



Volume 17 Issue 31

July 31, 2022

WHY DID JOHN DIE?

John the Baptist plays a vital role in the first century. It was he who prepared the people for the coming of the Lord (Isa. 40:3-6; Lk. 3:2-6). He stands out for this work. In fact, he was prophesied as coming "*in the spirit and power of Elijah*" (Mal. 4:5-6; Lk. 1:16-17; Matt. 17:11-12). Yet, after a time of preaching and preparing the people for the coming Messiah and His kingdom, we see him die at the request of a wicked woman (Mk. 6:22-28). Why did John die? Let me suggest three reasons why he died. **John Died Because He Would Not Change God's Message When People Got Mad.**

John's message included crying out for the nation's repentance (Lk. 3:7-14); and explicitly warning Herod it was not lawful for him to be married to his brother's wife (Matt. 14:3-4; Mk. 6:18). Because he would not relent or change the message, Herod had him put in prison and later killed. John was not the first nor the last to suffer such treatment for standing strong in the faith (Heb. 11:36-39; Acts 12:2; Rev. 2:13). Yet,

he stands out as a great example of faith and courage; and his godly example lives on to this day. Have we learned the lesson from John? Do we stand by the truth of God's word even when people get mad (1 Cor. 16:13-14)? If not, why not? **John Died Because A Wicked Woman Saw No Other Way To Silence Him (Mk. 6:17-28).** After Herodias' daughter danced for Herod, he promised her: "*Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.*" She consulted her mother, and Herodias demanded John's head. It is evident that John's faithfulness to God and His message did not waver despite cruel treatment, so she decided to silence him the only way she could. Sadly, there are people today who, like Herodias, blame the messenger when they do not like the message! As we know, from putting John to death, to the crucifixion of Christ, to the persecution of the Christians, such treatment did

not silence the gospel message but spread it farther (Acts 8:4)! May we be emboldened to spread God's word when opposition comes our way. **John Died Because A Wicked Man Made A Foolish Vow (Mk. 6:23).** We don't know if John was told why he was executed. It was simply carried out "*immediately*" after the request was made. Herod was "*sorry*" for what he had vowed, but not sorry enough to try to change the girl's mind (or her mother's) or to offer something else. John died that day because of a man's unruly tongue (Jas. 3:2-12)! Let us keep in mind that our words are powerful! They can build or tear down, so choose your words wisely! Let us be thankful for John and people like him who are faithful to God to the point of death (Rev. 2:10). John's righteous life and death were not in vain (1 Cor. 15:58). He teaches us how to act in the 21st century. – Jarrod Jacobs **What Makes A Good Preacher?** When asked to write an article on "What makes a good preacher?" I can think of no better answer than Paul's words to Timothy, "*I solemnly exhort you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and exhort, with great patience and instruction.*" (2 Tim.

4:1-2, NAS) When I examine this text, I'm reminded of the qualities that every good preacher will have. **"Preach the Word".** Always preach the word of God. Do not preach politics, something silly you found in a newspaper, or a man's opinion (including yours!). Some men think these things are necessary to carry a sermon, but they're wrong. I'm reminded of Psalm 19:7, which states: "*The Law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.*" The word of God carries itself! **"Be Ready In Season and Out of Season".** A preacher *must be ready*. I'm reminded of 1 Peter 3:15, which states, "*but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, but with gentleness and respect.*" Be ready for what? The phrase "in season and out of season" literally means "at all times." A preacher must be ready to preach the truth and to "preach it when folks like the message and when they don't." A good preacher must always be ready to preach the word of God regardless of whether or not it will be accepted! **"Correct".** The idea is to correct a person in error. How is he to do that? A preacher must use the word of God to accomplish this. Just as 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "*All Scripture is inspired by God and*

FIFTH SUNDAY PHOTOS

Every fifth Sunday of the month, we try to highlight some of great things happening around our congregation that were captured through photography. If you happen to get a good picture of one of those great things, please feel free to post it on our Facebook page, tag us on Instagram (@wellsburgchurch), tweet us at @wellsburgchurch, or e-mail us at minister@wellsburgchurchofchrist.com with a little description of what is happening in the picture.



Carlin is so excited for VBS she makes a rainbow smiley! Thank you to so many teachers and helpers who made VBS such a great success!



Our guest speaker for Shindig, Colin Morrison, prepares to give an encouraging devotion about how we are better together!



Lydia is completing her craft at VBS with a creative combination of stickers and images. The classrooms were so full of eager students excited to learn about mountains in the Bible!



Carlie is determined to find all the words related to the lesson in class at VBS. The teachers and volunteers did an amazing job of putting together exciting and engaging classes for all the kids to enjoy!

beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man or woman of God may be fully capable, equipped for every good work." God's scripture is needed to correct us and get us on the right path (Matt. 7:13-14)!

"Rebuke" Sometimes things call for a rebuke. Rebuke means to *sharply* correct or express *sharp* disapproval.

Rebuke can be a tough thing to do. We must do it, nonetheless. It is written, *"Better is open rebuke than love that is concealed.*

Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy" (Ps. 27:5-6).

"Exhort" Exhort means to encourage. Paul wanted Timothy to encourage people and stated this many times. One time was in 1 Timothy 4:13, which says, *"Until I come, give your attention to the public reading, to exhortation, and teaching."*

Encouragement to do what is right will help us get far in preparing for the world to come!

"With Great Patience". A preacher needs to have patience.

In fact, this is a characteristic all Christians need (II Pet. 1:5-7)!

The proverb states: *"One who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And one who rules his spirit, than one who captures a city"* (Prov. 16:32). **"And**

Instruction". This brings us back to our main point. What are preachers to use to instruct others? Preachers use the word!

Let us never forget these final words of Paul to a young preacher. – Ethan Jennings.

"Sentence Sermons" "You cannot find a scriptural way to do an unscriptural thing."

"Tragedy in the Bible Class ... The vacant chair and the unopened Bible. ARE THEY YOURS???"

"The man who is never very strong against anything is never very strong for anything!" "A fool tells you what he will do; A boaster, what he has done. The wise man does it and says nothing." **"People don't miss church services because they live too far from the building. It's because they live too far from God!"** --The Shively

Messenger, June 1995