

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS & MEDITATIONS YEAR A

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Source: <https://www.dailyscripture.net/>

THURSDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2023 – 25th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Scripture: **Luke 9:7-9**

7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done, and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had been raised from the dead, 8 by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the old prophets had risen. 9 Herod said, "John I beheaded; but who is this about whom I hear such things?" And he sought to see him.

Suppressing truth to ease a guilty conscience

Meditation: Who do you most admire and want to be like? People with power, influence, fame, or wealth? Scripture warns us of such danger (see Proverbs 23:1-2). King Herod had respected and feared John the Baptist as a great prophet and servant of God. John, however did not fear to rebuke Herod for his adulterous affair with his brother's wife. Herod, however, was more of a people pleaser than a pleaser of God. Herod not only imprisoned John to silence him, but he also beheaded him simply to please his family and friends.

God's truth cannot be suppressed

Now when reports of Jesus' miracles and teaching reach Herod's court, Herod became very troubled in conscience. He thought that John the Baptist had risen from the dead! Herod sought to meet Jesus more out of curiosity and fear than out of a sincere desire to know God's will. He wanted to meet Jesus - not to follow him but to prevent him from troubling his conscience any further.

We can try to rid ourselves of guilt and sin by suppressing the truth or by ridding ourselves of anyone or anything that points us to the truth. No power on earth, however, can remove a guilty conscience or free us from slavery to sin - only God can set us free through the atoning sacrifice which his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ made for us on the cross.

Whose voice and message do you follow?

How can we find true peace with ourselves and with God? The Lord Jesus shows us the way. Jesus explained to his followers, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:31-32). Only Jesus can set us free. If we listen to his voice and obey his word, we will find true peace, joy, and freedom to live as sons and daughters of God.

Does God's word take priority in your daily life? Or do you allow other voices and messages to distract you or lead you astray. The Lord Jesus promises to be with us and to guide us continually if we will listen to his voice and obey his word.

"Heavenly Father, form in me the likeness of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and deepen his life within me that I may be like him in word and deed. Increase my eagerness to do your will and help me to grow in the knowledge of your love and truth."

DAILY QUOTE FROM THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

Integrity is a hardship for the morally corrupt

by Peter Chrysologus (400-450 AD)

"John aroused Herod by his moral admonitions, not by any formal accusation. He wanted to correct, not to suppress. Herod, however, preferred to suppress rather than be reconciled. To those who are held captive, the freedom of the one innocent of wrongdoing becomes hateful. Virtue is undesirable to those who are immoral; holiness is abhorrent to those who are impious; chastity is an enemy to those who are impure; integrity is a hardship for those who are corrupt; frugality runs counter to those who are self-indulgent; mercy is intolerable to those who are cruel, as is loving-kindness to those who are pitiless and justice to those who are unjust. The Evangelist indicates this when he says, "John said to him, 'It is not lawful for you to have the wife of your brother Philip.'" This is where John runs into trouble. He who admonishes those who are evil gives offense. He who repudiates wrongdoers runs into trouble. John was saying what was proper of the law, what was proper of justice, what was proper of salvation and what was proper certainly not of hatred

but of love. And look at the reward he received from the ungodly for his loving concern!" (*excerpt from SERMONS 127.6-7*)