



Kingdom Value

Undervaluing the King

Matthew 13:53-14:12

How to Prepare

Begin preparing by reading the full passage a few times. Then answer the questions for yourself. Then think about how your Small Group might answer them. Try re-wording the questions to fit you and your Small Group. Don't feel tied down to the discussion guide, just be sure to discuss the main point of the text in your conversations.

Resources-

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-pride-of-nazareth>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/John-the-Baptist-beheaded.html>

<https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/virtues-vices-pride>

Sermon Outline:

Matthew 13:53-14:12

1. Pride is the Reason for Rejecting the Lord.
2. Judgment is the Result of Rejecting the Lord.

Matthew 13:53-14:12

John the Baptist Beheaded

Jesus Revisits Nazareth

53 When Jesus had finished these parables, He departed from there.

54 He came to His hometown and began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?

55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?

56 And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"

57 And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household."

58 And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

1 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the news about Jesus,

2 and said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him."

3 For when Herod had John arrested, he bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip.

4 For John had been saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her."

5 Although Herod wanted to put him to death, he feared the crowd, because they regarded John as a prophet.

6 But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod,

7 so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked.

8 Having been prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist."

Scripture (New American Standard Bible 1995)

- 9 Although he was grieved, the king commanded it to be given because of his oaths, and because of his dinner guests.
- 10 He sent and had John beheaded in the prison.
- 11 And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother.
- 12 His disciples came and took away the body and buried it; and they went and reported to Jesus.

Discussion Questions

Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 13:53-14:12 .

INTRODUCTION

Here is a question or two to help introduce the topic and jump-start discussion.

1. What was one main take-away that the Lord gave you through the text and sermon? In your own words, what does it look like to value Jesus as your King and Savior?

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION

These questions should help your Small Group dig deeper into the text and then apply it to your lives today.

I. Pride is the Reason for Rejecting the Lord.

2. What specific reactions do the people of Nazareth have to Jesus in Matthew 13:54-57? What do their questions reveal about their perspective?

3. If they did not outright deny His miracles or teaching, what caused the people of Nazareth to take "offense at Him?" How does pride lead us to make decisions contrary to the truth?

4. In what way was rejecting John the Baptist a rejection of the Lord? What elements of pride do you see in the actions and decisions of Herod and Herodias regarding John the Baptist? Compare and contrast the manifestations of Herod's pride, Herodias' pride, and the Nazarenes' pride.

5. In what ways can pride manifest in our lives, making us resistant to God's truth or unwilling to submit to His authority?

II. Judgment is the Result of Rejecting the Lord.

6. What is the immediate consequence of the people's unbelief in Nazareth (Matthew 13:58)? How does this demonstrate the link between rejection and judgment (or lack of blessing)?

7. Consider the story of John the Baptist's death. What is the "judgment" or consequence Herod faces, both internally and externally, as a result of his choices?

8. What does the Bible teach us about how God engages pride in our lives? (see James 4:6, and 1 Peter 5:5-6) What is the ultimate consequence or judgment when we reject God's word or His call on our lives?

9. Beyond overt rejection, how might a subtle "undervaluing" of the King in our daily lives lead to missing out on God's blessings or experiencing negative outcomes?

10. What does this passage teach us about the importance of genuine faith and humble submission to Jesus? How can we cultivate humility that allows us to truly value and receive Jesus, even if it challenges our preconceived notions?

Matt. 13:54–16:20 The Identity of the Messiah Revealed. This section marks a major new emphasis in Matthew's narrative as Jesus' messianic identity is increasingly clarified.

Matt. 13:54–14:12 Prophet(s) without Honor. Jesus is rejected at Nazareth (13:54–58); John the Baptist is beheaded by Herod Antipas (14:1–12).

Matt. 13:54 Although Capernaum had become Jesus' "own city" during his Galilean ministry (4:13; 9:1), his hometown is Nazareth, the village of his family and where he spent his childhood (see note on 2:23). Perhaps he is responding to a request from his mother and brothers to return home (see note on 12:46).

Matt. 13:55–56 Since they know Jesus' human roots, the people of Nazareth assume he cannot be anything special. He is a hometown son making fantastic claims for himself. His brothers and his sisters refers to other children born to Joseph and Mary after the birth of Jesus. Some interpreters, seeking to defend a doctrine of the "perpetual virginity of Mary," have suggested that these were cousins, or children of Joseph from another marriage, but no evidence in the Greek words adelphoi ("brothers") and adelphai ("sisters"), or in any other historical information, gives support to that view. For Mary to have sexual relations with her husband, Joseph, and to bear children, would contribute to her holiness, not detract from it (cf. Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 7:3–5; 1 Tim. 5:14). On Jesus' family, see note on Mark 6:3.)

Matt. 13:57 took offense. See note on 11:6. prophet. Jesus aligns himself with the OT prophets who had revealed God's will for the people of Israel but had consistently been rejected by them.

Matt. 13:58 not . . . many mighty works . . . because of their unbelief. Hard-heartedness and rejection of Jesus prevent the Spirit's healing ministry, just as they prevent forgiveness of sin (see note on 12:31–32). The Holy Spirit does not force his miracles on a hostile, skeptical audience.

Matt. 13:54–16:20 The Identity of the Messiah Revealed. This section marks a major new emphasis in Matthew's narrative as Jesus' messianic identity is increasingly clarified.

Matt. 13:54–14:12 Prophet(s) without Honor. Jesus is rejected at Nazareth (13:54–58); John the Baptist is beheaded by Herod Antipas (14:1–12).

Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

Matt. 14:1 Herod the tetrarch. Herod Antipas was the Roman ruler over the region where Jesus ministered. He was only 17 years old when his father, Herod the Great, died. The kingdom was divided among three of Herod's sons—Archelaus, Antipas, and Philip II (see note on 2:22). Herod Antipas was made tetrarch (the ruler of a fourth part of a kingdom) of Galilee and Perea and had a long rule (4 B.C.–A.D. 39).

Matt. 14:2 This is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead. Herod Antipas's reaction at hearing of Jesus' ministry reveals a curious blend of theology and superstition, based partly on semi-pagan ideas of returning spirits.

Matt. 14:3–4 For Herod had seized John. Verses 3–12 are a historical flashback. Herod Antipas had fallen in love with Herodias, the wife of his half brother Herod Philip I (not the tetrarch Philip mentioned in Luke 3:1), even though both were married at the time. Herodias divorced Herod Philip I and Herod Antipas divorced his wife (the daughter of the Nabatean king, Aretas IV), and they were married. John the Baptist had publicly condemned Herod Antipas for his actions (It is not lawful for you to have her). Josephus reports that John the Baptist was imprisoned at Herod Antipas's fortress-palace called Machaerus (Jewish Antiquities 18.116–119; cf. the description in Jewish War 7.164–177), which was a fortress built atop a steep hill east of the Dead Sea. It had been fortified by the Hasmonean Jewish kings (2nd century B.C.), destroyed by the Romans (c. 56 B.C.), and rebuilt as a palace by Herod the Great. Archaeological investigation has delineated the Herodian palace enclosure, including a cistern from this era.

Matt. 14:6–7 When Herod's birthday came a great celebration was held in his honor at the palace at Machaerus. Herodias had her daughter (named Salome in Josephus, Jewish Antiquities 18.136) perform a dance for Herod Antipas. She was only 12 to 14 years old, but in that debased setting it likely was a sensual dance, which pleased Herod.

Matt. 14:8 Prompted by her mother. Herodias steps in to eliminate the accusing voice of John the Baptist, a threat to her husband's reign.

Matt. 14:12 disciples. John's disciples had remained loyal to him throughout his imprisonment. They now devotedly cared for his burial, since all of John's family was quite likely deceased by this time (cf. "advanced in years," Luke 1:7).