

Money, Sex and Power!

When I was training for ministry, one of our lecturers suggested that all the sins of the world could be categorised in three ways. They were all, in one way or another, connected to money, sex and power. I remembered that as I pondered this week's Gospel passage

We recall the sad end, of John, called the Baptist. A man who was willing to speak up for what he believed to be true, no matter the cost. One of his challenges was to be bold enough to call out the excesses even of the local royal family. Herod had misused the powers given to him by the occupying forces. Herod and his brothers former wife, Herodias, had misused the privileges they had, to manipulate circumstances so they could marry. And then to top it all, Herod is manipulated himself, by his step daughter, during a spending spree! A luxurious banquet, with the King probably 'worse for wear', being cornered. Manipulated into keeping a promise he should never have made. The loser is poor John whose life is ransomed in the misuse of sex, money and power!

I could re-iterate now just how unchanged things really are. How journalists inform us weekly of some evil perpetrated for wealth, power or to gain an unhealthy hold on a person they covet. But I won't!

Instead encouragement is the order of the day. John the Baptist is a historical figure with much to teach the world. Helping us hold tight to godly principles of love and respect for others. To help us do our very best to uphold those principles. Respect both for those who share our views and those who don't. That is what Jesus meant by 'Love your enemies' and pray for them'. Hard at times but nonetheless godly!

We may not be as bold or as outspoken as John, but we can all ensure that getting our own way is not the highest priority. This truly is part of what it means to love our neighbours. And let's hope that our neighbours show us the same kind of love!

Go well!

