation has been brought to bear.

And so we ask, Lord, that your grace and mercy and peace may be upon each and every one. Bless your word now as we come to it and that we will again know your guidance in it and your blessing from it.

May our lives be enriched by it. Help us, Lord, not to push you away. Help us, Lord, to receive you, to want to know you more and more, to cast ourselves upon you.

[7 : 28] We ask, Lord, that you will help us in all the challenges of life. So often there are anxieties and worries and pressures and issues. So we pray, Lord, that we may learn more and more to cast our burden upon the Lord and experience your promise where you tell us that you will sustain us.

Commit your way unto the Lord. Trust also in him. He shall bring it to pass. Grant wisdom to all our leaders and those in authority over us. We pray for them and ask, Lord, that they would be given the wisdom from above, not their own wisdom, to lead us and direct us in the right way and to be with us nationally and internationally.

We live in dangerous times and troublous times, but we ask for protection. Oh, Lord, may your arm be around us as a nation. And as we hopefully are moving more and more out of lockdown, we pray that there won't be a second spike and a second wave of this virus.

We pray that a safe vaccine, a powerful vaccine, will be found, that will do great good to so many. We ask, Lord, that you will be with us.

Watch over us in the little while that we're together waiting upon you. Pray your blessing upon our carers. We give thanks for them, the great work that they do in our communities.

[8 : 50] Bless all those, Lord, who tirelessly work in all the different areas and aspects of life. Remember our emergency services, our police and our fire and our ambulance and all the various services, our Coast Guard services, Lifeboat, all who do so much work in rescuing and protecting.

Grant us your grace, then, we pray, and forgive us of every sin. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Just a wee word to any of the young folk who might be listening in.

My mother was 103 last Monday. Now, as you know, that's a very, very old age to reach to. And she gets up every day.

She sits in her chair. She listens to CDs and she reads. And she is very, very happy. We have wonderful carers who come and they get her up and they make her look, dress her and make her look like the queen every day.

And she seems to be as happy and content. One of the sad things, although her mobility is largely gone, finds it, her memory also has disappeared.

[10:08] I mentioned, I think, this before. So that she doesn't really know. She doesn't know who I am. Most of the time, there's the odd time, she'll say, Kenny. And you think, whoa.

But a lot of the time, she knows she knows me, but she doesn't know that I'm her son. And we show her photos of different people. I've said that as well. Even my dad, who she's married to for 52 years, looks at the photos and doesn't recognize him.

So it's a very sad thing when a person's memory goes away. My mum was born in 1917. And in fact, a few weeks ago, I was talking about the dead man's penny, the kind of the medal or plaque that people got in memory of them when they were killed in the war and how my granduncle, he was killed in 1917 in the battle there.

Well, my mum was born that year in 1917. King George was the king at the time. And the world was very, very different.

It was reckoned that only 23%, which is about a fifth of the world's population, could read and write back in 1917. Nowadays, it is reckoned that it's well over 80%, maybe 83%.

[11:33] I can't remember the figure. I remember seeing it at one point, but 83% plus, which is the vast majority of the world's population can read and write.

Back then, it took about five days to travel from London to New York. Today, you can do that in about eight hours. Eight in a little hours. It used to take over three months to go from London to Australia.

You can now do that, probably as quick as in about 18 and a half hours. Isn't that incredible? Over three months back in 1917, and now in less than 24 hours today.

So you can see there have been huge, massive changes in that period, in these 103 years. Of course, there were no computers, there were no iPads, there were no laptops, there were no mobile phones, there were none of these things.

When my mum, in fact, when I grew up, there was none of these things. I never saw any of these things when I was a boy growing up, there alone, going back to my mum's age.

[12:44] But I know when my mum was young, they didn't have electricity in the house. It would be lamps, tilly lamps, with paraffin and such like in it. And there wasn't running water.

I know, I remember when I used to go to Carly and Holiday, the well, there was a well right beside the house. And Dad said, that's where we used to go and get the water every day. Because there was no running water.

You went to the well to get the water. And we'd just turn on a tap. So you can see the huge changes that took place in my mum's lifetime.

So she saw an incredible amount of changes. But she herself has changed. Because she used to, when she was young, she used to love running, cycling. She was a teacher.

She had a great memory. She can't do any of these things now. That's what happens with age. So she's 103 years old. But imagine if you met somebody who was 300 years old.

[13:43] Imagine. That person would have been alive during the time of Bonnie Prince Charlie. Or somebody who was, say, 700 years old. That person would say, well, I met Robert the Bruce.

I met William Wallace. You say, whoa, that's, that's really, really old. But if you went back nearly two, two and a half, 2,400 years ago, you'd say, well, I was alive at the time of Alexander the Great. Or if you went way back in time to the, the time of David. David was king for 40 years from 1010 to 970 BC.

That's 3,030 years ago. Imagine being that old. But you know, the amazing thing is that the God of heaven and earth has lived through all these years.

He was exactly the same alive, powerful, in charge, ruling, reigning today as the same as in 1917.

[14:54] Same at the time of the time of Bonnie Prince Charlie. Same at the time of Wallace and Bruce. 13, 14, I think, was the Battle of Bannockburg.

The same at the time of Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great. The same at the time going back to David all the way back to Adam and Eve because he made Adam and Eve.

He made this whole world. He made the universe. He made everything. But the amazing thing is God God has always been. He has no beginning and he has no end.

He doesn't live in time in the way that you and I live in time. We're governed by time. Do you know what it tells us? That one day with God is the same as a thousand years.

1066, the Battle of Hastings. You go back a wee bit more than a thousand, just a little over a thousand years. and one day, today, God's sight is the same because he sees the end from the beginning because he is over everything.

[16:05] Before ever there was anything, God was everything that he is today, exactly the same. He has always and ever been. But he brought this world into being and he knows and he has a time appointed when he brings it to an end.

Everything that we know is going to come to an end. But he never changes. You and I change.

Even in the day, our moods change. Sometimes we're angry, sometimes we're sad, sometimes we're happy, sometimes we're in a bad mood, sometimes we're in a good mood.

God is never like that. His love never changes, his mercy never changes, his justice never changes, his forgiveness never changes.

He's the same. And you know, there is nobody in all the wide world is greater to have as a friend, somebody to be with you forever than the living God.

And he asks us today and every day to come to him through his son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And he says, you know, I have the best for you. I have the best for you now and I have the best for you in the future.

[17:21] Will you give your life to me? Because I am life. I am life forever. Will you please do that? You'll never regret it because he is the only living and through God.

I want to say the Lord's Prayer. Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. We're going to turn again to read God's Word and this time we're going to read from Mark's Gospel, chapter 6.

Mark, chapter 6. And it's the same reading as we had in Matthew, chapter 14. It's the death of John the Baptist. Mark, chapter 6, verse 14.

King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some said John the Baptist hath been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him.

[18:35] But others said he is Elijah, and others said he is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old. But when Herod heard of it, he said, John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.

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. For John had been saying to Herod, it is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.

And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to put him to death, but she could not. For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe.

When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly. But an opportunity came when Herod, on his birthday, gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee.

When Herodias' daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests. the king said to the girl, Ask me whatever you wish, and I'll give it to you.

[19:47] Devour to her, whatever you ask me, I will give you up to half of my kingdom. And she went out and said to her mother, For what should I ask?

Oh, and she said, the head of John the Baptist. And she came in immediately with haste to the king and asked, saying, I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

The king was exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests, he did not want to break his word to her. And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head.

He went and beheaded him in the prison and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Amen, and may God bless to us this reading of his own holy word. We're going to focus today, although I want us to keep the reading of Matthew 14 in our minds, primarily I want us to look from verse 16 of Mark chapter 6.

[21 : 04] But when Herod heard of it, he said, John, whom I beheaded, has been raised. For it was Herod who sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias' brother Philip's wife, because he had married her.

For John had been saying to Herod, it is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife. And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death. She could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man.

And he kept him safe. And he heard him. He was greatly perplexed. And yet, he heard him gladly. Now, in this episode, we meet Herod Antipas, or sometimes Herod the Tetrarch, where he ruled over a fourth of the kingdom, governs a fourth part of a kingdom.

Herod Antipas, was a son of Herod the Great. Herod the Great was Herod who was king when Jesus was born and was responsible for the slaying of the infants in Bethlehem.

His grandson, Herod Antipas, was one who was king at the time when James was put to death and Peter was in prison in order to be put to death as well.

[22 : 35] And here we have this Herod, the Herod before us, here Herod Antipas, and here's the one that, sorry, it was Herod Agrippa, I should have said, that put James to death and imprisoned Peter.

And here we have Herod Antipas, he's the one who puts John the Baptist to death. So you can see the Herods weren't any great friend of the gospel, and they actually have a lot of blood on their hands with regard to the dealings with God's people.

Now, we find here that as Jesus went about teaching and healing and ministering in a way that nobody really had ministered before, the name of Jesus was on everybody's lips.

Who is this man? There was just this amazing sense of this being somebody special, somebody powerful. And there was a tremendous compassion about his work, a tremendous kindness.

He was a religious leader, but he didn't fit into the category of any of the religious leaders of the day. You see, people like, we all like to categorize people, put people in their boxes, say, well, he belongs there, or she belongs there, that's what we do.

[23 : 57] But it doesn't work like that, because Jesus didn't fit into any box. Everybody could see he was a good man, a religious man, but he didn't fit into the box of the scribes, or the Pharisees, or the chief priests, or any of these.

His teaching was revolutionary and radical, different to anything that had gone before. He taught with power and authority, and he was healing all the time.

And so, there was this quandary, who is this? And so, there were various views. And as we saw in Matthew's Gospel, and here in Mark's, people had different views.

Some thought it was Elijah, or one of the Old Testament prophets, and others said it was John the Baptist who was raised from the dead. And for one person in particular, the thought of John the Baptist rising from the dead was a horror.

And that was for Herod. Because as we read in Matthew chapter 14, and also here in Matthew 14, we read at the beginning, at that time, Herod heard about the fame of Jesus, and he said to his servants, this is John the Baptist.

[25 : 07] He has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him. And again, in chapter 6, King Herod heard of it for Jesus' name had become known.

Some said John the Baptist had been raised from the dead. Others said it's Elijah. But when Herod heard of it, he said, John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.

And that's the last thing that Herod would have wanted. He would have hated the thought of this because I believe that Herod, from the moment that he had John beheaded, never experienced anything but a troubled conscience.

Because he had heard so much from John that he knew that one day he was going to have to face up for this appalling crime that he had committed. And so his heart would have condemned him and his conscience would have pushed him.

You see, John spoke to Herod often and he spoke and he discussed the things of God with Herod. And Herod listened to John's teachings and so he knew that having killed the mouthpiece of God, that huge guilt lay on his heart.

[26 : 27] And you know, we shouldn't envy those who live in their palaces and in their corridors of power because we do not know what kind of troubled conscience they may have. We said before when we were looking at David and Saul, that I'm quite positive that David slept a lot better in the cave when he was hunted than Saul with all his luxury in the palace.

Because Saul was a tormenting soul. David had the peace of God that passes all understanding. And I'm quite sure that John the Baptist slept a lot better in the prison.

And the prison, these prisons were not nice. I'm sure he slept a lot better than Herod did in his palace. Because John's conscience was clear, Herod's wasn't.

And you can't put a price on that sort of thing. And you know, if you don't know the peace of God that passes understanding, you ask the Lord to come into your heart. It'll change your life. It will give you what you don't have just now.

So many people today crave peace but they can't get it. And the thing is, the one place where they can get peace is in Jesus. Jesus said, my peace I give you, not as the world gives I unto you.

[27 : 42] And yet people say, we don't want Jesus. And in saying they don't want Jesus, they are really saying they're pushing goodbye to that peace that is unique to a Christian.

So you ask Jesus to come into your heart. John had ended up in prison because he had criticized Herod for having taken Herodias as his wife.

Because Herodias was actually married to Herod's brother Philip. But Herodias was also his niece. So what Herod had done was all wrong. And Herod didn't take kindly when John criticized him and condemned him for having done that which was wrong in the sight of God.

And John's ministry, we have to remember, was a call to repentance. Repent and believe. Repent for the kingdom of God has come. And you know, there are few messages that disturb people more than the message of repentance.

[28 : 50] There are few messages that bring umbrage into or cause umbrage in people's hearts than being told they have to repent before God because there's the attitude of who, me, why?

Because so often what we do is we judge ourselves against other people. And we have a greater sense of our rightness before God than we should have.

And we say to ourselves, well I'm a decent enough person, okay my life, I've done loads of things that aren't good but are not bad. Well, in God's sight, none is righteous, no, not one.

And God calls us all to repent of our sin. And it's only when the grace of God begins to work in our heart and in our lives that we're brought to see something of what our sin is really like.

And when God's spirit touches our heart there is a cry of repentance. Lord, I'm sorry. And the call of the gospel isn't just to believe, it is to repent and believe.

[29 : 58] In a sense you cannot have saving faith without repentance unto life. The two are bound together. And when you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of your soul, you do so asking that your sins, which are many, would be forgiven.

That's what you and I do. That's what happens. And so it is the only way of salvation. So John had fiercely told Herod that what God is requiring and what God demands.

And Herod didn't like it. But we've got to remember that God's message and God's commands and God's demands are for everybody. The poor down and out who has nothing, all the way to the Queen and Prince Philip and to Donald Trump, the President of the United States, to every person in this world, the message, whether you're Kim in Korea or whether you're Trump in the White House, the message is the same, to repent and to believe.

There is no difference to rank, to status, to privilege, to anything. we are all one in the sight of God and his word and his command comes to all.

So John had been put in prison and Herodias wanted John put to death right away. She was raging at what he had done. How dare this man? But initially Herod didn't want to do that because he feared the people because he knew that the people counted John a prophet.

[31 : 39] But you know things changed with Herod because Herod obviously began to get to know John and I think what would have happened is that as time went on Herod would have called for John to be taken from the prison and he spoke with him.

Because in verse 20 we find something very simple, very interesting taking place. This is what it says, For Herod feared John knowing that he was a righteous and holy man and he kept him safe. when he heard him he was greatly perplexed and yet he heard him gladly. Herod knew that John was a righteous man. In the presence of John Herod became very aware.

He was a man of integrity, a man of uprightness, a man who tells as it is. Herod no doubt would have been surrounded by yes men who would tell him exactly what he wanted to hear. Here was John who told the truth. There is no doubt that even it might have been grudgingly so, but a growing respect grew in the heart of Herod for this man John.

[32 : 52] You will notice what Herod does and he kept him safe. Herodias wanted John dead, but Herod kept him safe.

He was shielding John the Baptist. so you can see the change that is taking place in the heart of Herod. And you will notice that the end of the verse tells us when he heard him he was greatly perplexed and yet he heard him gladly.

In other words, as John the Baptist would speak with Herod, the more he spoke, the more Herod was beginning to enjoy what he was hearing, God's truth was obviously having some form of impact upon Herod's life or in Herod's mind anyway.

And Herod was beginning to rethink things and he would say, you know, that's good what I'm hearing. But the sad thing was Herod wasn't changed. You see, God's word is either a savor of life unto life or death unto death.

The most important thing we can do is come unto the word. Read God's word, come unto the preaching of God's word because it is through the reading and the preaching of God's word that our lives are changed.

[34 : 14] But we can come unto the word and our lives not be changed. And that's what sometimes happens with people. So you make sure that when you come unto the word you ask the Lord and say, Lord, help me to be willing that my life be changed.

Because there's something within us that resists against the change. We don't want to change. But it's so important that we be willing to be changed.

Ask the Lord, Lord, help me to be changed. You know, there are some people who love just coming unto the word. And they love to be challenged by the word. They love to be terrified unto the word.

God, I knew a young lady years ago. And I was speaking to her about the gospel, not on this island, but I was speaking to her about the gospel. And I said to her, you have a really good ministry, you're under a really good ministry.

And she said, oh, he's all right. But she said, you know, he doesn't terrify me. She said, you know what I love? I love going to church and ending up shaking in my shoes under a sermon.

[35 : 24] I love a hellfire sermon that shakes me in my shoes. So I said to her, do you want to be converted? Oh, yeah, but not just now, later on. So for her, it was like going to, it was like a, it was like, you're talking for some, like, some terror movie, something that would terrify, but had no intention of responding to what the terror of the law was bringing in order to push us to see the safety in Jesus Christ.

And there are people like that, that they can come under the word, but they have no intention of letting the word do anything to them. But as I said, don't get me wrong, it's absolutely essential that we do come under the word and thank the Lord for every person who listens to the word.

And that's one of the great things even through our lockdown, that the word of God is still going out and maybe reaching people who don't normally listen to the word. we pray that souls will come to be saved.

But it also tells us something else, that when he heard John, he was greatly perplexed. See, he was really disturbed. He was disturbed in his mind.

And you know, I read somewhere that a repressed conscience plays absolute havoc with the mind. and you know, that's quite a thought.

[36 : 53] Because if we press, suppress, and press down these things and try to push away the things that are wrong within our life and all these issues and different things are wrong, it doesn't go away.

It causes problems. David tells us that in Psalm 32. Remember in Psalm 32 where David refused to acknowledge his sin and he tried to suppress it and to push it down.

And this is what he says. For when I kept silent, in other words, when I pushed the sin down and tried not to acknowledge it or confess it or anything, my bones wasted away through my groanings all day long.

My strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Poise state to be in. And I believe a lot of people are like that. And it's only when he confessed his sin that he discovered the freedom and the

liberty and the cleansing that is found in Jesus Christ.

So Herod, he preferred a sinful lifestyle, although he knew it was coming at a price because he had a troubled conscience. Now we know the story, it was a sad, sad episode happens here.

[38 : 06] Herod's birthday, through a big birthday bash, all the top guys in the place where he is, all the nobles and the top of the land were there. And Herodias' daughter came in and she danced before them.

She danced obviously very wonderfully or seductively or whatever, to such an extent that Herod, he was so moved and he said, hey, hey, you know this, I will give, I promise you, I will give you whatever you want, even up to half of my kingdom.

do. And the girl goes running away and she says to her mum, wow, guess what, Herod has promised me anything I want, anything, what will I ask for mum?

Golden opportunity for Herodias. She wasted no time, get back to Herod, say, I want the head of John the Baptist on a platter. And Herod were told, wasn't just sorry, he was exceedingly sorry for the request.

She couldn't have asked for anything worse. But it tells us that for the promise that he made in front of all the people, he went with it.

[39 : 20] In other words, he couldn't lose face, his pride would stop. Herod, he was king, he could have said, oh, come on, I will give you anything, that is unreasonable, I'm not going to give you something, I'm going to take somebody's life.

But rather than lose face, he gave in and he said, okay. I wonder if we go through history, both church history and world history, how much sorrow and division and pain and bloodshed has come about because people are not prepared to lose face, people are not prepared to climb down, because of pride.

people don't give in and give up and there is so much havoc and pain and sorrow over it. But you know what I find really solemn when we conclude with this, is that the next time we meet Herod, Jesus is before him.

You can read about it in Luke chapter 23, at the time of the trial of Jesus. And initially Herod is delighted that Jesus is before him because it tells us for a long time he wanted to meet him. and he was hoping that he would perform some miracle. And so Herod begins to question Jesus and you know what it tells us? And Jesus answered him not a word. Why? Because Herod had already cut off God's mouthpiece.

[40 : 42] God had sent a messenger to Herod and Herod had heard that message gladly but then he cut off the mouth. Cut it off. That was it.

Nothing else to say. And you know what the true Herod then comes out? Because he begins to mock Jesus and he holds him in contempt. And that mocking of Jesus and the holding of Jesus in contempt didn't stop Herod.

It goes on right to this very day. Tragically. Sadly. And so we find that Herod was a man who seriously thought about the kingdom of God that his love for sin was greater.

Where are you today? Is there something in your life that's holding you back from closing in with Christ? You yourself will know that. But remember there is no sin that's worth pushing Jesus away for.

Because that sin, if you turn Jesus away forever, that sin will be your return from it. please ask Jesus to come into your life, take over your life, so that you will know the blessing and the beauty and the freedom that is found in him.

[42 : 04] We're going to conclude by singing in Psalm 2 from Sing Psalms, Psalm 2 from Sing Psalms. Why do the heathen rage? Why do the peoples plot in vain? Earth's kings combine in enmity, her rulers join against God's reign.

They take their stand against the Lord and challenge his anointed one. Let us break off their chains from us with their restraints. Let us read in Psalm 2, verses 1 to 6 from Sing Psalms.

Why do the heathen nations wage? Why do the peoples plot in pain?

As kings combine in enmity, her rulers join against God's reign.

They take their stand against the Lord throne and challenge his anointed one.

[43 : 21] Let us take off their chains promise with their peace slain.

Let us become the one enthroned throne in heaven last.

The Lord on high delights them all. Then he refutes them in his crown, his great man's care but on them fall.

the Lord has made it known to end, my chosen king I often saw, of Zion my own falling hill, he is the one.

the one whom I have fallen. Now may the grace, mercy and peace of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore.

[44 : 55] Amen. Well, thank you for worshipping with us today and we pray that God will be with every single one of us. half past six and the service this evening will be conducted by Scott MacLeod.