

## Death of a Conscience

### I. Slide#1 **Announce:**

- A. **Welcome** our **High Schoolers** in with us this morning.
- B. **Slide#2 Israel Info Meeting:** tomorrow night **7pm**, in the *New Rm.* **March 21-April 1.**
- C. **Slide#3-5 Cambodia:** **Chad/silk screen training at ATC** [explain not showing faces, not re-exploit]
  - 1. **Slide#6,7 Former Brothel we helped purchased** (3 weeks out) Note 3rd story.
  - 2. **Reestablished relationships with AIM & discuss future trips.** **Slide#8(Chad tried convert to Buddhism)**

### II. Slide#9 **Intro: Death of a Conscience**

- A. Your **Conscience** is your **warning system**.
  - 1. Like **physical pain**, which **warns** of **damage to the body** - the **conscience** can **warn** of **damage to the soul!**
  - 2. **So what happens when one's neurological warning system goes out?** - You think of the leper who can't feel anymore, & the complications from that.
  - 3. **So what happens when one's conscience warning system goes out?** - We learn this morning from **Herod**, how his conscience went from **troubled** to a **dead** one.
- B. **Slide#10 So, what's a conscience?**
  - 1. One teenager defined it as, "Something that makes you tell your **mom** before your **sister** does!"
  - 2. Kent Hughes said, "it is the **warning light** that goes off in your soul."
  - 3. "It's a **Walkie-Talkie** in your heart by which God speaks to **you**."
  - 4. **Slide#11** MarkTwain, Man is the only animal that **blushes** & the only animal that **needs to**.
  - 5. **Slide#12,13** Paul said in Rom.2:14,15, **for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts **accusing** or else **excusing** them.** - So your conscience **accuses** or **excuses** what you do.

### III. THE DEATH OF CONSCIENCE

- A. **Slide#14 A TROUBLED CONSCIENCE** (14-16)
- B. The "I" is emphatic in the Greek, *I am the one – I did it*. The sense is he said it **again & again**.
  - 1. "*I did this*"...**Yet not** a **confession**. [Like the V.B. player who gets in the habit of just mouthing, *My bad*, yet doesn't do anything to fix her errors]
- C. **Slide#15 A GUILTY CONSCIENCE** (17-19)

- D. **Slide#16 Herod Antipas** – Tetrarch of Galilee & Perea (in Pink). He was his *father's son* in all that was worst in his father's character.
- E. **Slide#17 - His Father? Herod the Great**, patriarch of the corrupt *Herodian dynasty*.
1. Antipas went to Rome. Stayed with his ½ bro Philip 1. He was intrigued with Herodias, his wife. The two **eloped**, although both were **married** at the time.
  2. Oh, & Philip 1st was Herodias' **uncle**. Which she now left, for her **other uncle!**
  3. So here **Herod Antipas** married his niece & his sister-in-law.
    - a) What “*matrimonial mayhem*” we find in this family.
- F. **Slide#18 A DOUBLED-MINDED CONSCIENCE** (20)
- G. 1st troubled by **God**, now by **the man of God**.
- H. Note, **Herod feared John...& heard him gladly**. Here we have a man caught in 2 minds:
1. He **rejects** him **but respects** him.
  2. He alternated between the **bed** of Herodias, **and the cell** of John.
  3. He loved the beauty of a **holy life**, **but he loved his sin** as well.
  4. He's fascinated by **his message**, **but afraid of its consequences**.
    - a) Do you ever find yourself in a similar dilemma? Caught between **conscience & lifestyle**.
  5. Herod loved John, **but he never loved John's Master**.
    - a) Loved John in that *he protected him* (i.e. from Herodias, & that by keeping him in prison?) **Coward!**
    - b) **Slide#19 Josephus** tells us this all took place in *Machaerus* (*Ma-KEER-is*; aka *Mukawir*). A desert fortress-palace perched 3800' above the Dead Sea (East side). Below were dungeons/cisterns which can still be seen today w/their iron hooks.
  6. **What a contrast between them: Herod the Coward - John the Courageous**.
    - a) **Herod** a *mighty monarch*, **John** an *imprisoned preacher*...**yet** the king is afraid of him.
    - b) You know the famous preacher **George Whitefield** was best of friends with **Benjamin Franklin**(deist)...they called them *the religious odd couple*.
    - c) **Warning** - You will spiritually travel only as far as **Herod & no farther**, **unless Grace** leads you to **Jesus Christ**.
- I. **Slide#20 A TRAPPED CONSCIENCE** (21-25)
- J. A little **wine**, a little **drunken passion**, a little **lust**...a receipt for disaster!
1. Especially for this Topsy Tetrarch.
- K. (22) **SNAP!**...went the *Herodias trap*.
1. **Slide#21 Sin** is like a **spider** weaving a **web**...it starts with *one little strand*.
- L. **Pride** will not allow him to go back on his word.

1. Slide#22 Herodias web is weaved. Herod's conscience is the fly now caught in the middle.
  - a) It's like Herod says, "I can't avoid the wrong, & I can't do what's right!"
- M. Here lies a wonderful compliment for John... "his head was worth half the kingdom!!!"
- N. Slide#23 A SEARED CONSCIENCE (26-29)
  - O. He was sorry, but seared none the less.
    1. As per Herod's soul, this was God's last loving Shock-Treatment for his heart... Clear! (i.e. Defibrillator)
  - P. Don't feel sorry for John. He got an instant trip to glory!
  - Q. Feel sorry for Herod. For his party was over. His light is about to go out.
    1. The guillotine fell on Herod that day.
      - a) Oh, he took John's head...but lost his own conscience.
  - R. Slide#24 Mt.14:12 adds Then his disciples came & took away the body & buried it, & went & told Jesus.
    1. Slide#25 Where do you go if someone close to you dies? Where do you take your hurts? Take them to Jesus like the disciples did.
  - S. Well Herod, you can silence one voice, but you cannot silence the Word of God.
- T. Slide#26 A DEAD CONSCIENCE (Lk.23:8-12)
  - U. This is the last biblical record of Herod.
    1. This is shortly before the crucifixion. Come on Herod last chance tell it all to Jesus! Silence the voice of your tormented conscience!
  - V. Now read the passage! Lk.23:8-12
    1. Jesus answered him nothing/not a word! There was no need to.
    2. His conscience was long dead, buried, & the tomb of his heart sealed!
  - W. The End of his story? - Herodias prevailed on Herod Antipas to accompany her to Rome to demand a favor.
    1. Slide#27 Instead Caligula (new Emperor) banished Antipas to Lyons in Gaul, where he died in great misery.
    2. His new buddy Pilate also was stripped of power and died in shameful exile w/him.
  - X. Herod lost his conscience. It was 1st lovingly troubled, then tormented, then guilt ridden, next double-minded, finally trapped, subsequently seared,... & lastly dead as a door nail!
    1. It's so important for you to take care of your conscience.
    2. It can be dulled. It can be seared.

3. Slide#28 Paul told Felix, I always try to maintain a clear conscience before **God** and **all people**. How?

Y. \*\*\* *Invite up worship team & ushers to set up.*

Z. Slide#29 **A CLEANSED CONSCIENCE** (communion)

AA. So **how** do we protect our conscience against being **dulled**, even **seared**? [4 things]

1. Slide#30a Let your conscience be guided by **the Word of God** [Do what the Bible says is *rt*]
2. Slide#30b Let your conscience be guided by **the Holy Spirit**. [Rom.9:1, **With Christ as my witness, I speak with utter truthfulness. My conscience and the Holy Spirit confirm it**]
3. Slide#30c **Listen to your conscience**. [The devil wants you to *ignore* your conscience]
4. Slide#30d Keep your conscience clean through **confession of sin** and **acceptance of God's forgiveness**.
  - a) Heb.9:14...**the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience** from dead works to serve the living God?

BB. **Bread: confession of sin**

1. Lord we recognize, like all our other faculties, our conscience has been **perverted by the fall**.
2. Lord we confess **not listening to** the conscience You've implanted in us.
3. Lord we confess sometimes **tuning out** that inborn sense of right & wrong.
4. Lord we understand & confess this has **damaged our very soul**, & we cry out for Your forgiveness.
5. God **heal** our consciences that we have **violated**. **Even now**.

CC. **Cup: acceptance of God's forgiveness**

1. God **Thank You** for this **warning system** you have built in us.
2. God **Thank You** for **2nd chances**, after we've blown it.
3. God **Thank You** for regenerating us with a **clear/clean** conscience this morning.
4. God **Thank You** for letting us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our **hearts sprinkled** from an **evil conscience** and our **bodies washed** with pure water.