

BECAUSE OF

TODD S BOOKOUT

WWW.EXPEDITION.CHURCH

 **expedition**

INTRODUCTION: BECAUSE OF

IMAGINE FOR A MOMENT THAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN COMPLETE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE WHAT YOU WANT TO DO FOR A LIVING, WITH NO BARRIERS. WHAT WOULD YOUR LIFE LOOK LIKE? WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING? WHO WOULD BE THERE WITH YOU? ARE YOU FULFILLING THAT VISION NOW, OR HAS LIFE TAKEN YOU IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION?

AT 19 YEARS OLD, I FOUND MYSELF AT A CROSSROADS. I FELT A DEEP CALL INTO MINISTRY THAT I COULDN'T IGNORE. THIS CALLING TOOK ME ON SEVERAL TRIPS TO AFRICA AS A MISSIONARY, AND AT ONE POINT, I EVEN LIVED THERE FOR SIX MONTHS. THOSE EXPERIENCES WERE TRANSFORMATIVE AND LIFE-CHANGING, SETTING ME ON A PATH TOWARD PASTORAL MINISTRY. BUT AS WITH ALL OF US, THERE HAVE BEEN MOMENTS WHERE I HAD TO ASK MYSELF WHY I MADE CERTAIN CHOICES, AND WHAT TRULY MOTIVATED ME TO FOLLOW THIS CALL.

B E C A U S E O F

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SCRIPTURE

JOHN 6:57 (ESV)

"AS THE LIVING FATHER SENT ME, AND I LIVE BECAUSE OF THE FATHER, SO WHOEVER FEEDS ON ME, HE ALSO WILL LIVE BECAUSE OF ME."

- **IN THIS VERSE, JESUS EXPLAINS HIS LIFE'S SOURCE: HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER. JUST AS HE LIVES BECAUSE OF THE FATHER, WE TOO ARE SUSTAINED WHEN WE "FEED ON HIM," WHEN WE TRUST AND FOLLOW HIM IN EVERY PART OF OUR LIVES.**

B E C A U S E O F



SCRIPTURE

ROMANS 8:10 (ESV)

"BUT IF CHRIST IS IN YOU, ALTHOUGH THE BODY IS DEAD BECAUSE OF SIN, THE SPIRIT IS LIFE BECAUSE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS."

- **PAUL SPEAKS HERE ABOUT THE CONTRAST BETWEEN DEATH AND LIFE. SIN BRINGS DEATH TO THE BODY, BUT THE SPIRIT BRINGS LIFE, "BECAUSE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS." THE LIFE WE LIVE, SPIRITUALLY, IS ROOTED IN CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH CHANGES US FROM THE INSIDE OUT.**

B E C A U S E O F



SCRIPTURE

MATTHEW 14:1-12 (ESV)

"1 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.' 5 AND THOUGH HE WANTED TO PUT HIM TO DEATH, HE FEARED THE PEOPLE, BECAUSE THEY HELD HIM TO BE A PROPHET.

B E C A U S E O F



SCRIPTURE

6 BUT WHEN HEROD'S BIRTHDAY CAME, THE DAUGHTER OF HERODIAS DANCED BEFORE THE COMPANY AND PLEASSED 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.' 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. 12 AND HIS DISCIPLES CAME AND TOOK THE BODY AND BURIED IT, AND THEY WENT AND TOLD JESUS."

- **MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT MIRRORS MARK'S, FURTHER HIGHLIGHTING THE WEIGHT OF HEROD'S DECISION. THIS WAS A MAN CONTROLLED "BECAUSE OF" FEAR, GUILT, AND PRIDE, ULTIMATELY LEADING TO TRAGEDY.**

B E C A U S E O F



THE "BECAUSE OF" MOMENT

IF WE PAUSE AND REFLECT ON THESE PASSAGES, A POWERFUL PHRASE EMERGES:

"BECAUSE OF."

JESUS SAYS HE LIVES BECAUSE OF THE FATHER. OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE IS MADE POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS. AND IN THE CASE OF HEROD, HE WAS DRIVEN TO TAKE A DESTRUCTIVE ACTION BECAUSE OF HIS FEAR AND PRIDE.

AT 19, I DIDN'T KNOW WHERE MY CALL TO MINISTRY WOULD TAKE ME, BUT I KNEW I WAS STEPPING INTO SOMETHING GREATER BECAUSE OF THE EXPERIENCES GOD WAS GIVING ME. MY TIME AS A MISSIONARY IN AFRICA WASN'T EASY, BUT IT SHAPED ME. IT BECAME CLEAR THAT MY DECISIONS IN LIFE NEEDED TO BE ROOTED IN GOD'S CALLING AND NOT IN FEAR, PRIDE, OR EXCUSES.

THIS BRINGS US TO THE CENTRAL QUESTION: WHAT IS YOUR "BECAUSE OF"? ARE YOU LIVING BECAUSE OF YOUR FAITH IN CHRIST, OR ARE YOU HELD BACK BECAUSE OF FEAR, PRESSURE, OR OTHER DISTRACTIONS?

B E C A U S E O F

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QUESTIONS

1. **WHAT IS YOUR "BECAUSE OF"? – IN JOHN 6:57 AND ROMANS 8:10, WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO LIVE AND ACT? ARE YOUR CHOICES MOTIVATED BY FAITH AND TRUST IN GOD, OR SOMETHING ELSE?**
2. **WHAT DO YOU THINK HELD HEROD BACK? – LOOKING AT HEROD'S ACTIONS IN MARK 6 AND MATTHEW 14, WHAT EXCUSES DROVE HIS DECISION-MAKING? CAN YOU RELATE TO THIS STRUGGLE IN YOUR OWN LIFE?**
3. **MOTIVATION VS. EXCUSE – IN YOUR OWN LIFE, HOW DO YOU DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN MOTIVATIONS THAT COME FROM GOD AND EXCUSES THAT HOLD YOU BACK? HOW CAN WE STRENGTHEN THE "BECAUSE OF" THAT CONNECTS US TO GOD RATHER THAN TO FEAR?**
4. **WHAT IS GOD CALLING YOU TO DO "BECAUSE OF" HIM? – REFLECTING ON JESUS' WORDS, HOW CAN YOU LIVE MORE FULLY "BECAUSE OF" YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER, AS JESUS DID?**

B E C A U S E O F

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TAKEAWAY

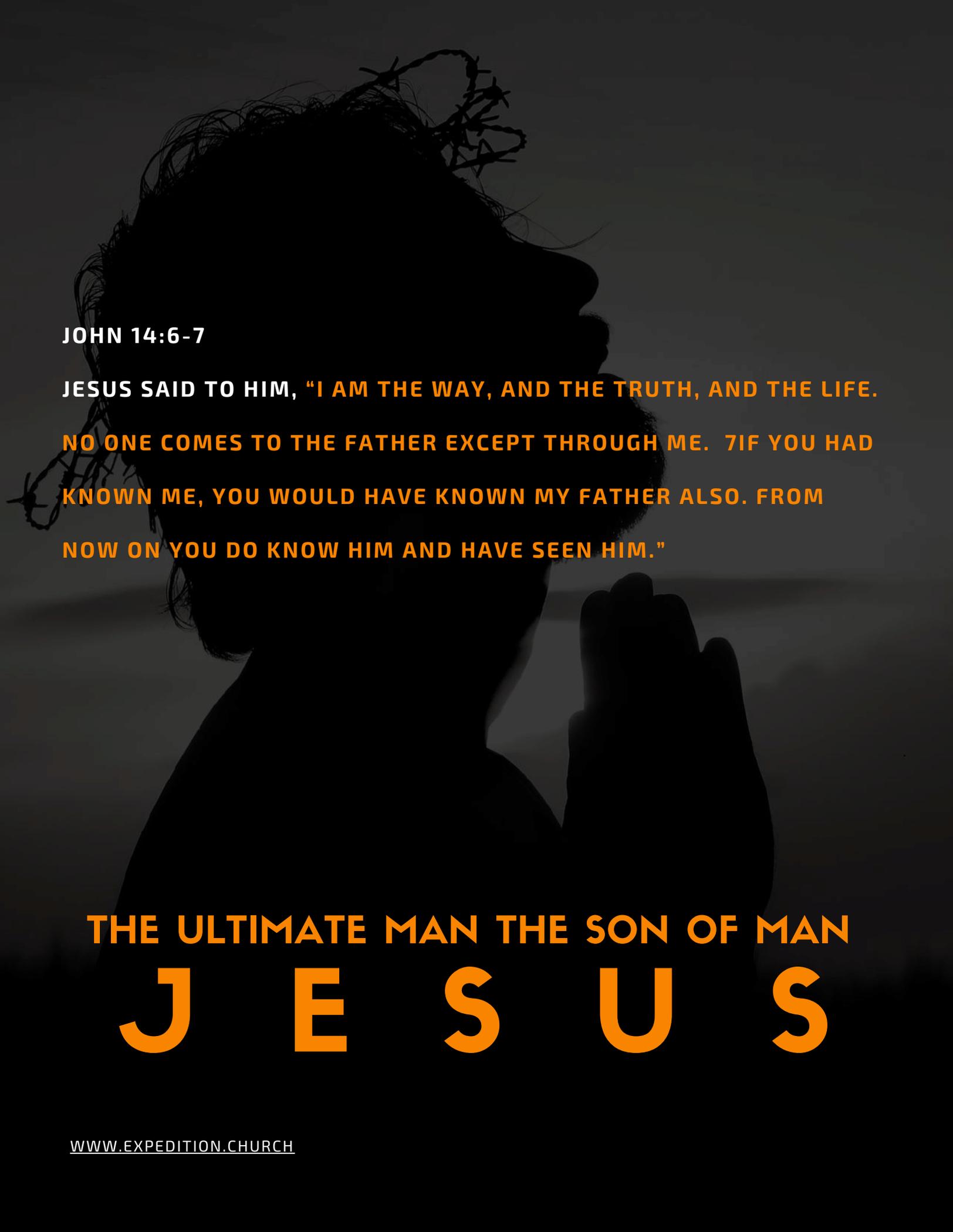
THE QUESTION OF "BECAUSE OF" IN YOUR LIFE IS ONE OF DEEP SIGNIFICANCE. WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR DECISIONS? ARE THEY ALIGNED WITH GOD'S PURPOSE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS, OR DO THEY STEM FROM FEAR OR EXTERNAL PRESSURES? AS YOU REFLECT THIS WEEK, LET THE LIFE CHRIST OFFERS BE YOUR "BECAUSE OF" AND LET HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS GUIDE YOUR CHOICES.

CHALLENGE

IDENTIFY ONE AREA OF YOUR LIFE WHERE YOUR DECISIONS HAVE BEEN DRIVEN BY FEAR OR PRESSURE. THIS WEEK, TAKE A STEP IN FAITH AND TRUST GOD WITH THAT AREA, LETTING HIS SPIRIT GUIDE YOU INSTEAD.

B E C A U S E O F



A silhouette of a man with a crown of thorns on his head and his hands clasped in prayer. The background is a dark, gradient sky.

JOHN 14:6-7

JESUS SAID TO HIM, "I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME. 7IF YOU HAD KNOWN ME, YOU WOULD HAVE KNOWN MY FATHER ALSO. FROM NOW ON YOU DO KNOW HIM AND HAVE SEEN HIM."

THE ULTIMATE MAN THE SON OF MAN

J E S U S

BONUS SCRIPTURE

MARK 6:14-29 (ESV)

"14 KING HEROD HEARD OF IT, FOR JESUS' NAME HAD BECOME KNOWN. SOME SAID, 'JOHN THE BAPTIST HAS BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD. THAT IS WHY THESE MIRACULOUS POWERS ARE AT WORK IN HIM.' 15 BUT OTHERS SAID, 'HE IS ELIJAH.' AND OTHERS SAID, 'HE IS A PROPHET, LIKE ONE OF THE PROPHETS OF OLD.' 16 BUT WHEN HEROD HEARD OF IT, HE SAID, 'JOHN, WHOM I BEHEADED, HAS BEEN RAISED.'

17 FOR IT WAS HEROD WHO HAD SENT AND SEIZED JOHN AND BOUND HIM IN PRISON FOR THE SAKE OF HERODIAS, HIS BROTHER PHILIP'S WIFE, BECAUSE HE HAD MARRIED HER. 18 FOR JOHN HAD BEEN SAYING TO HEROD, 'IT IS NOT LAWFUL FOR YOU TO HAVE YOUR BROTHER'S WIFE.' 19 AND HERODIAS HAD A GRUDGE AGAINST HIM AND WANTED TO PUT HIM TO DEATH. BUT SHE COULD NOT, 20 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.

B E C A U S E O F



BONUS SCRIPTURE

21 BUT AN OPPORTUNITY CAME WHEN HEROD ON HIS BIRTHDAY GAVE A BANQUET FOR HIS NOBLES AND MILITARY COMMANDERS AND THE LEADING MEN OF GALILEE. 22 FOR WHEN HERODIAS'S DAUGHTER CAME IN AND DANCED, SHE PLEASSED HEROD AND HIS GUESTS. AND THE KING SAID TO THE GIRL, 'ASK ME FOR WHATEVER YOU WISH, AND I WILL GIVE IT TO YOU.' 23 AND HE VOWED TO HER, 'WHATEVER YOU ASK ME, I WILL GIVE YOU, UP TO HALF OF MY KINGDOM.' 24 AND SHE WENT OUT AND SAID TO HER MOTHER, 'FOR WHAT SHOULD I ASK?' AND SHE SAID, 'THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.' 25 AND SHE CAME IN IMMEDIATELY WITH HASTE TO THE KING AND ASKED, SAYING, 'I WANT YOU TO GIVE ME AT ONCE THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST ON A PLATTER.' 26 AND THE KING WAS EXCEEDINGLY SORRY, BUT BECAUSE OF HIS OATHS AND HIS GUESTS HE DID NOT WANT TO BREAK HIS WORD TO HER.

B E C A U S E O F

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