

Herod's fear

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- [0 : 00] You turn with me for a few moments this evening to the chapter we read previously to the gospel according to Mark and chapter 6. Mark chapter 6 and verse 16.
- Mark chapter 6 and verse 16.
- Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him and would have killed him but she could not. For Herod feared John knowing that he was a just man and a holy and observed him and when he heard him he did many things and heard him gladly.
- For Herod feared John knowing that he was a just man and a holy and observed him and when he heard him he did many things and heard him gladly.
- Here we have a conflict situation.
- [1 : 42] A confrontation between John the Baptist and his message and a man who has many things that his conscience is bothered about.
- And I suppose you can say that whenever the gospel to a larger or to a smaller extent there is always a degree of confrontation when someone comes face to face with the gospel.
- Because no matter how interesting the gospel is on the academic level or on the interest level. The problem with the gospel is it speaks directly to the person himself or herself.
- It speaks about things that we would prefer that other people didn't know about and we would prefer to ignore because they know that they're wrong.
- It speaks about the things that we have learned to cope with. The secret sins and areas in our heart that we have learned to cope with by arguing with ourselves and by persuading ourselves that everything is all right and there's nothing really wrong.
- [3 : 06] The gospel demolishes all our arguments. And that is what we have here. As soon as you have that demolition you have a situation of confrontation and conflict.
- And it is a very dangerous situation indeed for the Christian, for the person who is trying to be faithful to the word of God. Here you have the man of whom it was said that amongst those who were born of women.
- Jesus said this about John the Baptist. He said amongst those who are born of women there has not arisen greater than John. John the Baptist. That is how highly Jesus thought about John the Baptist.
- A man of integrity. A man of truth. A man of consistency. A man of fearless individual. Who was in this, placed in this world to be the forerunner of Jesus Christ himself.
- And to point his hearers forward to the great gospel that Jesus was come to say. A man who was not afraid therefore to tell the truth about individuals.
- [4 : 17] On the other hand you have Herod. Who is a man who was a puppet king. He wasn't really the king. Those who were in charge were the Romans. They were, the Roman governor was of course Pontius Pilate as we know.

And Herod was simply the leader of the Jews if you like. He was kept on as a kind of a puppet king. And his life was involved in trying to please a whole lot of important individuals.

And trying to persuade himself that he was more important than he actually was. And all the time failing, failing to commit himself to the living and the true God.

And we'll see that in a few moments. Now I suppose that it's true to say that it is inevitable that in a country as small as Judea in those days. A man like John and a man like Herod.

It was bound to happen that they would come face to face with one another. Because inevitably they would meet and inevitably there was confrontation when they did meet.

[5 : 21] Because this man's life was anything but what it should have been. He had taken his brother Philip's wife to be his own. He was living in adultery with her. God had said thou shalt not commit adultery.

And John had gone through the course of his ministry at some point in time. He had said to Herod you must not do this. This is wrong in the eyes of God to whom you must give an account.

And instead of accepting what John had said about him. He decided he was going to react strongly against it. Instead of accepting and repenting and believing in the truth of God.

He took John and threw him into prison. That was of course the easy option. There are countless easier options for you this evening than to accept what God says about you.

There is always some easier option. There is always some way in which you can take the message and put it away. And ignore it and try and pretend it wasn't there. It is always an easier option to turn your back on the gospel than to face the facts about yourself.

[6 : 33] Now then, something interesting arises here with regard to John the Baptist. And I want to just touch on it because it is a very interesting theme that runs all the way through scripture.

John the Baptist was one of many righteous men. One of many upright and outstanding men that we find in scripture. We have been thinking with Mr. Stewart about the life of Elijah. And in fact, John of course was very similar to Elijah in his character and in his person.

But you come across many of those characters in the Bible. Who were prepared to stand for what they knew to be the truth. They were prepared to stand in very dangerous circumstances for what they knew to be the truth.

You have the example of Daniel, for example, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Who were prepared to defy the king's command in order to stand, to make their stand for the God they knew and they loved.

The question that arises is this. Why is it that some of them are miraculously saved from death? And others, John the Baptist namely, actually are put to death.

[7 : 42] They come to the end of their life. Why is it that Jesus, capable of all that he was capable of. He was capable of raising the dead, of cleansing the leper, of curing the blind, and so on and so forth.

He was capable of the most magnificent miracles. He wasn't 50 or 20 miles away from where John was. And yet he never delivered him from death. And yet you have a man like Daniel who is delivered out of the mouth of lions.

You have men like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who are miraculously delivered out of the flames of the fiery furnace. Why is it that there is this contrast between the two? John the Baptist facing death and he's actually put to death because he's not afraid to stand for the truth.

And these other men are miraculously delivered. I want to suggest only one thing. And that is this. That God's people will never die before their time.

And that the fact that John the Baptist was put to death at this moment means only one thing. That that was God's appointed time for him to be taken away from this world.

[9 : 00] In the case of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and Daniel, it was not the appointed time yet. In the case of John, it was the appointed time.

God was ordering everything to happen. And the same God who released Peter from prison, who opened the prison doors, was capable, more than capable, of doing the same thing for John the Baptist.

But he didn't because that was his providence. He had a better plan for John. He had better things in mind. So John was to face, he was to face very death itself for what he knew to be the truth.

He was not afraid to speak out. And we must be the same as the people of God. God's people this evening must not be afraid of the truth. We must not be afraid of standing alone for the Lord Jesus.

We must not be afraid of being ostracized and even being persecuted for the sake of the Lord. But persecution seems an awful long way away from us. But John wasn't persecuted until he made a very politically incorrect statement to Herod.

[10 : 09] Until he put his foot in it, as we would say. Until he overturned, turned over the stone. Until he started stirring things up in the course of his duty. And the question that lies in front of us this evening is, if political change was ever to come, would we have the same courage as John the Baptist?

Are the church, is the church prepared to continue to speak out against the moral evils that take place in this world today? Like homosexuality, and like adultery, and like abortion.

Moral evils which are encouraged in our day and in our generation. Are we prepared to stand and to continue to speak out against those for the sake of the truth?

Because conditions could become very different if we are prepared to speak out against an ever-changing political climate and an ever-changing public opinion.

I leave that one with you. I'll leave that one with you. Now then, I want to look at this verse here. I want us to focus our attention on Herod. And in very many, many ways, this passage is one of the greatest tragedies that we find in the Bible.

[11 : 26] Because there are some characters in the Bible who their whole lives had no interest in the living God whatsoever. They had no interest in Christ. They had no interest in the gospel. They lived their whole lives from start to finish without paying the slightest attention to the Lord.

There are other people who started off that way and when they heard the gospel, they were changed. They began to believe and their life thereafter was changed from that moment onward.

It was changed. They were converted. But here is a man who hears the gospel not just once, but twice and many times. He hears it preached to him in an exemplary fashion.

He hears it in an unmistakable way. In such a way that he cannot escape the force and the power and the influence of this great gospel through this great man, John the Baptist.

He comes so close. He comes within a hairspray of believing in Jesus Christ. He hears John. He hears him gladly.

[12 : 30] He's influenced. He's moved by John the Baptist. And yet at the end of the day, he fails to commit himself to Jesus Christ.

He ends up and Herod is lost because the very gospel which had such an influence on him, it was taken away. The opportunity was taken away.

What is it then that brought Herod so close? What was it then that brought him so close to the truth itself? And yet at the end of the day, while he was so near, yet he ended up being so far away from believing that would have saved him and given him eternal life.

What was it that brought him so close to that gospel? First of all, the life and the personality of John the Baptist had made a great impression on Herod.

The life and the personality of John the Baptist made a terrific impression on Herod. Verse 20, our text this evening, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and a holy man and observed him.

[13 : 53] Herod feared John. Not only did he fear him, he respected him to the extent that after he sent him into prison, in actual fact, one of the gospels tells us that he sent him to prison partly for John's protection because Herodias, the woman at the center of this row, was so infuriated by John's remarks about her, that she wanted him put to death right away and she saw it, we're told, ways of putting him to death right away.

If it was up to Herodias, she would have had him killed right there and then. But that's not the case, that wasn't the case with Herod. Herod saw something in John the Baptist that made a terrific impression upon him.

Here was a man who really knew what he believed. Here was a man who by his character and by his witness and by his behavior, he lived what he believed.

He lived as if God was walking right next to him. He lived as if God was there. He was present with him. He lived under the fear of God, under the influence of God all the time.

Is that how we live as a church? Is that how we live as Christians, as God people? Because if we do, we'll make an impression on others. There's no question about it. See that you may let your light so shine, said Jesus, that men when they see you, they will see by your good works.

[15 : 17] Now you might not feel that. You might not feel you're making an impression on anyone whatsoever. You might feel that there's just hostility and dislike amongst people with whom God, amongst whom God has placed you.

But nevertheless, if we as Christians are faithful and godly people and living as we ought to, there is no question about the way in which God will use that consistency and sincerity of faith to be an influence on other people.

But I want to turn the attention on you if you're an unbeliever tonight, if you haven't come to know Christ tonight, and you know, you've seen the example that consistent and faithful Christians have left you.

Maybe it was a grandmother or a grandfather. Maybe it was someone in your family, someone you knew from the time that you were very young, and no one in this world has made the impression that that person has made on you.

You loved to be with that person. Every ounce of that person spoke of the love and the truth of Jesus Christ. They lived for Christ, and there was no question about the truth of Christ.

[16 : 22] You never questioned it. Why? Because you saw it shining and radiating in their lives from the time that you first met them. You knew by that person's very behavior and character that the gospel was nothing but the truth.

And if ever a person made an impression upon you, it was that person. Or maybe you've read someone in history.

Maybe you've read through your Bible and you've read the outstanding bravery of men of God. Men and women who have lived their lives to the glory of God. And there is something in you that says, that is the kind of person I would want to be.

That is the kind of person that there is something in me that longs to be like. Some of the finest people in the world have been God's people. You notice, if you know your history, the people who have moved mountains, who have changed the course of world history, who have changed lives, around whom the whole world has turned upside down.

Faithful men and women of God. And you know perfectly well by their lives that the gospel is the truth. The life and the personality of John the Baptist made a great impression upon Herod.

[17 : 46] But then secondly, the second thing that brought him so close to the gospel was that Herod knew that what John said was right and true.

What John said was right and it was true. Verse 20 again, our text, Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, observed him.

And when he heard him, he did many things and heard him gladly. He knew that what John said was right and true.

This word, heard him gladly, it actually means that he heard him many times. It means there is a continual sense in the grammar of the original language in this.

He heard him many times. He was drawn back time and time again to listen. Why was it? Why should a man, why should a man respect John the Baptist who tells him that he is a sinner?

[18 : 50] He tells him that he is a sinner. What was it about what John the Baptist said that made such an impression upon Herod? You might say in one respect it was the last thing that ought to have made an impression upon him.

He spoke to him. He spoke to him as you, the second person singular. It was as if John the Baptist was reliving with Herod every moment of his life.

It was as if there was a window into his heart. He perceived the things, the motives that Herod was guilty of. He perceived his past. He went into his past. He told him of his deceitfulness.

He told him of his sinfulness, of his departure from... You know there is something about the gospel in itself that bears witness. Something about its persuasive and perceptive power.

It knows, it searches, it enters into the heart, into your heart and reveals the secrets that you can otherwise keep from everyone else.

[19 : 55] It cannot sow the gospel. It brings out the secrets of your heart. There was something Herod knew that what God, that what John said was right and it was true.

But then thirdly, he felt himself drawn to John. When he heard him, he did many things and he heard him gladly.

He heard him gladly. It wasn't just that he knew intellectually of the truth of the gospel. It wasn't just that he affirmed in his own heart that what John said was true, but there was something that actually had an effect upon him, that it threw him time and time again to hear those very things that made him so uncomfortable, to hear those personal things, to hear John telling him that he had a soul and that he was accountable to God, the God who not only sees what he does on the outside, but the God who sees what he does on the inside.

Now there is nothing as uncomfortable as the gospel and yet it draws us time and time again. to verify and to confirm that it is the truth because it speaks to our heart.

There is a peculiar power that moves and affects us that tells us that it is the truth of God. He heard him gladly. He heard him gladly.

[21 : 26] I can't understand that. He heard him gladly and yet at the end of the day he was lost. But you know what confirms it to me as much as anything else is because I see the same thing happening in the hearts and lives of people even today.

People even amongst us this evening. You come back, you come back, you like listening to the gospel, you like being persuaded, you like being moved by the gospel.

Many of you have even been moved to tears by the gospel. You know that it is the truth. You have been impressed by the lives and the characters that you have come across. People who have lived a consistent Christian life.

You know that there is a peculiar power to the gospel. You know that what God demands, God's demands are the truth. You know of the love of Jesus Christ who came into the world to save you from your sin, to die for you for your sin, to suffer the cruel death of the cross instead of you and yet, and yet, you have never come to that place of complete, complete surrender to Jesus Christ.

And that will bring me on to that word yet, to that awful, fearful, horrific word yet. All of the movement that took place in Herod amounted to nothing.

[22 : 59] Why? Why did it amount to nothing? A man who was so influenced and so affected, at the end of the day it amounted to nothing. Why? Well, first of all, he never thought things to their end.

He never thought things right through to the bitter end. You see, Herod was a slave. Herod was a slave as much to his feelings as he was to his wife.

We'll come on to his wife a little bit later on. But he was a slave as much to his feelings as his wife. You see, he went by his feelings on the surface rather than thinking, using the mind and the reason that God had given him to think the matter through to the very bitter end.

In other words, when he went to see John, he was a different man than when he went to see his wife or when he was in the company of his own servants and his own people, his own family.

When he went to see John, he would sit there and he would listen to what John said. And he would listen with a straight and a solemn face, knowing that every word he said was true, was the truth, not just about God, but about him and his accountability to God.

[24 : 15] That every word he said was the truth. And he listened to him and he was interested and he was moved and he was affected by what he said. But then he went out the door. He went all the way back to his own palace and he would come into the company of his friends and he transformed completely into a different man.

All his emotions were gone, all his feelings were gone, all the movement, all the sadness, all the solemnity and the serious was gone and he moved back into his court where he was a popular and he was an important man where he enjoyed wealth and success and where he had many servants and where he thought he was a big fellow and he could make his own decisions and he thought that he was surrounded by all his friends and the people who thought made him so popular.

A different man altogether and when he got into the company of his wife and people like his wife he began to listen to her and she began to say well that John is talking a load of nonsense.

I don't know why you're going to see that John all the time. What is it about him that you want to go and see? Do you not love me? Do you not think that I have given you so many things in this life? Do you not think that I've given you everything that you need?

What do you lack more? Why do you go and see that man, that fool that has made such a fool of himself and he's made such a fool of us and tried to make out as if we're the worst sinners in the country?

[25 : 36] She would say to him. Why do you listen to him? Why do you not stay here? And then he would listen to her and he would say, yes dear, you're right, you're right. I must stay in my own palace and live in the comfort of my own home and forget all about these things.

You see, he was a slave to his own environment. Slave to his own environment. He was a slave to the particular surroundings at the time and it's the same with you, isn't it?

It's the same with you. You come here and you listen to the gospel and sometimes it's as if you're the only person in this church because the passage speaks directly to you.

In personal terms, you know that the gospel is the truth of God speaking to you because God is demanding your complete surrender and you take it seriously.

You listen, I can see on your faces. Don't think that I can't see, by the way. I can see how many of you take what is said seriously and I know that the vast majority of you take what is said seriously.

[26 : 42] You listen to what is said, yet you haven't believed. You haven't believed. Why? Because you go out the door and Monday morning comes, you're in a different environment.

You're in amongst your work friends, you're in amongst your friends, your neighbours, the people who you like to be with as well. And it's different, it's laughter, it's hilarity, it's a different slant on things. You begin to discover the world isn't so serious after all.

You turn on your radio and they tell you, listen, have a good time. You only live once. What about this thing that's happening tonight or that thing that's happening tonight? You want to listen, you want to go to this movie, you want to go to this public house, you want to watch this on television.

And the whole environment has changed. The seriousness has gone. what has become of the feelings and the influences that you had on a Sunday.

Isn't that the truth? Isn't it the truth? He was, he never thought things right through. But you see, if you think about it, if you would only sit down and if you would only push aside all your environment and the things that try and pull you in one direction, push them aside and ask yourself, how am I going to really think about this thing through to the very bitter end?

[28 : 00] Have you ever thought the gospel through? Not just on a Sunday but on a Monday morning or on a Tuesday or a Wednesday because the truth is the same on a Wednesday as it is on a Sunday. It's the same, whatever you feel like.

The facts remain. It is as true during the week. It is as true when you're sitting in front of your television, your mind is a thousand miles away from the gospel.

That doesn't affect the truth of the gospel. It is true. Have you ever thought it right through? Have you ever thought I am a sinner? I am lost.

I am accountable to a God who is perfectly holy and who has made demands of me that I must keep completely and perfectly. And I have failed to keep those demands.

I have sinned. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Each moment that I live, I live as someone who has come short of the glory of God, who has missed the mark, who has missed the point.

[29 : 00] Each moment that I live, I live in debt. I live in the red to God. And if I was to appear before his judgment seat today, I would be guilty and I would die eternally for my sins.

Have you ever thought the matter through? To Jesus Christ, there is a way of salvation. There is one who has come into the world. There is one, the son of God himself who became man and who suffered so that I might be saved, so that I might repent and believe and by repenting and believing, I would find forgiveness and eternal life in his name.

So why don't I repent and believe? Why don't I see the whole thing through? Why do you stop short? Why do you stop short? Because you haven't thought the matter through.

God kept him was his love for Herodias.

His love for Herodias. Firstly, he never thought the matter through. He was a slave to his own environment. But then secondly, he loved Herodias.

[30 : 16] Herodias was not his wife in God's eyes. He had taken her. He was living in adultery with her.

Herod feared John verse 20, knowing that he was a just man and a holy and observed him. And when he heard him, he did many things.

In other words, what that means is this, that John's preaching had such an influence on Herod that it actually changed him.

He was changed. He went away and he put into practice some things in his life. He perhaps went to those he had influence over and he said, look, you know, really we ought to give a wee bit more to the poor.

There are people who are suffering in this country. We ought to give. We ought to be a wee bit more kind to them. And perhaps himself with his wealth, he began to see that there were poor people and he began to give to them, perhaps.

[31 : 26] Or perhaps the kind of language he would use at his parties or his festivals, he would say, you know, my language is really, it really is excessive. My swearing is excessive. I really ought to take a step back and I must improve myself a little bit.

Or perhaps he was cruel to his servants before or some of the people in his kingdom. He did many things. John's influence, John's preaching had a great influence on him.

It affected the way he lived. Someone looking at him would say, well, this John the Baptist has done a great deal of good for Herod. It's changed him a little bit. But he still loved Herodias.

Herodias was his favorite sin. And the one thing that he would not let go in his life.

And it's the same with you tonight, isn't it? You've heard the gospel before and I'm not saying the gospel hasn't had an effect upon you. I'm sure it has. I'm sure it has affected you deeply.

[32 : 28] It's affected the way you fill in your tax return form. Because you come under the influence of the truth of God and you say, I must be honest in what I say. And it influences the way in which you speak to people.

You say to yourself perhaps on a Monday, well, I was really challenged by that sermon last night. I'm going to stop swearing so much. Or I'm going to stop drinking so much. Or I'm going to change my habits a little bit. I really have to improve my life.

The gospel does have an influence upon a person's life. Listen. God is not interested in the improvements that you are going to make to your life.

The gospel is not concerned with you trying to make your life a little bit less sinful than what it is. God demands your complete syringa.

And that means a forsaking awe to follow him. are forsaking everything to follow him. And that is where Herod stopped short.

[33 : 37] Because I reckon tonight that you would be prepared to give many things to be saved. You would be prepared to give up many things. In fact, many, perhaps some of you have done it already.

But that's not what God wants. God demands our complete surrender. If any man would come after me, said Jesus, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Follow me. And that is where Herod stopped short. Because you see, there was this great love in his life. He had become infatuated by Herodias.

He had fallen head over heels for this woman. Even to the extent of throwing out God's law and the righteous demands of a holy God. He had given up what he knew to be right for the sake of this woman.

And this woman was eventually what was going to lead him to a lost eternity. What is it with you? It might not be a woman. It might be something else. What is it? What is it that you refuse to forsake tonight that keeps you from eternal life itself?

[34 : 52] Listen, let me tell you something. However precious it is to you, however valuable, whatever influence it has on your life, there is nothing, nothing is so important that it should keep you from eternal life.

Whatever it is, don't let it keep you from salvation. Don't let it keep you from coming to faith in Jesus Christ. Leave it. Let it go.

Leave it behind. Forsake it. And follow the Lord Jesus Christ. And then lastly, there was his own concern for his own reputation.

And I want at this point to notice how his circumstances changed after verse 20, and when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords and high captains and chief estates of Galilee.

And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in and danced and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. Now there is a very important and a horrific point here, and that is that what we think is going to last forever turns out to be short-lived.

[36 : 06] Herod is making one fatal assumption. He's put John in for his own protection, for John's own protection, and he doesn't even realise that he himself, Herod, is John's greatest danger.

The last person in this world who he ever expected to be the source and the reason for John's death was himself, and yet that's what happened. You see, when we refuse the gospel, when we live recognising the truth of the gospel, being drawn by the gospel, being affected by the gospel, and never coming to that place of commitment to Christ, never coming to that place where we take a stand, where we make a decision for Christ.

I have no apology in using that word. I use it guardedly, but I hope I use it correctly. Making a decision for Christ, because he demands that decision, that commitment, that belief, whatever word you want to use, that belief, that point of commitment and surrender to Christ.

When we think we can continue that in that direction, we can't. I want you to notice that mercy's ground is only finite.

That there is a finite time between, and a fine line between God's mercy and God's wrath. God's patience and God's wrath.

[37 : 37] And the last day in which he expected, his circumstances to change for the worst, and his circumstances would never be the same again, was his own birthday. His harmless birthday party, when he was surrounded by his friends and neighbours, wearing his other hat, wearing his hilarious hat, his party hat, if you like.

hat where he discards all the seriousness of John's message. Listen, there is nothing as dangerous as living like that because your circumstances will change in a moment in time.

Who would have thought, who would have thought that a dance of a young girl would affect him so much? Who would have thought that the innocent, the seemingly innocent party to celebrate his own birthday would result at the end of the day with John's head being brought in on a plate?

You think about that, you think about that the next time you talk about what's the harm in it? You think about that very carefully because there's a lot of harm in this world. And the most dangerous position is being, trying to have a foot in both camps, listening to one thing and listening to another because the circumstances will come, the situation will come in which the cleavage will be made and when it is made, it will be made once and for all with no turning back.

Because his own popularity, his own image, his own surroundings proved to be more important than the truth itself. What a tragedy in the case of Herod.

[39 : 17] What a tragedy. You see, when I say that God's mercy will not last forever, well, you think that's true.

Because one day I will die. But that's not the only way in which God's mercy comes to an end. You could grow old or you could grow sick and your mind could be taken away from you.

In your old age or your sickness, your mind could be taken away from you and you are incapable of knowing even what the gospel is, let alone whether you can commit yourself to the gospel. You could end up in a state, in a moment of time, where you can't even distinguish Jesus from anyone else in this world.

You are unable to discern the truth of the gospel. Have you ever thought about that? It's happened before. But there's another way.

By your own decision, by your own foolishness, never trust the decisions that you come to while you are outside of Christ.

[40 : 27] Never trust the life you live while you are outside of Christ. You are capable of anything at all. And Herod was haunted by the specter of John the Baptist for the rest of his life.

so much so that when he heard of Jesus himself, when he heard of even the Christ himself, he was so overcome with what he had done, with the action that he had taken, that he said it can't be the great Christ.

It must be John. See? Every day he lived, he lived with a memory of John the Baptist. Every breath he took, he took in a conscience of what he had done to John the Baptist.

Year by year, his mind was twisted and turned. He was never allowed to forget the action that he had taken to put to death a man who had told him nothing but the truth.

You could put the gospel to death in your own heart tonight. by your own action. You could put the gospel to death in your own life.

[41 : 49] That is why the gospel is either a savor of life unto life or a savor of death unto death. And that is why the very words that Jesus utters on the day of mercy come unto me will one day, if you continue the way you are, it will change to depart from me.

May that never be the case for any one of us. May God bless his world. Let us pray. Gracious Lord, we pray that thou wilt impress upon us not just the truth of the gospel, but to such an extent that we will come to Jesus Christ, that we will believe in Jesus Christ, that we will follow Jesus Christ, that we will deny ourselves, that we will forsake all and believe in Jesus.

Oh Lord, we pray then that even this night that thou wilt so touch someone here in this church, that even by the account for which a man of God gave his life, we pray that that account may be the means of convicting someone to the saving of their soul.

Bless thy word to us then we pray. Forgive our sins in Jesus' name. Amen.