

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

The Villain of Christmas

Week 3: Herod's Darkest Hour

Matthew 2:13-18

December 10, 2023

Jeff Griffin

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The first Christmas was almost ruined by an evil king, but God had other plans. Today we're taking another look at the biblical events surrounding King Herod and his attempt to dethrone the King of Kings — this time, by eliminating some of the most vulnerable among us.

Kicking It Off: Historians believe King Herod likely played a role in resurrecting the ancient Olympic Games. With that in mind, what's your favorite summer Olympic sport to watch?

Discussion:

1. What stood out to you about King Herod from this week's message?

2. Jeff discussed the natural inclination we all have to try to make ourselves feel a little better than others around us. When have you been tempted to act like that? When have you felt inferior or "like the riffraff" around you?

3. Taking a closer look at Matthew 2:16, what led King Herod to try and eliminate all the baby boys in Bethlehem, ordering the Massacre of the Innocents — not to mention killing so many others close to him?

"When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi." (NIV)

4. By contrast, what does Jesus say about children (to His disciples) in Matthew 19:14? How does this verse apply to young and pre-born children today?

"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'" (NIV)

5. Jeff shared a longer list of how God pursues people who are often not valued in our world today: mentally disabled, the poor, prisoners, and the elderly. What does this say about the heart of God?

How could thinking about someone's humanity — and how much they matter to God — impact how you spend your time, talent, and treasure?

6. What would change in society if everyone took Genesis 9:6 seriously ... and focused on how every person on the planet is made in God's image? How might that affect how you treat people?

"If anyone takes a human life, that person's life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings in his own image." (NLT)

Wrapping Up: If God is willing to send His son to die for us, how does that change your self perception and outlook, in light of 1 Corinthians 6:20?

"for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body." (NLT)