

LUKE I Herod's Disturbed Conscience Luke 9:1-9

Our MENTAL Health is Contingent upon Our MORAL Health

1. **The Human conscience is both fascinating and strange...** *—Bill Turner*
 - a. It is so integrated into our inner-self that we hardly talk about it separately from ourself
 - b. But it is also something that judges us and bothers us in a way beyond our self...
 - c. **Since 1811 the U.S. Government Has Been Receiving \$ in the mail** by people who's conscience is bothering them... stolen souvenirs, cheated taxes...
 - d. The Treasury Department puts this \$ into an account called: the **Federal Conscience Fund**
 - e. But Our Conscience is Not Perfect and it Can Be Ignored—at least for a while.
 - f. One man struggling to put conscience to rest wrote an anonymous letter to the government,
**“I have cheated on my income tax. I can't sleep. Here is a check for \$75.
If I still can't sleep, I'll send you the balance.”**
 2. **The Bible is clear: Our MENTAL Health is Contingent upon Our MORAL Health**
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I. THE DISTURBED CONSCIENCE OF HEROD ANTIPAS

A. HEROD ANTIPAS

1. **Herod Antipas was the son of King Herod the Great...**
 - a) Herod the Great was Not a Great Dad Though...
 - b) He was insanely jealous and Paranoid...
 - c) He murdered his wife—Then Murdered several sons who he felt threatened by
2. **After Herod the Great died His Kingdom was divided by Rome...**
 - a) Herod Antipas (Herod the tetrarch) was appointed to rule over Galilee and Perea,
 - b) Two regions in the eastern part of the Roman Empire.
3. **Herod Antipas Was a lot like his father**

B. HEROD WAS DRIVEN BY POWER, PLEASURE & SELF-PRESERVATION

1. **He Was Wealthy, Powerful, Ambitious—but He was Worldly and Discontent**
 - a) His Selfishness Set the Trajectory for His Life
 - b) it empowered him and then destroyed him...
2. **He Seduced His Brother's Wife Herodias and Took Her For His own wife**
3. **John the Baptist Openly and Publicly Condemned Herod and Herodias**
4. **and She Became Livid with Hate for John the Baptist** (Mark 6:16–29)
 - a) The Truth Hurts—But instead of Doing What is Right—She wants John killed
5. **Knowing Herod's Weakness—She Manipulates him through seduction using her own daughter Salome!** [IMAGE: Palace]

The Jewish Historian Josephus confirms this historical event: “John, that was called the Baptist... was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness toward one another, and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism... Herod, who feared the great influence John had over the people... sent [John] a prisoner, out of Herod's suspicious temper, to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death.” (Flavious Josephus, Ant. 18:116-119)

6. **Archaeologists have found Herod's Palace Castle... Macherus**

- a) they've uncovered the floor Salome danced on / the Dungeon John was imprisoned

C. HEROD'S HAUNTED CONSCIENCE

- 1. Herod is hearing reports about Jesus and His Sins are finding him out**
 - a) His Past is coming back to haunt him and his conscience is disturbed
 - b) He doesn't know what to think (**Luke 9:6–9**)
 - c) But Fears that John the Baptized is back from the grave.
 - 2. What Happens When Secrets of the Past Come Back from the Grave?**
 - a) Herod Knew He was Manipulated by His Wife...
 - b) He Knew He Killed a Righteous Man...
 - c) and He Knew it Was His Own Sick Depravity that Led to it...
 - 3. Despite all his wealth, power and prestige—He was not a happy person
—He was haunted by a guilty conscience**
 - a) and later Herod wanted Jesus dead (**Luke 13:31**)
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II. THE MORAL CONSCIENCE WITHIN

A. THE SOUL'S AUTOMATIC WARNING SYSTEM

1. Like an Early Warning System in the Controls of an Aircraft.

"In 1984 an Avianca Airlines Passenger Jet Crashed in Spain. Investigators studying the accident made an eerie discovery. The "black box" cockpit recorders revealed that several minutes before impact a shrill, computer synthesized voice from the Plane's Automatic Warning System told the crew repeatedly in English, "Pull Up! Pull Up!" "The Pilot, evidently thinking the system was malfunctioning, snapped, "Shut Up Gringo!" and switched the system off. Minutes later the plane plowed into the side of a mountain. Everyone on board died."¹

- 2. The Wisdom of the World often sees Our Moral Conscience is a Defect,
—that robs people of self-esteem.**
- 3. But Our Conscience is a MORAL Warning System of Right & Wrong**
 - a) It does cause mental anguish of shame and guilt when we do what is wrong—
—But it does this So We Will Try to Do What is Right!
- 4. This Inner Moral Voice that Cannot Be Explained By Darwinian Evolution!**
 - a) They want to say morality is an instinct. —But think about it...
- 5. EX: If You heard a woman being attacked and screaming for help you
would experience 2 conflicting feelings... A Stronger & Weaker**
 - a) One (Impulse or Instinct) is to not get involved for your own safety
(Evolution always puts survival first, as the Stronger instinct)
 - b) The Other, Weaker impulse is to help this woman even at your own risk
- 6. But there is a Third Voice that transcends and Judges Between the two!**

"But you will find inside of you, in addition to these two impulses, a third thing which tells you that you ought to follow the impulse to help, and you should suppress the impulse to run away. Now this thing that judges between two instincts, that decides what should be encouraged, cannot itself be either of them. You might as well say the sheet of music which tells you, at a given moment, to play one note on the piano and not another, is itself one of the notes on the keyboard. The Moral Law tells us the tune we have to play: our instincts are merely the keys." —C.S. Lewis

¹ John MacArthur, The Vanishing Conscience, p.36

B. GOD CREATED US WITH THIS MORAL CONSCIENCE WITHIN

1. THE WORD CONSCIENCE IS A COMBINATION WORD

a) **LATIN** scire (to know) and con (together)

b) **IN GREEK: suneidesis – Literally means “co-knowledge”**

(1) Conscience is Knowledge Together with Oneself. Conscience knows your inner motives and true thoughts. It is above Reason and beyond Intellect.

c) **IN HEBREW: for conscience is (leb) usually translated “heart” in O.T.**

(1) “The Conscience is so integrated at the core of a person that the Hebrew mind did not draw a distinction between the conscience and the rest of the inner person of the heart.” (MacArthur, The Vanishing Conscience)

(2) A Defiled Heart—meaning a Defiled Conscience

(3) A Pure Heart—Meaning a Pure Conscience

(4) David asked for a Clean Heart—Meaning a Cleansed Conscience (**Acts 24:16**)

2. YOUR CONSCIENCE IS NOT The Voice of God... or Infallible Word of God...

**It’s the Human faculty that Judges our Actions and Thoughts—
—by the Light of the Highest Standard We Perceive.²**

a) The Puritan believer Richard Gibbs in the 17th century said the conscience is
“the soul reflecting upon itself.”

b) We call this Meta-Cognition — The Ability to think about our thoughts.

c) But the Conscience is not just thinking about our thoughts but judging them.

d) Present in every Human Being Whether they know God or Not! (**Romans 2:14-15**)

C. THE CONSCIENCE HOLDS COURT

1. As When the Pharisees Brought a Woman Caught in Adultery to Jesus...

a) Jesus said, he that is without sin cast the first stone (**John 8:9**)

2. THE CONSCIENCE IS ALWAYS PRESENT... (Psalm 32:1–5**)**

a) No Matter Where You Go—Your Conscience Goes With You!

b) In our Busy World—non-stop NOISE Drowns Out the Inner Voice of the Conscience

c) That’s Why the COVID lockdowns were hard—suddenly being alone w/ own thoughts

3. THE CONSCIENCE IS NOT PERFECT (Titus 1:15**)**

Your Conscience is not the Voice of God, or the Word of God

EX: The conscience has been compared to a sundial, which is able to give fairly good time by day when the sun is shining on it but is totally unable to give any kind of time by night.

4. THE CONSCIENCE MUST BE PROPERLY TRAINED & DISCIPLINED

a) NOT a SEARED Conscience of WEAK Consciences but a TRAINED Conscience

b) (**Hebrews 4:12–13**) The Word of God is Powerful, Living, Active, Effective...

c) Surgically Piercing Down to a spiritual level of thoughts & Intents of the heart!

5. IMAGINE IF We Didn’t Have a Conscience—A World Full of Sociopaths!

Your Mental Health is Contingent Upon Your Moral Health!

² John MacArthur, The Vanishing Conscience

III. THE ONLY CURE FOR OUR CONVICTED CONSCIENCE

A. HEROD ANTIPAS WANTED TO SEE JESUS AND EVENTUALLY HE DID

1. **The Jewish Rulers Want Jesus Put to Death—But They Did Not Have Authority From Rome to Execute Prisoners...**
 - a) So They Had To Bring Charges to Pilate to Have Jesus Put To Death
 - b) This Fulfilled Prophecy Because Jesus was to be Pierced for our transgressions, not killed by stoning as the Jews would have done.
2. **Pilate Knows Jesus is Innocent—and His Wife Had a Dream Confirming it**
 - a) The Conscience is Mysterious—She Sends Pilate Warning that Jesus is Innocent!
 - b) So When Pilate Finds Out Jesus is From Galilee He Sends Him to Herod
3. **Herod Happened to be in Jerusalem When Jesus Was On Trial (Lk 23:6-12)**
 - a) Herod Wanted to Meet Jesus and See Him Perform Some Miracle
4. **WHY Didn't Jesus Speak TRUTH to Herod?**
 - a) Because Herod Didn't Want the Truth—He Wanted to Worship Himself!

B. MANY WAYS PEOPLE DEAL WITH A CONVICTED CONSCIENCE

1. **PRIDE: Herod Mocked Jesus... That's how he appeased his conscience**
2. **BLAME: Pilate told the Jewish rulers to deal w/ it & washed his hands of it**
3. **POWER: Herod and Pilate Became Friends that day, no longer rivals**
 - a) Only 6 yrs later Herod Antipas was banished by the Emperor Caligula
 - b) Pilate was also banished from the empire and took his own life
4. **DENIAL: Peter denied Jesus 3x and wept bitterly**
5. **MONEY: Judas thought Money would Comfort His Convicted Conscience**
6. **SUICIDE: But Judas silenced his conscience with suicide**

C. A GUILTY CONSCIENCE IS A TERRIBLE BURDEN—BUT GOD HAS PROVIDED A WAY FOR US TO HAVE A CLEAN CONSCIENCE

1. **Jesus Took Upon Himself the Penalty and Punishment We Deserved**
 - a) Jesus Was Convicted, Condemned and Crucified for Our Transgressions
 - b) To Take Away Our Conviction, our Condemnation, our Transgressions
 - c) So We Could Be Cleansed and Set Free from Condemnation
2. **You can have a clean conscience (Hebrews 10:22-23)**
 - a) When we are Buried with Christ in Baptism—our old self is put to death
 - b) And We Are Raised from the watery grave of baptism to new life in Christ
3. **Only Because of the Blood of Jesus (Hebrews 9:14)**

CONCLUSION:

1. **A good man in church: Bro. Stewart... at 16 he lied to enter military in ww2**
2. **Your MENTAL Health is Contingent upon Your MORAL Health**
3. **Only forgiveness in Christ Can Cleanse a Convicted Conscience (Rom 8:1)**