



## desert breeze community church

**Teaching Notes:** Ray Davis

May 24, 2009

### Jesusology

Mark 6:14-30

#### “Spiritual Vertigo”

Faith without doubts is like a human body without antibodies. It is defenseless to the intrusion of foreign objections destructive to our faith. If you don't take the time to ask the hard questions of why you believe what you believe you will eventually find yourself defenseless to the probing questions of a skeptic or the painful questions of suffering causing a spiritual vertigo.

Mark 6:14-30

#### What is Doubt?

*V20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.*

“Perplexed” = Gr. To be in doubt or not to know which way to turn.

- 1) It is an inescapable part of the human condition. (Book of Psalms; Rom. 7)
- 2) It is to waver between belief and unbelief. (James 1:16)
- 3) It is asking honest questions, unbelief is refusing to hear the answers. (Matt. 16:1-4)

#### How Should I Respond to Doubt?

- 1) See it as an opportunity to strengthen faith in God. *v21 “But an opportunity came...” (Vv14-16 Herod's conscience is haunted. Luke 23:7-12 Herod mocks Jesus). (Eph. 5:15-17; 2 Cor. 6:2; Rom. 1:18-32)*
- 2) Don't condemn it or condone it, but challenge it. (Jude 22; Mark 9:23-24; Phil. 2:12)

- Conservative perspective: Think of doubt as evil, a total failure, and therefore create churches where people can't be authentic.
- Liberal perspective: Think of doubt as intellectually sophisticated and emotionally mature and therefore are skeptical and cynical about everything.
- Balanced perspective: Struggling with God over the issues of life does not show a lack of faith. That is faith! That is what develops your Faith!

#### 3) Challenge it by uncovering its basis.

Doubt will force you to look at the foundation of your life. What is the basis of my doubt?

- Intellectual – Not enough information? (Heb. 12:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 10:17)
- Emotional – Bias from past hurt? v19 “Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death.” (Eph. 4:26-27; Heb. 1:15)
- Volitional – Do I want sin more than God? v26 “And the King was exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her.” Herod's greatest fear was loss of power and face. (John 3:19; Rom. 1:25)

#### 4) You can reason to a point of probability but it takes commitment to get to certainty. (Heb. 11:1, 6)

- It is turning from sin in repentance and turning to Christ in faith. All of life is repentance and faith. (Mark 1:15; Matt. 21:32; Rom. 2:4)
- There is no reality more breathtaking and intoxicating than the truth and beauty of Jesus Christ! (2 Cor. 4:4-6; 1 Pet. 1:8; Phil. 3:8-11)
- Divine truth is self-authenticating. (vv18, 20, 27; Mark 1:7; Ps. 34:8 “Taste and see that the Lord is Good.”)



# Growing

May 24, 2009

## desert breeze community church

1) Have the probing questions of a skeptic or the painful questions of suffering ever caused a spiritual vertigo in your life? Explain. Why is it important to not only know what you believe but also why you believe what you believe?

2) Read Mark 6:14-30. How would you describe Herod's relationship with John the Baptist (v20)? Define doubt? Why is doubt an inescapable part of the human condition?

3) How is doubt an opportunity to strengthen faith in God? Why does it go the other way with Herod and what does it reveal about Herod's values (vv26-27)? How does Herod's conscience seem to be haunting him in (vv14-16)?

4) What are some extreme ways of dealing with doubt and their consequences? How is struggling with God over the issues of life evidence not of a lack of faith but of faith? What can be the cause(s) of doubt?

5) What does it mean that you can reason to a point of probability but it takes commitment to get to certainty? How did John the Baptist continue to proclaim the truth even at the cost of his life (Mark 1:7)? How is the beauty & truth of Jesus self-authenticating (Ps. 34:8)?