

**Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
For Group Meetings from July 8 through July 14**

Prayer of the Day: O God, from you come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments; and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BIBLICAL EQUIPPING TOGETHER:

Share: How did last week's scripture (Mark 6:1-13) work in your life?

Mission: What was most satisfying about your ministry last week? Where do you see God at work? How did you participate in God's missional activity? ***How did inviting go last Saturday and Sunday? How many new people did you talk to?***

Hear: Mark 6:14-29

Explore Questions: (Use these or develop your own.)

1. What kind of impact did the preaching of John the Baptist, Jesus, and his disciples have on the people, leaders and rulers of the day? Confusion? Fear? Anger? What do you see in the text?
2. Why did King Herod have John arrested and put into prison and why was his wife so angry?
3. What was the result of John the Baptist speaking truth and critiquing the actions of a political ruler and his family? Did his death stop the impact of his words?

Connect Questions: (Use these or develop your own.)

4. What kind of impact does God's word have in your life today when you hear it proclaimed in worship? How can we go out and make Jesus' name known (v. 14)?
5. John the Baptist reflected the truth of Herod's situation and called him to account. Where do you see a conflict in your area of influence between God's word of truth, mercy, and love? Where do you see God's truth, mercy and love being lived out faithfully?
6. Does faith make your life easier or harder? Why?

Prepare: Memorize this verse: "*King Herod heard of [the disciples' preaching,] for Jesus' name had become known...*" (Mark 6:14a). How do you hear God calling you?

BIBLICAL EQUIPPING APART:

Obey: During this week follow through on your intentions.

Meditate: Read Ephesians 1:3-14. How does this speak into your life?

Reflect: What have I learned in my week of living with this text? What can I share with my group when we next meet?

OUR MISSION TOGETHER: As a missional congregation we celebrate Christ's presence, invite people into a growing relationship with Jesus, and equip them to serve in a broken world.

Notes for ChristCare leaders:

John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus' coming by proclaiming the truth from God that it was time to repent and follow Jesus. It was time to break away from old ways of sin, death, and brokenness to embrace and trust the Son of God who came to bring faith, hope, and love. John spoke the truth, even in dangerous situations, and the result was his death. Yet, his words and his testimony live on thousands of years later. He stuck to his mission and never looked back. It was the fear, jealousy, and anger of being confronted by the truth that caused his imprisonment and beheading. Sometimes people just don't want to hear the truth about themselves because it's easier to just go on living the way we want to live. Yet, God's word is like a mirror that reflects our true selves back to us, helps us to see the error of our selfish ways, and then reaches out to rescue us from ourselves with a chance to repent, be forgiven, and receive new life full of hope and peace and love. The invitation is open for all to receive God's word which always comes to us with law and gospel – correction and grace. We are all called to speak the truth of God's word in love at all times. This is quite a challenge! It's easier to stay quiet. And yet, part of our call is to make Jesus' name known by telling the world about his words of acceptance, forgiveness, peace, and love for all people!

Thanks be to God,
Pastor Andrea acain@desertcross.org

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those
Who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
And deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
And the glory are yours,
Now and forever. Amen.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified died and was buried;
He descended to the dead,
On the third day he rose again;
He ascended into heaven,
He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
He will come to judge the living and the
dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting. Amen