

My Life is Out of Control...

What Should I Do?

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Series: Mark (Introducing Jesus)

Introduction: Open your Bible to **Mark 6**. We come to a situation that is radically out of control in this passage. It ends with the murder of John the Baptist. We have a man, “King” Herod whose life is out of control. Herod is best known as the one who had John the Baptist killed. His life was out of control and he didn’t even know it. He was an “in the moment” kind of a person.

The message this morning is entitled, “My Life is out of Control...What Should I Do?” You will find yourself often in a situation that is beyond your control. You must learn to trust the Lord and listen carefully to the Lord—do what He says—or you are going to suffer disaster. Of course that disaster is infinitely multiplied for the lost person.

We are going to see three groups of people in this passage. You fall into one of the three this morning. There are:

- Those who made the **wrong** choice and REFUSED Christ (vs. 1-6).
- Those who made the **right** choice RESPONDED to Christ (vs. 7-13).
- Those who made **no** choice and lived to REGRET it (vs. 14-29).

What will you do with Jesus? What do you think of Christ? The answer to these questions will decide your eternity.

Let’s look now at Mark 6. We see these three types of people.

- A. **Those who made the wrong choice—they REFUSE Jesus** (vs. 1-6). We come to verses 1-6, and we find Jesus was so familiar to those in his hometown, his own family and friends would not believe Him. They were offended by Jesus.

Mark 6:1-4, “He went away from there and came to his hometown [Nazareth], and his disciples followed him. 2 And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.”

Now look at who is listed as Jesus’ brothers. Two of them are writers of holy Scripture: James and Judas both have books in the New Testament [James and Jude]. So even among those who reject and reject, there is still mercy for those people. “Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear” (Isaiah 59:1). By the way James and Jude were fireballs when they got saved!

Yet at the time Jesus was doing miracles in front of their eyes, they refuse to believe. And Jesus has a word for them. **Mark 6:4-5**, “And Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.” 5 And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 And he marveled because of their unbelief.” Notice that miracles in themselves will never produce faith. Faith is a personal commitment and choice.¹

Poor Beggar Lazarus and Father Abraham

Remember what the poor man Lazarus told Abraham in the story Jesus told in **Luke 16:30**? “if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.” But Abraham said to him, **verse 31**, ““If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.””

As powerful and gracious as Jesus Christ is, many reject him. So it was with his own family and friends in Nazareth.

Illustration: A tourist, eager to see everything in the art gallery, ran from picture to picture, hardly noticing what was in the frames. “I didn’t see anything very special here,” he said to one of the guards as he left. “Sir,” the guard replied, “it is not the pictures that are on trial here—it is the visitors.”²

Jesus it says, “**marveled because of their unbelief**” (**verse 6a**). Our hardness and stubbornness is amazing! Let us all thank God for His powerful Word and His amazing grace that allows any one of us to be saved! We ought to marvel and grieve for those who refuse Christ. Jesus cared. And so he went on “And he went about among the villages teaching” (**verse 6b**).

There are those who make the wrong choice – and they refuse Christ. They turn Him away. “No it can’t be this simple. He can’t be the Savior.” For these people, familiarity breeds contempt. We must always fear the place where we might lose our awe of Christ. Christ was no less worthy or powerful or almighty in Nazareth. The people were blinded by their familiarity of Him.

- B. **Then there are those who make the right choice and **RESPOND** to Jesus.** So Jesus sent the twelve out two by two, and they healed, did miracles, and **verse 12** says they preached and what was the message? **Verse 12**, “So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. 13 And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.”

Mark wanted to make sure that we understand that serving Christ is not always easy, but we are to respond to Christ and do what He says. They went out two by two, and they saw they amazing things happening. Great fruit was being produced by their ministry. God was

¹Carson, D. A. (1994). *New Bible commentary : 21st century edition*. Rev. ed. of: The new Bible commentary. 3rd ed. / edited by D. Guthrie, J.A. Motyer. 1970. (4th ed.) (Mk 6:1). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: Inter-Varsity Press.

²Wiersbe, W. W. (1996, c1989). *The Bible exposition commentary*. "An exposition of the New Testament comprising the entire 'BE' series"--Jkt. (Mk 6:1). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

working! So Mark reached into the material that had been given to him by Peter, and the next thing he records is the martyrdom of John the Baptist.

So he records this after the fruitfulness of their ministry, but at the same time there is a massive spiritual war being waged that evidences itself through brutal circumstances. As a believer in Christ, you are going to face some serious challenges. Jesus said in **Matthew 11:11**, “Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist.” John was martyred because of the message he preached!

Application: You need to remember that the Christian life has deep joys that will sustain your soul, but there are also days and weeks that have deep pain and confusion. You should not be surprised if your life is tested with pain.

Context: The person that murdered John the Baptist was named Herod. None of us here are John the Baptist. What we need to do is make sure we don't fall into the category of King Herod. He loved his comfort zone. He loved to listen to the truth, but he never acted on the truth. He let fear and “what other people think” control him instead of submitting his life to Christ.

Surely no one begins wanting to mess up their life. But people are very busy about their life. Everyone right now is doing something with their life. You are either driving safely on God's road, or you are driving in the direction of a cliff.

Illustration: I watched a rally car race this weekend. Cars were flying on mountainous roads at high speeds. One of the cars lost control and plunged 500 feet over the cliff. My concern is not that any of you would do that with your car, but I'm concerned that you ***DON'T do that with your life.***

We see people headed in a certain direction, and we want to say “Don't!” Yet people do make decisions that effect the rest of their lives. Everything feels good, but you're not aware of the 500 foot cliff that's just moments away. There are all kinds of warnings around us, but if we choose to ignore them, we might tumble over!

Many messages are encouraging. We learned about how Jesus can calm our storm and heal our mind and heart, and He wants us to touch the hem of His garment. All of that is encouraging. Now this morning's message is a warning. We are commanded not only to encourage but to also warn. **Colossians 1:28** says (speaking of Christ), “Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ”. It's great to have encouraging messages—to help you grow in your faith. Sometimes we have instructing messages—they help us understand the Bible or how to study it. The message this morning is one of warning—God tells us if you don't listen, you're going to get hurt.

- Alright, so we've seen those who make the wrong choice and refuse Jesus.
- We've seen those who make the right choice and respond to Jesus.
- We are going to find out what happens when a person does nothing.

Everyone is doing something even if they're doing nothing. Your marriage or your job has been bad for years, but you've done nothing about it. You've tried to fix it, but you've not surrendered it to Christ.

Most people on the road to destruction and disaster are on that road doing NOTHING. They are in their comfort zone. Many hear the truth of the Word but do nothing with it. In the end it leads to disaster. I want to show you how King Herod destroyed his life to show you how it happened.

I. **If your life is out of control, start resolving problems in your life.**

Ignoring them won't make them go away. Start dealing with the issues in your life, or you will be headed for disaster. You've got warnings coming at you that you need to deal with something, but you are putting it off, because you want to stay in your comfort zone. If that's you, you might be comfortable now, but soon you will be in deep trouble, and you'll hurt others in the process. Turn over to **Proverbs 10:17**.

Proverbs tells us that "Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life, but he who rejects reproof leads others astray" (**Proverbs 10:17**)

Is that the kind of person you are—one who avoids issue resolution? And you'd rather live a life separate from someone than get things right?

Let's begin reading in **Mark 6:14-29**, "King Herod heard of it," –he heard of the ministry of Christ and his disciples sent out two by two, and the amazing miracles they were all doing. It was spreading like wild fire, "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." Who is Herod? He is a man who loved his comfort zone. He loved the most scandalous sins of the world, he loved to party, and he loved the preaching of John the Baptist. He was a man that just took life as it came, but never wanted to resolve any problems.

A. **You may have unresolved problems in your life and not even realize how serious they are.**

Illustration: Have you ever hydroplaned in your car? Hydroplaning is when your car is going to fast on wet pavement, and it hovers over the water suspended by millimeters. It gives you the illusion that you have control, but when you go to turn the wheel, you have no control. A person in a hydroplaning car is on a freefall forward. What is the solution to hydroplaning? **Pay attention to what is happening around you and SLOW DOWN.**

1. **I don't think Herod knew his life was out of control.** I don't think he planned on being the man in world history who killed John the Baptist. Yet Herod's life was a product of his choices. Your life is a product of your choices. You can choose to do what is right, or you can go speeding and hydroplaning through life until you hit a

wall or a telephone poll. So many people wake up with their life wrapped around a telephone poll and wonder what happened.

- I don't think a woman says, "I know what I'll get married, have children, divorce in a few years, and then live the rest of my life as a single mom". She just wanted to get married, and she didn't pay attention to the "road conditions".
- Someone makes a quick decision to quick college and before they know it they are 30 years old waiting tables, waiting for a big break in life. He just wanted to start "living life" and he didn't pay attention to the road conditions.
- We can go through life, not thinking about the decisions we are making, but we are all products of the choices we make. Right now you are living a life of your own choosing.

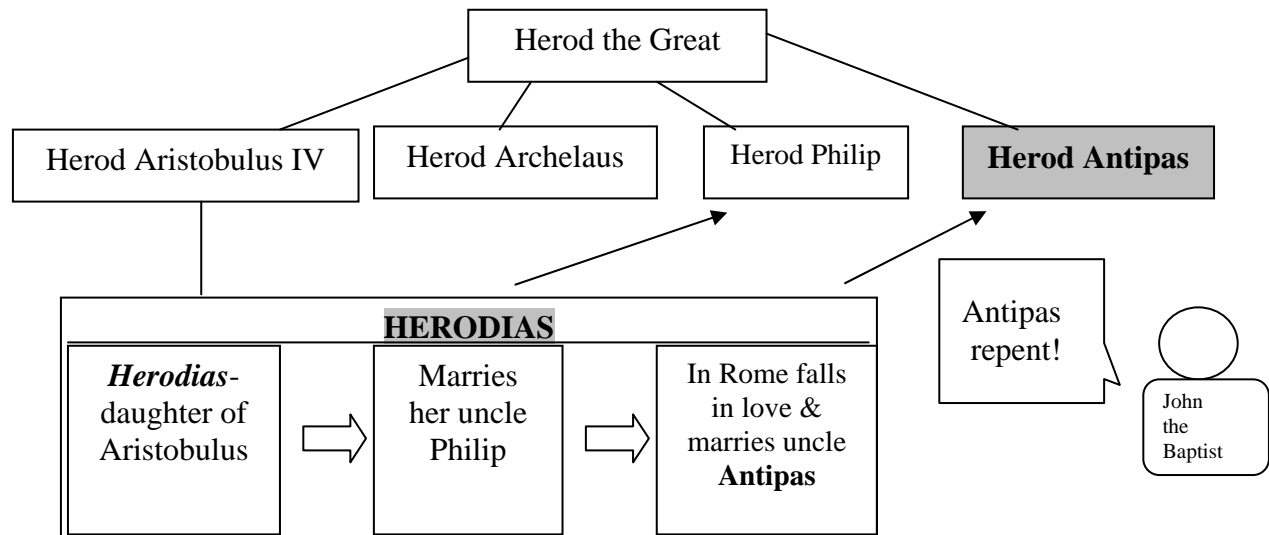
Herod was a man whose life was out of control and he didn't even know it.

2. **You may wonder who this "King Herod" is.** It is not Herod the Great from Matthew 2, who feared a King would be born to replace him. No this Herod the Great had four sons to whom he gave his kingdom. The Herod that is spoken of in Mark 6 is Herod Antipas.
3. **Each son took the name Herod before his name, so you have...**
 - Herod *Archelaus* – found in **Matthew 2:19-23**, "After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt²⁰ and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead."²¹ So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel.²² But when he heard that [Herod] Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee,²³ and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth."
 - Herod *Aristobulus IV* (has a daughter named Herodias)
 - Herod *Philip* (marries his niece Herodias, and then divorces her)
 - Herod *Antipas* (takes Herodias, his niece and brother's ex, as his wife)
4. Now Antipas is called a king in this passage, but it is being used sarcastically, because Antipas was never a king. Each of his sons would be called a "tetrarch". A tetrarch means "ruler of a forth". Antipas didn't like that title, and in AD39 he lost his governorship trying to get the title of "king".
5. Herod Antipas is found in another place in the Bible.
 - **Luke 23:11**, "And Herod [Antipas] with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate."

6. This was quite a quartet, and their life was a soap opera on steroids. We see this from **verse 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.”

History confirms this.

- Herod Aristobulus IV has a daughter named Herodias.
- Herod Philip marries this daughter (his own niece Herodias), and then divorces her)
- Herod Antipas takes the divorced Herodias (his own niece and brother’s ex) as his wife.



Aristobulus IV was the oldest, and his youngest daughter Herodias grew up and married her young Uncle Philip. So she entered into an incestuous relationship. Philip later divorced Herodias after one day very bizarre day. Antipas was on a trip to Rome this particular day and stopped by his brother Philip’s house. He immediately fell in love with his brother’s wife Herodias, who also happened to be both their niece. He was so enraptured by her, he stole her from his brother Phillip and married her. So out of the four brothers, one’s her dad, another is her ex, and another is her present husband. This is an immoral, sleazy soap opera.

B. You may not deal with unresolved issues because you are living in the moment instead of thinking through the long term issues.

So, Herod was living in the moment. He wasn’t thinking through the fact that he might one day crash and burn. There are those people who will not resolve issues because they believe, “Everything will just work itself out”. Listen, everything will not work itself out. The only way to work things out is to choose to resolve it. You’ve got to confront issues. You’ve got to listen to those who are warning you.

ENTER JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Involvement Help: Now how many of you think John the Baptist would have something to say about that? Yeah!

Notice again **verses 17-18**, “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.”

That was just the first part of John’s message. It’s not lawful for you to have your niece as your wife either. Herodias did not like John the Baptist! The only place she wanted him was in prison, or better yet, dead. Look at **verse 19**, “And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death. But she could not,”

Do you see what is going on? Herod has some serious unresolved issues in his life. He was in an immoral relationship. His unlawful wife Herodias hated John, but Herod would often go hear John. He would hear God’s Word, but he would not deal with anything. Look at **verse 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.”

C. You may not deal with unresolved issues in your life because you love living in the comfort zone.

Herod Antipas loved the comfort zone. He liked preaching, he liked the world, he liked it all—as long as he didn’t have to make the hard choice. He would have fit real well in our generation. Every time he’d go hear John preach, John would say, “You’ve got the wrong wife. You need to deal with this problem. It’s going to send you to hell”. Then he’d go home and hear Herodias say, “You’ve got to kill John”. You think killing John will wipe away Herod’s sin? But it didn’t matter—Herod Antipas did *nothing*. He loved his comfort zone. He could put off the greatest of all the OT prophets!

Antipas let life happen—he let it slide by. He must have made a thousand excuses.

- It’s too hard!
- It’s too much trouble!
- I’ll just leave it alone for a while, and maybe it’ll go away!
- I’m sure he had all kinds of excuses...
 - I’d like to follow what John says, BUT, it’s too hard.
 - I’d like to make this hard choice, BUT, I’m hoping it will resolve itself.

The only thing that is going to resolve your problems is dealing with them head on. Hiding them does not make them go away. Maybe Herod was too busy. Certainly he loved his comfort zone. Now I’m not particularly concerned about Herod; he’s already in eternity. But we’re all still here, and we have choices to make. Listen you can get away with a lot of busyness if things are in order. But if you are busy and you are using that as an excuse not to tackle some things head on, then you are preparing for a crash!

Application:

- If there’s a *conflict in your marriage*, begin to deal with it today.
- If you’ve got a *child who has the wrong friends*, deal with it today.
- If you’ve got a *secret sin* that’s persisting in your life, deal with it today.

- If the backdrop of your spirituality is a lot of defeat, shame, and frustration, and your *spiritual life* is really just a façade, could I plead with you? Deal with it!
- If you're standing on the *edge of a relationship* that you know you have no business in, can I challenge you to deal with it?
- If you have a *bitter, unforgiving spirit* toward someone, and there's hatred in your heart—please, deal with it!

You think you can handle it! You are driving too fast.

Illustration: Do you know if you are driving in a car going 50 miles an hour, if you have to hit the breaks, you have 125 feet to make your stop. But if you are going double that speed, it will take you 5 times as long to stop!

Application: You might be here today, and you are letting life go by, and you need to deliberately slow down and start resolving the issues in your life. They will not go away. You must choose to deal with them.

I. *If your life is out of control, start **resolving problems** in your life.*

II. Here's the second thing: If your life is out of control, **stop trivializing truth**. Wake up spiritually!

Look again at **verse 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 [puzzled, he didn't understand what he was hearing], and yet he heard him gladly.” Literally it says that Herod used to enjoy listening to him. Now think about this, John the Baptist had only one sermon: REPENT! Basically he was saying, “This is serious stuff, and you need to take God's message seriously. It's heaven and hell.” But it seems Herod enjoyed the **style**, enjoyed the **show**, but left without the **substance**. In other words, he could listen to God's Word over and over again, and he found it interesting. It tickled his intellect. But it never reached his heart! He *trivialized the truth*.

Car / Sleeping Illustration: Have you ever been asleep at the wheel? Jill and I used to travel to churches on deputation raising support so we could go to Spain as missionaries. We would travel several hours and be busy teaching and preaching all day long. At the end of a long day we would head back several hours home. We were almost always the last people to leave the church. The last hour home was always the hardest. We would do anything to stay awake. Roll down the windows. Turn up the music as loud as we could. ***There's nothing worse than the feeling of being jolted awake and realizing you are propelling forward at 60 miles an hour!*** In that moment you go from wonderful dream world of rest (which is not reality) to the real world trying to get your car under control and hopefully not die.

Cops Illustration: Jill and I were watching the show the other night about COPS. It really should be renamed, “Stupid Criminal Show”. At any rate, one of the incidents was a police officer following a swerving vehicle. The vehicle suddenly, seemingly for no reason veared off into the other lane of traffic and proceeded to hit a telephone pole. Amazingly, the guy got out of the car. He was dazed, but no broken bones. He had fallen asleep.

Application: Here we are in North America. Never in the history of the world have we had so much Bible teaching, with so many Bible study tools, and never has it made so little difference in the way people live. Listening, listening. Bible teaching can become a form of entertainment.

Application: The measure of your worship here this morning is not whether you enjoyed it or not. Our worship is not for our entertainment or enjoyment. Our worship is not for us but for God. We are in deep trouble if this becomes about our enjoyment and our happiness. The purpose of Tabernacle Baptist Church is to glorify God by being changed into Christ's image, by proclaiming His Gospel to lost people and seeing them transformed, and then diligently building the Body of Christ. Now if you get enjoyment out of that, it's a by product. It's not the main thing. Jesus didn't die so we could be happy. He died so we could be holy!

Until you stop trivializing spiritual truth, you will not gain control of your life. If you hear preaching on how God wants you to marry a godly mate, take heed to it! If you hear preaching on honoring the wishes of your mother and father, apply it to your life. If you hear that God hates gossip, yet you aren't willing to stop, you are trivializing spiritual truth.

Now we come to a third truth.

- I. *If your life is out of control, start **resolving problems** in your life.*
- II. *Here's the second thing: If your life is out of control, **stop trivializing truth**. Wake up spiritually!*
- III. If your life is out of control, **stop ignoring your internal spiritual alarm (conscience)**.

Look at verses 21-26, "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 [Salome] came in and danced, she pleased 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."

Involvement question: Did you know that God put a spiritual alarm inside every one of us? It's called the conscience.

A. What is the conscience? The conscience is the internal alarm system that God put in you to warn you of sin. It either gives you confidence that something is right, or it gives you a sense of unease and guilt if something is to be avoided. This was going off in the head and heart of Herod Antipas, but he chose to ignore it.

Alarm Illustration: Have you ever heard this? [Trip Fire Alarm Beeper]. Do you know what that means? It means get out of the building! Have you ever ignored the “check engine light” in your car? If you have, you probably are not driving that car any more. It’s not in the parking lot, it’s in the JUNK HEAP. Now I don’t really care about houses and cars, but I do care about your soul.

Application: God has given you a warning system called the conscience. All people have a conscience. The word conscience is found over 30 times in the NT. It’s a phenomenal thing. It always works, and it doesn’t need batteries. Let give you four truths about your conscience.

B. How does the conscience work?

1. First, if you follow your conscience, it commends you, and gives you peace and well being and confidence. If you violate your conscience it brings condemnation and shame and fear and regret and disgrace and anguish.
2. Second, a conscience is conditioned by what you know. A conscience is not a teacher. It is not a source of revelation. How many of you could do all kinds of things before you were saved that today you are ashamed of? You didn’t feel bad about these things, but now you’ve been taught by God’s Word and His Holy Spirit. Because our conscience is warped by sin, we need to bring it under the power of the Word of God. Some things feel wrong but are not morally wrong, and you need to strengthen your conscience according to the Word. Other things are wrong, but you may be unaware of it. So you need to educate your conscience. **Example:** Euphemisms. How many people know it is wrong to blaspheme God? How many of you find your self saying “O my _____”? You see we need to educate our conscience.
3. Third, your conscience is conditioned by what you do.
 - (1.)It’s an amazing phenomenon that the more you do right, the more you submit to the Lord, the more sensitive your conscience becomes. If you look at the greatest saints in church history, you’ll find they were most aware of their personal sin. We’ve all met people who when you ask them if they are a sinner, they can hardly locate a single sin in their life.
 - (2.)It’s also amazing that the more you ignore your conscience, the more you do wrong, the less sensitive your conscience will be.
 - **Wounded Conscience.** 1 Cor. 8 says if your conscience is functioning well, when you do wrong, it causes you pain. It is wounded. If you at times have a wounded conscience praise God! Listen to it and thank God for a sensitive heart! Praise God for the alarm.
 - **Calloused Conscience.** Mat. 13 says if you ignore your conscience it will be dulled and hardened. You can remember perhaps something that used to disturb you, but now there is only a dull kind of pain in

your conscience. There used to be great grief. If you do nothing with a wounded conscience, you will get a calloused conscience.

- **Seared Conscience.** If you do nothing with a calloused conscience, you will get a seared conscience. 1 Tim. 4:2 describes a person who's conscience doesn't feel any pain at all. People at this place just disobey the Lord, and you can't tell them any different. It would be like picking up a hot iron skillet with no mitten. And it just burns my hand. But if I did it again and again and again, soon I would have no feeling in my hand.

4. Ignoring your conscience is extremely dangerous. It's like killing the guard sent to protect you.

Illustrations:

- It's like taking down the railing of your 25th story apartment.
- It's like ripping the label off the bottle of poison and putting it back in the refrigerator.

1 Tim. 1:19 says those who ignore conscience will suffer shipwreck in regard to their faith.

Context: Herod did not listen to the alarms that were going off inside him. It says when Salome, Herodias's daughter asked for John's head, "the king was exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her."

C. **What is it that causes us to ignore warnings?** I think the main thing is LIVING FOR THE MOMENT or living in a fantasy world. You don't think about the long haul.

1. **Herod made a rash promise. Verse 22,** "For when Herodias's daughter [Salome] came in and danced, she pleased 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."

Have you ever seen someone about to make a choice, and you want to grab them and shake them and say, "What are you thinking?" If someone is warning you about something in your life, you need to listen!! John was warning Herod.

2. **Herod was taken in the pleasure of the moment.** He lived on emotions. "[Salome] came in and danced".

Harry Ironside said of this in 1948 as pastor of the Moody Church. Quote, "This is describing a vile orgy of drunkenness and debauchery. Clearly a pagan festival that began with alcohol, continued with perversity, and in a moment will conclude with murder".

Are you living of the moment? You've got to count the cost!

- I. *If your life is out of control, start **resolving problems** in your life.*
- II. *Here's the second thing: If your life is out of control, **stop trivializing truth**. Wake up spiritually!*
- III. *If your life is out of control, **stop ignoring your internal spiritual alarm (conscience)**.*

IV. If your life is out of control, **stop embracing open rebellion**, and submit your life to Christ. **Verse 27**, “And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John’s head. He went and beheaded him in the prison 28 and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. 29 When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.”

Herod is frozen in the moment—he ignores the warnings. He’s living in the moment. He’s not thinking of the future. And he goes over the edge and has John the Baptist’s head taken from him. Herod’s life is not utterly out of control, and he crashes!

Perhaps you are here today, and you can’t understand why your life is out of control.

Conclusion: We all need to heed the warning signs. If not we might go right over the cliff.

March of the Lemmings Illustration

The lemming is found in Norway and is a short-tailed animal that looks like a miniature rabbit. Through the sub-Arctic Norwegian winter it lives completely buried under snow through which it burrows in search of food. Females can conceive and produce offspring within four weeks of their birth. Talk about reproduction, these things make rabbits look infertile. Mass reproduction! Eventually they outgrow the tunnel system, and the lemmings fill the tunnels, and there’s not enough food and not enough space.

God has put a little alarm inside the lemmings to give us a picture. A warning for us. What these lemmings do is about every two years, when the population is too high, most of them will crawl out of the ground and start a march. They come out of the ground in Norway. This is so bizarre that the people come outside and watch this happen. First 10 and then 100 and then thousands and then hundreds of thousands join this massive march across the landscape so that you can’t even see the ground. They get to the sea, and they go right over the cliff, and right over into the ocean and DROWN.

This is silly. It’s stupid of these animals to do that. That animal has a brain as small as your fingernail, yet some of you are on the same path. You are about to make some decisions that are going to harm your future. Others of you need to be bold and trust God and go forward with God’s revealed will.

We have an internal alarm system that God has given us. We need to listen to it! We need to listen to the Word of God. We need to resolve problems and apply this book to our lives!