

**Prayer:**

**Slide # 1**

**Theme:** *Christ the King*

**Outline:**

- Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)
- Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.
- Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)
- Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)
- Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)
- Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.
- Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.
- Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.**
- Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.
- Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.
- Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.
- Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.
- Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

The first 10 chapters of Matthew present evidence showing that Jesus is the prophesied Christ (Messiah-God). In chapters 11-12 we have the response of the nation of Israel as led by her religious leaders – and that response was one of REJECTION. Christ then responded with judicial judgment in the form of parables in Matthew 13. The parables concealed further kingdom truth from those rejecting Christ and revealed further kingdom insight to true disciples.

And a KEY point in the parables is that the kingdom offered is now being postponed. In order for the kingdom to come Israel must accept Jesus as her Messiah and that was the problem. They were outwardly enthused about His “miracle ministry” but they were not accepting of WHO He was as Messiah-God. They rejected His Lordship, and hence the coming of the kingdom is now delayed.

The period of kingdom delay is marked by these realities...

## **Slide # 2**

- ***Kingdom Delay Realities...***

- 1) During the kingdom interlude believers and unbelievers **co-exist** in the BIG TENT kingdom movement (Christendom).
- 2) The great issue in the kingdom movement is who will prove to be **genuine** and ultimately go into the kingdom.
- 3) Those that are truly “kingdom children” can expect to be **persecuted** for it before the kingdom comes.

If anyone initially expected to go into the kingdom at Christ’s first coming it was John the Baptist. He preached “the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mt. 3:1). He said, “even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees” – indicating imminent judgment on those who refuse to repent and thereby go into the kingdom (cf. Mt. 3:10, 12). But alas, that was not to be.

The kingdom offer was rejected and there was now to be delay and in this interim the true kingdom people would not be appreciated and would be persecuted and often killed. And exhibit “A” of this reality was John the Baptist who became the very first martyr (as it were) for Christ.

In Matthew 13 we have the reality of kingdom delay introduced and then in Matthew 14 we see the fall out of that reality. The premier prophet (John the Baptist) who laid out the terms for the kingdom to come is killed which is indicative of where we are at during this time of kingdom delay.

It is amazing what passes for leadership in the world and that is nothing new. The Herodian family was crazy – sinfully crazy. The Herodian family figured large during the time of Christ and the early days of the Church. They represent the governmental authorities during this time. And as we see in our text today they totally rejected the Messiah’s herald in the person of John the Baptist and by extension the truth of Jesus as Messiah.

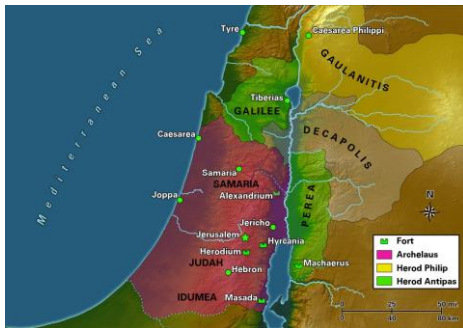
**Matthew 14:1–13 (NKJV)** (cross refs. Mk. 6:14-29; Lk. 9:7-9)

**1 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the report about Jesus  
2 and said to his servants, “This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him.”**

Herod the Great founded what we know as the “Herodian Dynasty”. He ruled from 37 BC to 4 BC. He was an Edomite, a descendant of Esau. He was a builder and he was a tyrant. He had 9 wives and thought nothing of killing them and his children if they crossed him for any reason. Like I say he was paranoid crazy. It was Herod the Great who had all the infants killed in the Bethlehem area in an attempt to wipe out the newborn King of the Jews (cf. Matt. 2).

Herod had a good number of sons and after he died they divided up the region that he had ruled over. The Herod in view here at the beginning of chapter 14 was Herod Antipas. Tetrarch means “ruler over a fourth part of the kingdom.” He ruled over Galilee and Perea from 4 BC to AD 39. This is the very area where most of John the Baptist and Christ’s ministry took place.

### **Slide # 3**



Herod Antipas was the one who murdered John the Baptist and later put Christ on trial and mocked Him (cf. Lk. 23:7-12). Here we have the background on what specifically happened to John the Baptist.

Herod Antipas had John the Baptist beheaded and now he lived with a troubled conscience knowing that he was a “just and holy man” as noted in Mark 6:20.

When Herod heard about the miracles that Jesus was doing he superstitiously assumed this must be John the Baptist back from the dead.

The voice of conscience is a powerful voice, and it can be the voice of God to those willing to listen. – **Warren Wiersbe**

This is what I call an example of “the long arm of the conscience”. Many years after Joseph’s brothers had viciously abused him and sold him into slavery and then claimed he was dead their conscience was still at work.

As Joseph's brothers went to Egypt and the leader their (unbeknownst to them being Joseph) was rough with them and held them in Egypt. Immediately their conscience went back to Joseph and what they had done to him.

#### **Slide # 4**

##### **Genesis 42:21 (NKJV)**

**21** Then they said to one another, "**We are truly guilty concerning our brother**, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; **therefore this distress has come upon us.**"

It had been many years and yet the long arm of the conscience was very much at work. And so with Herod, as wicked as he was, yet the conscience is a hard thing to get away from. Yes, it is possible to come to the place of having a seared conscience but that involves a horrible process.

The most holy man Herod ever knew was John the Baptist and so his guilty conscience combined with superstition jumped to this conclusion which was also fed by the rumor mill of others (cf. Lk. 9:7-9).

In truth John the Baptist had done no miracles. His ministry was strictly that of being a herald announcing and preparing the way for the Messiah.

#### **Slide # 5**

##### **John 10:41 (NKJV)**

**41** Then many came to Him and said, "John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true."

In verses 3-12 we have what is called "a literary flashback" which gives us the historical background on the death of John the Baptist.

**3 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.**

**4 Because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her."**

Herod had put John in prison because he dared to call Herod to account for his immoral relationship with Herodias. Herodias was the daughter of another half brother by the name of Aristobulus. Although she was a niece, she had married another brother (her uncle) by the name of Phillip.

But now yet another brother (Herod Antipas) who was also her uncle has taken her to be his wife. I tell you it was all in the family.

Herod Antipas had been married to **Aretes** who was the daughter of a Nabatean king. However, upon marrying Herodias, Aretes was sent packing back to her father and the result was ensuing war. It was very messy.

Into this context came the fearless John the Baptist telling Herod that it was not lawful for him to have Herodias as his wife (cf. Lev. 18:16; 20:21). That was speaking truth to power and neither Herod nor Herodias appreciated it.

Many commentators believe that John was probably referring to Leviticus 18 which deals with all manner of sexual perversion.

There God tells His people not to behave as the pagan Canaanites did in all their sexual perversion.

It is striking in Lev. 18 the accountability concerning sexual immorality that God holds over the heads of these pagan people. God gave people conscience; and even nature itself testifies of the wrongfulness of gross immorality (cf. Rom. 1). And although the Canaanites did not know God at all – He still held them accountable for their gross immorality.

### **Slide # 6**

#### **Leviticus 18:24–25 (NKJV)**

**24** ‘Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you.

**25** For the land is defiled; **therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it**, and the land vomits out its inhabitants.

### **Slide # 7**

#### **Leviticus 18:30 (NKJV)**

**30** ‘Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that you do not commit any of these **abominable customs** which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I am the Lord your God.’ ”

Why should they NOT do these things? BECAUSE GOD SAYS SO! In light of Who He is, that is good enough. That is all the answer that is needed (cf. v. 26, 30).

They needed to realize that He is a Holy God Who clearly demonstrates that His holy standard involves sexual purity; as seen in the reason for the wiping out of the Canaanites. It should be duly noted that there are NO CANAANITES today. As a people group, they were destroyed. They illustrated the sexual perversion of the prevailing culture that God's people are to be separate from. Sexual purity has everything to do with HOLINESS. It is a REALLY BIG DEAL before God.

As we come to the NT we find in the book of Romans that pagans suppress the truth of God (Rom. 1:18). And as they do so their wicked hearts are darkened and in that rebellious darkness God gives people over to a depraved mind resulting in all manner of sexual deviance and perversion (cf. Rom. 1:24, 26, 28).

Consistently throughout the Scriptures...

Sexuality is a holiness issue.  
Sexuality is a Lordship issue.

God demands that He be LORD in this area of the believer's life (cf. 1 Cor. 5:9-11, 6:9-11, 10:8-11, Eph. 4:17-19, 1 Thess. 4:3-7, Rev. 21:8, 22:15).

Sexual immorality is completely incompatible with God's holiness; and God's people are to have no fellowship with it. Sexual purity is to define God's people. It is one of the key things that set us apart.

### **Slide # 8**

**1 Thessalonians 4:3 (NKJV)**

**3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;**

If you want to get in trouble with the world today – just take a public stand against immorality. The world will hate you for it and will call you a HATER for taking such a stand. This is a premier issue that separates God's true people from the world.

### **Slide # 9**

The ungodly like religion in the same way that they like lions, either dead or behind bars; they fear religion when it breaks loose and begins to challenge their consciences. – **Unknown Author**

Josephus (the Jewish historian) reported that John was imprisoned at Machaerus which was a fortress located east of the Dead Sea.

### **Slide # 10**



**5 And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.**

Herod Antipas was a fickle fella all over the map emotionally and spiritually. John speaking out against Herod's immoral relationship with his niece who was also his brother's wife - infuriated Herod. He was so angry that he wanted to kill John because of it and yet politically he feared an uprising of the multitude if he did so because they counted him as a prophet.

I say that Herod was fickle because on another score – evidently in other areas Mark 6:20 says that Herod heard John gladly. He didn't mind hearing John out on other matters, but when it came to the issue of his personal immorality Herod didn't want to hear it. He gladly heard John until it got too personal and then he wanted to kill him.

Here is a truism: Until people are repentant, they don't love the truth and they don't want to hear it. And they will hate those who expose them and call them to repentance. Unrepentant people do not appreciate being called to repentance.

And we see here that Herod was a fickle coward. He feared the multitude as politicians tend to do. Public opinion swayed him and determined his course of action. So we see he was not a principled man.

**6 But when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod.**

On the occasion of Herod's birthday, the entertainment was the daughter of his illegitimate wife Herodias. Most commentators believe the daughter was somewhere between 12 and 14 years of age. She was still young enough to be under the control and direction of her mother.

Again, most commentators believe this dance was sexually suggestive in nature being provocative and sensual. This is very much in keeping with the moral deviancy of Herod and company.

Josephus tells us that this daughter was named Salome who was the daughter of Herod Phillip who was the uncle of Herodias. So Herodias and her uncle Phillip had this daughter named Salome. And now Herodias is married to another uncle named Herod Antipas.

And it should also be noted that Salome later married another of Herod's sons called "Phillip the tetrarch" who was a different Phillip. But again, it was all in the family. Total immoral perversion – family style defined this family generally.

Herod was perversely pleased with this sensually provocative dance and and...

**7 Therefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask.**

He must have really been infatuated to make this kind of an offer and to strengthen it with an oath – as if to indicate he was very serious about it. Evidently Herod and his company were very pleased sensually with this dance.

**8 So she, having been prompted by her mother, said, "Give me John the Baptist's head here on a platter."**

This almost comes off like a plot all along to get Herod to carry out this dirty deed. Certainly, Herodias was right there to take advantage of this situation and in effect she was playing her husband and manipulating him to do something he didn't really want to do for fear of the people as seen in verse 5.

It is the mother (Herodias) behind the scenes who was pulling the strings at this point. This really wasn't Salome's idea, but rather that of her mother who coached her in what to request.

And so, under the influence of her wicked and bitter mother she requested the head of John the Baptist on a platter. Everyone exploited this kid. Herod exploited her sensually and her mother exploited her in the desire for personal renege against John.



**Slide # 11**

Something of man's depraved nature can be seen in the action of each of the three main players in this sad drama: the young girl used her seductive skill to lure the king into a vulnerable position; Herod foolishly promised, before witnesses, to give away up to half of his kingdom; and Herodias was so bent on revenge that she chose to kill a man who was already in prison. – ***Ed Glasscock***

**9 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.**

Note again the fickleness of Herod. In verse 5 he wanted to put John to death but now in verse 9 he is sorry to do so. The word sorry (Gk. ***lypetheis***) means to be greatly distressed – to be grieved or disturbed to the point of distress. This really bothered Herod, but not enough to change course.

Herod was a man captive to human opinion. He feared the multitude in verse 5 and now because of the “peer pressure” of those who sat with him and observed him make this grandiose oath – because he didn't want to lose face, he commanded that John be beheaded and his head given to Salome.

In doing so Herod put his ego above all else. Even though he knew it was wrong he violated all principles right and wrong to save face in front of his audience. But again, the long arm of the conscience continued to follow him.

Herod was really a fickle wimp. We read in Luke 23:8 that Herod had for a long time wanted to see Jesus do some miracle (cf. Lk. 9:9). And yet at the same time in Luke 13:31 Jesus was told that Herod wanted to kill Him. In response Jesus said this:

**Slide # 12**

**Luke 13:32 (NKJV)**

**32** And He said to them, “**Go, tell that fox**, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.’

Jesus was not the least bit intimidated by Herod. In fact, the word “**fox**” in Luke 13:32 is feminine meaning Jesus literally said, “**Go, tell that vixen**” – “**Go tell that female fox**”.

Seemingly this was Christ’s commentary on what a wimp he really was. Perhaps the feminine indicates that in reality the real power behind the throne was his wicked wife Herodias as he was subject to her wicked impulses and manipulation.

### **10 So he sent and had John beheaded in prison.**

Being the fickle egomaniac that he was John against all better principles of judgment sent and had John beheaded in prison.

### **11 And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother.**

What a gory scene. Here John’s bloody head was brought on a platter and given to this young girl age 12-14 who in turn presented it to her wicked mother. This is all incredibly gross and sinful depraved. These people were really hard! Even to depict it on the screen is a little to overwhelming – let alone to actually live this out and do it.

These people had no regard for the life of the prophet or the God He represented.

### **12 Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus.**

John’s disciples then came and took the body and buried it. For the Jews the proper disposal of the dead was consistently burial. People who were cursed were burned.

No mention is made of what happened to the head of John the Baptist. Perhaps Herodias kept it as sort of a morbid trophy over the man who dared call her and her uncle Herod out on their immoral relationship.

After burying John, his disciples then went and told Jesus. The forerunner had completed his mission. He pointed to Christ. He introduced Christ to the nation and called them to repentance. He preached against sin. And what did he get for it? He got his head cut off!

**Slide # 13**

When the disciples came to tell Jesus, it was another evidence of the growing rejection of Jesus and His message and a stark reminder of the awfulness of sin and unbelief. – **John Walvoord**

And the attention was now solely on Jesus! John the Baptist had said of Jesus, “**He must increase, but I must decrease.**” (Jn. 3:30) John has now completely faded from the scene and with His passing Jesus alone now took the stage of history.

**13 When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities.**

Upon hearing the news Jesus got away all by Himself. The question is raised as to why He did this. Some have suggested that perhaps Jesus was afraid that Herod would prematurely kill Him also. But that doesn't square with what is recorded elsewhere showing clearly that Jesus had no fear of Herod. Still, He may have been avoiding a premature show down as the timing was not yet right.

Also, there may be a couple of other things in view. Number one, Jesus was fully human. Yes, He was fully God, but He was also fully human – living in a context of humility in which He was subject to all the struggles and challenges of humanity.

When Christ's good friend Lazarus died when Jesus came to the tomb the Bible says, “**Jesus wept**” (Jn. 11:35). He knew the experience of human emotion – whatever was all involved here.

There is a place for grieving the loss of loved ones. Death remains the last enemy. The Bible says we do sorrow but not as those who have no hope.

When loved ones die, sometimes we need time to just get alone and process it. Perhaps that was part of Christ's human experience at this time. The Bible is clear that Christ had the full human experience, but He did so completely without sin (cf. Heb. 4:15).

But there may also be something else in view here.

### **Slide # 14**

#### **Luke 9:9 (NKJV)**

**9** Herod said, “John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?” **So he sought to see Him.**

When the fickle crowds rejected Jesus, He taught them in parables they could not understand – thus denying them the privilege of further revelation. When wicked Herod wanted to see Jesus He did not make Himself available to Him. Christ does not perform just to gratify curiosity. He does not cater to those who are not serious about Him.

Clearly Herod had heard about the great miracles that Christ was doing as clearly stated in the gospels (cf. Mt. 14:2; Lk. 9:9; 23:8). And yet He was not really open to where these SIGN miracles pointed – namely the truth of Jesus being Messiah-God.

### **Slide # 15**

For a fuller explanation [of verse 13] it is necessary to turn to Mark 6:30 where it is indicated that Jesus wanted to confer in private with His disciples who were just returning from a missionary tour of Galilee. This, then, would be a debriefing session. And in this context the discussion no doubt also included some reflection on the cost of discipleship. – **Howard Vos**

We have noted that verses 3-12 are a parenthetical interjection. So note the troubled conscience of Herod in verse 2 in relation to “**these powers at work**” in whom Herod thought was John risen from the dead – and then jump down to verse 13 showing the multitudes that were currently following Christ. If Herod thought that the ministry of Jesus was actually that of John risen from the dead, he undoubtedly would have felt threatened by it. He was fascinated and yet at the same time undoubtedly apprehensive.

After all the masses were following Jesus and Herod feared the masses as noted in verse 5. So, verse 13 provides explanation as to why Herod was so worried and concerned about the ministry of Christ and perhaps shows why as stated in Luke 13 Herod wanted to kill him.

Having presented Himself and His Messianic credentials to the nation on every level – the uniform response of both the nations spiritual and secular leaders was essentially that of REJECTION.

The experience of the Christ at His first coming was that of great humility, great rejection, and great suffering. So much for the KINGDOM coming as the Jews thought was going to immediately happen at the coming of Messiah. Yes, the kingdom was presented on the condition of repentance. But the people refused to accept Jesus for WHO He was Messiah-Lord and therefore the kingdom could not come.

The narrative as presented by Matthew shows that the REJECTION was very universal (exceptions of course – as God always has a remnant).

The fickle crowd largely rejected the claims of Christ – although in a self-centered sort of way they loved His miracles. They liked healings and free food. Even now we see in verse 13 the multitudes were still seeking after Jesus in search of more miracles. But again Christ saw right through the superficiality of this “crowd phenomenon” and because of it He spoke to them in parables as seen in chapter 13.

Even Christ’s hometown people – those closest to Him (humanly speaking) in terms of background – even they did not accept Him.

And in keeping with the REJECTION of Christ as Messiah was the rejection of John the Baptist – (Christ’s forerunner) by the nation’s leaders (cf. Jn. 5:35).

In the BIG SCHEME of Matthew he is showing us that the trajectory of Christ first coming took the direction of REJECTION which ultimately led to the cross.

### **Slide # 16**

John the Baptist was the first martyr to die for Christ, and it seems certain that Jesus took this opportunity to further prepare His disciples for what lay ahead for them. – **John MacArthur**

The disciples were expecting the kingdom to come. They knew the basic truth that the Messiah brings in the kingdom. And yet now even the Messiah’s forerunner had been beheaded. What to make of this? How did this fit in? It didn’t seem consistent with the kingdom expectations.

But as noted the rejection of Christ at His first coming meant there would now be a time of kingdom delay and during this delay Christ’s followers would generally be persecuted and killed. The martyrdom of John the Baptist denoted a major turning point in God’s kingdom program.

The end of Christ’s ministry involved Him preparing the disciples to expect coming rejection and persecution – even as the forerunner and then Jesus the Christ experienced.

### **Slide # 17**

**John 16:1–3 (NKJV)**

**1** “These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble.

**2** They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, **the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.**

**3** And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.

The ministry of John the Baptist is one of the great proofs in the Bible for the truth that Jesus is the true Messiah fulfilling the Scriptures. 700 years before the time of Christ Isaiah 40:3 predicted a forerunner to come on the scene preparing the way for the LORD. Clearly the Messiah was to have a forerunner emerging from the wilderness and this was fulfilled to the letter in the person of John the Baptist.

You just can't predict this 700 years in advance of your life and make it happen. Only God can sovereignly arrange these kinds of details. And He did. It all fits perfectly with Jesus being the true Messiah as prophesied by the prophets in the OT.

John the Baptist is an example of the fact that we just don't know the specific plan that God has for our lives. John fully expected to go into the kingdom – and he ultimately will – but the timing is to come later. It made no sense to him at the time what was happening to him in terms of what he was suffering, but looking back – having more revelation we now see the whole BIG picture and it all makes sense.

And so it is with our lives. We often don't understand and that is when we need to trust God with the truth that even when it doesn't make sense to us we have the promise that all things work together for those who love God. God is BIGGER than our circumstances and everything ultimately has a purpose in the BIG scheme of things. God only asks that we trust Him.

And finally, as we study the totality of Scripture we find two great themes in relation to the Messiah. There is a suffering theme and a glory theme.

**Slide # 18****Luke 24:25–26 (NKJV)**

**25** Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!

26 Ought not the Christ to have **suffered** these things and to enter into His **glory**?”

### **Slide # 19**

#### **1 Peter 1:10–11 (NKJV)**

**10** Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you,  
**11** searching what, or **what manner of time**, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the **sufferings** of Christ and the **glories** that would follow.

Now with further revelation we see clearly the rejection relates to Christ's first coming while His reigning relates to His second coming. The point is the prophetic truth of the Scripture also tells of His coming suffering. And thus, this too had to be fulfilled.

### **Slide # 20**

#### **Psalm 118:22–23 (NKJV)**

**22** The **stone which the builders rejected** Has become the chief cornerstone.  
**23** This was the **LORD's doing**; It is marvelous in our eyes.

Again, this all fits the truth of Jesus being the Messiah. Many other passages could be noted such as Isaiah 53 and Ps. 22.

And here is what we see. The way of Christ is first the way of the cross and then the way of glory. First the cross then the crown. And that is true also of those who follow Christ.

Today many want the way of kingdom glory and claim to champion this in the here and now, but at the same time there is precious little emphasis on the way of the cross.

Where we live in the “in between time” – the time of kingdom delay is characterized largely by the rejection of Christ as seen also in the rejection of those who are His followers. We today live in the way of the cross. This is our calling. The kingdom, the crown, and the glory are yet to follow.

Why did the world hate Christ?

**Slide # 21****John 7:7 (NKJV)**

7 The world cannot hate you, but **it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.**

If you want the world to love you – just don't speak out against the evil of its works. If you dare to expose the evil of the world they will hate you for it. That was true of Christ and it is true of His followers.

Jesus said,

**Luke 6:26 (NKJV)**

26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

The true prophets who called the people out on their sin consistently were hated for it. Stephen the first martyr of the Church said to the religious leaders of his day...

**Slide # 22****Acts 7:51–52 (NKJV)**

51 “You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.

52 **Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute?** And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,

Here is the full truth of the matter. Yes, the kingdom is on its way, but in the meantime if you want to take a real stand against sin you might get your head cut off for it. They beheaded John for speaking out against sin, they crucified Christ, and do we think we should get a pass?

**2 Timothy 3:12 (NKJV)**

12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

**Slide # 23****1 Peter 4:12–13 (NKJV)**



**12** Beloved, **do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial** which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;  
**13** but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's **sufferings**, that when His **glory** is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

As we present the truth of Christ, we can expect a dual response. Some will appreciate it and others will hate it.

As I preached the gospel at my father's funeral some loved it and others not so much. And in a strange way that is encouraging. If we are doing our job we should expect this dual response pretty consistently.

### **Slide # 24**

#### **2 Corinthians 2:15–16 (NKJV)**

**15** For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

**16** To the one we are the **aroma of death** leading to death, and to the other the **aroma of life** leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things?

To those in rebellion and unrepentant the aroma of death is offensive, and they don't appreciate it. But for those repentant and putting their faith in Christ the message is the aroma of life. Everyone is one of those two categories.

#### ***From the diary of John Wesley:***

"Sunday, A.M., May 5 - Preached at St. Anne's. Was asked not to come back anymore.

Sunday, P.M., May 5 - Preached at St. John's. Deacons said, 'Get out and stay out.'

Sunday, A.M., May 12 - Preached in St. Jude's. Can't go back there either.

Sunday, A.M., May 19 - Preached in St. Somebody else's. Deacons called a special meeting and said I couldn't return.

Sunday, P.M., May 19 - Preached on street. Kicked off street.

Sunday, A.M., May 26 - Preached in a meadow. Chased out of meadow as bull was turned loose during service.

Sunday, A.M., June 2 - Preached out at the edge of town. Kicked off the highway.

Sunday, P.M., June 2 - Afternoon, preached in a pasture. Ten thousand people came out to hear me.'

Part of proof Jesus being the real Messiah was the rejection He and the forerunner John the Baptist experienced. God is in charge of results. But until Christ returns, we can expect many will reject, but some will also respond in saving faith. Our job, as Paul in his last words said to Timothy, is to preach the Word in season and out of season! (2 Tim. 4:2)

Above all may God help us to be faithful to His Word and leave the results with Him!

My favorite chapter in the Bible is Romans 8. And some of the verses that I often read to dad were Romans 8:38-39.

**Romans 8:38–39 (NKJV)**

**38** For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,  
**39** nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

But the setting of those verses is interesting. In context these verses are right before Romans 8:36-37.

**Romans 8:36–37 (NKJV)**

**36** As it is written: "**For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.**"

**37** Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

God help us to be faithful in the way of the cross and then we will share in the crown as more than conquerors. Now is the way of the cross. God help us to be faithful in that way!