

A CHRISTMAS HORROR STORY discussion

Matthew 2:1-23

REMEMBERING

1. When have you been most aware of the presence of a “nasty villain” on your life journey? (Like one “prowling about like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.”)

REFLECTING

2. What actions or responses from you did that awareness prompt at the time?

DISCOVERING

3. Which characteristics of Herod did you find most appalling?
 - a. Addicted to POWER (control)
 - b. Obsessed with POSSESSIONS (influence)
 - c. Preoccupied with PRESTIGE (self-importance)
 - d. Gripped by PARANOIA (fear)

CONNECTING

Ted called “the horror” of this story not the historical Herod—the Herod of the past—but the way the spirit of Herod still rules hearts in the present.

4. Where and when do you see the spirit of this king on the throne of your heart or the hearts of others?
 - a. When we seek to control our lives and others by being crafty and manipulative, when we dispense cutting

remarks and treat others with cruelty and insensitivity, the king addicted to POWER sits on our throne

- b. When we are envious of what others have and we seek to own increasingly more, yet enough is never enough, the king obsessed with POSSESSIONS sits on our throne
- c. When our feelings get hurt easily and we’re always mad at someone for ignoring or not acknowledging our contribution, when we demand respect and to be treated worthy of our considerable value as people, the king preoccupied with PRESTIGE sits on our throne
- d. When we are so timid we can’t act, so afraid to make tough decisions, so fearful that someone might get their feelings hurt if we do this or that, the king gripped by PARANOIA sits on our throne

RESPONDING

5. What could you do this week to ensure that the King of Kings *reigns* and *remains* on the throne of your heart?