

MYSTERY & MAJESTY

– 7 –

The Cost of Truth

- ❖ In 1977, one of the most feared men in Africa was Idi Amin.
- ❖ People disappeared, were imprisoned, and killed.
- ❖ In Uganda there was a Christian leader named Janani Luwum.
- ❖ Luwum and other Christian leaders confronted the violence of Amin's regime.
- ❖ He knew it was dangerous.
- ❖ And shortly before his death, he reportedly told another bishop: “They are going to kill me. I am not afraid.”
- ❖ In February of 1977, Janani Luwum was dead.
- ❖ Truth has a price, but compromise has a greater one.

Matthew 10:16-20 16 “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. 17 Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, 18 and you will be dragged before governors

and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. 19 When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. 20 For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Matthew 10:28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

- We've got to learn to be courageous as Christians.

Matthew 14:1-4 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus, 2 and he said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead; that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him." 3 For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, 4 because John had been saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her."

- This story is a flashback.

Who is Herod?

- ❖ Herod in Matthew 2 is Herod the Great.

- He ruled when Jesus was born. Murderer, killed children, evil.
- ❖ This is Herod Antipas
 - Son of Herod the Great.
 - He ruled Galilee and Perea.
 - Technically he was a tetrarch, although people sometimes referred to him as a king.
 - The “Herod” involved in Jesus’ trial.
- ❖ Herod the Great had 2 sons named Philip.
 - Philip 1 married Herodias and had a daughter named Salome.
 - Herod Antipas falls in love with and subsequently marries his half brothers wife, Herodias. Taking her.
 - Then Philip 2 marries his niece Salome.
- ❖ This is what gets John T.B. in trouble.
- ❖ He tells him it is not lawful for you to have her.
- ❖ Herod has heard of Jesus and his ministry.
- ❖ Herod has killed John already and he thinks Jesus is John come back to haunt him because of superstition.
- ❖ “John had been saying” – this was a repeated confrontation against his sin
- ❖ The “Herod’s” claimed to be Jewish religiously, though Edomites ethnically.

R.C. Sproul – we need examples...of people who are willing to stand up against the whole world if necessary to be loyal and faithful to Christ.

Matthew 14:5 And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet.

- Mark tells us that Herod respected John.
- Herod was afraid the people might rebel.

Matthew 14:6-8 6 But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company and pleased Herod, 7 so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. 8 Prompted by her mother, she said, “Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter.”

- Scholars suggest she danced provocatively.
- Herodias uses her daughter.

Matthew 14:9-11 9 And the king was sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given. 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.

- Herod didn't want to kill John.

- Feeling sorry is not repentance.
- It is an opportunity for repentance but it is not itself repentance.

Matthew 14:12 And his disciples came and took the body and buried it, and they went and told Jesus.

- Jesus said that among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist.
- He performed no miracles.
- The disciples ran to Jesus.
- Go to Jesus in your grief and sorrow.