

Fine Line: The Church's Prophetic Voice

Mark 6:14-29

Bethany Assembly of God

10.20.24

Central Proposition: The Church can be a prophetic voice to our culture.

Introduction

The moment when Herod Antipas heard about the ministry and miracles of Jesus brought a haunting image to his mind. You see, Herod had John beheaded and for no good reason. This sordid story follows right after Jesus' apostles have experienced great success preaching the Kingdom, healing the sick, and casting out demons. It seems that Mark wanted to remind us that though there was great success, Jesus was being identified with John and that, like John, He too was headed for a completely unjustified death at the hands of powerful people who felt threatened by Him. We're closing a series on politics called, "Follow the Lamb" and today, we need to consider the church's prophetic voice. We've seen from the beginning of this series that Christians have been called and set apart and our citizenship is in heaven. So, we represent and speak for Jesus. John's story gives us some insight into what we should be willing to do and what we should expect. The Church can be a prophetic voice to our culture, including to our politics. How?

1. We must stand in allegiance to King Jesus. See Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:2-3; Joshua 5:14.

First, we need to recognize that Christianity is not bound by American culture. As much as we may love our nation, Jesus' Kingdom does not rise or fall with it. His kingdom is forever. And so, I have to remind myself and I must remind you that we have to stand in allegiance to Jesus, more than anything else. This allegiance is the foundation for what comes next and so, is indispensable for us. In all your political engagement, conversations, prayers, and hopes, don't forget that Jesus is King. Your allegiance belongs to Him.

2. We must proclaim the Gospel. See Matthew 24:14; John 3:16; Romans 5:6-8; Acts 17:30-31.

I know that we like to say that the Gospel is not political and we would prefer to keep religion and politics separate, but Jesus called it, "the Gospel of the Kingdom." The Gospel is a message contrary to every allegiance that people set up in their lives. Some make the government the ultimate authority. Others make money, pleasure, race, their sexual identity...the ultimate authority. In all these cases, the Gospel challenges that claim by saying there is another Authority. As a church, we must boldly proclaim the Gospel: the love of God revealed through Jesus and the judgment of God revealed through Jesus.

3. We must be willing to suffer. See Luke 14:28-30.

This has been the case for prophets throughout history. Elijah spoke up against Ahab, Jezebel, and the prophets of Baal and he was chased all over the country for it. John spoke up against the sin of Herod and he was beheaded. Paul spoke prophetically to Jews and Gentiles and he was arrested and beaten on multiple occasions. To be the church is to be the prophetic voice of God. To be the prophetic voice of God is to invite suffering. The cost to follow Jesus is high, but it's worth it because He offers forgiveness, cleansing for your soul, righteousness, and eternal life.

Conclusion

To be a prophetic voice in our culture, we will have to walk a fine line. It is a line that often goes between parties. It's a line of proclaiming the justice of God and the love of God simultaneously. It's the line of hating evil and loving our enemies. It is the narrow road that Jesus called us to walk.

Will we represent Jesus when it hurts or only when it's comfortable? Will we remember that the most important thing we can do is represent the judgment and love of our eternal God?