

Jesus, A Terror to the Impenitent

Matthew 14:1-12

Halifax: 20 November 2005

Introduction:

Last week, we came to a new section in Matthew's Gospel that begins at the end of chapter 13.

- Here we find Jesus departing from Capernaum after ministering there for a year.
- In the remainder of chapter 13 and all of chapter 14,
 - Matthew presents Jesus to us among different groups of people and shows us what He is among them.
- Last week we saw that He was an offense to the home-town folks.
 - They knew that Jesus was one of them,
 - He had lived in their town and worked in his father's carpentry shop.
 - They could not think of Him as a prophet—much less as the Son of God!
- I warned you about the danger of an over-familiarity with Christ that can be our ruin—
 - We can come to think that because He is fully human...
 - He is not also fully divine...
 - but He is the very Son of God, the same in substance with the Father, equal in power and glory.!
 - He is one person with two entire, complete, distinct natures—a divine nature and a human nature.
 - If you would be saved, you must not only know Him as a man who can represent us and sympathise with us,
 - but also as the Son of God who is to be worshipped and honoured and fully trusted in.
 - Do not stumble because He took on our nature...
 - Marvel, but do not cease to worship Him!

This week, Matthew shows us what Jesus is to another class of people:

- The impenitent; that is:
 - Those who refuse to repent of their sins.
 - Matthew shows us that Jesus is a terror to such.

- And to illustrate this, Matthew chooses Herod the Tetrarch or Herod Antipas.
 - This Herod should not be confused with Herod the Great who was the King of the Jews when Jesus was born,
 - nor should he be confused with Herod Agrippa the First, who killed James and imprisoned Peter.
 - The Herod presented to us here in Matthew 14 is Herod Antipas.
 - He is the Herod that, as this passage shows, killed John the Baptist—
 - He is also the Herod to whom Pilate sent Jesus at His trial when Pilate could find no fault with Him.
- It can be rather confusing to sort out all the relationships in the Herodian line because there is a lot of intermarriage, remarriage, overlapping times in office, and even persons with the same name.
 - I have inserted a chart in your bulletin to help untangle some of the confusion about the different Herods that are mentioned in the Bible.
 - **Herod the Great** is the first Herod we meet in the New Testament at the birth of Christ.
 - He was king over three regions:
 - Judea and Samaria (the southern portion of his dominions)
 - Galilee and Perea (the area where Jesus conducted much of His ministry)
 - Trachonitis and Iturea (the northern portion of his dominions)
 - When he died in 4 BC (just after Jesus was born),
 - the land was divided between three of his sons—all three who are sometimes called simply Herod in the New Testament:
 - **Herod Archelaus** (the Herod that Jesus' parents wanted to stay away from when they returned from Egypt)
 - was given Judea and Samaria
 - which he ruled with cruelty until 6 AD when it was turned over to Roman Governors until 37 AD.
 - **Herod Antipas** was given Galilee and Perea
 - until he was banished to Gaul in 39 AD upon accusation of conspiracy against Rome...
 - Herod Agrippa I, was the one that accused him and then was given the rule of Galilee and Perea.

- **Herod Philip** was given Trachonitis and Iturea,
 - which he ruled peacefully until his death in 34 AD.
 - At that time, his territory was annexed to Syria...
 - Then in 37 AD, the now annexed territory was given to Herod Agrippa the First.
- This **Herod Agrippa the First** was also given Judea and Samaria in 37 AD, and was officially given the title of King—
 - This, in part, was what led to the downfall of Herod Antipas.
 - In jealousy, spurred on especially by his wife Herodias,
 - Herod Antipas went to Rome to try to acquire the same title, and that was when he was rewarded with banishment.
 - And his accuser, Herod Agrippa the First, was given his charge and now found himself over all the territory that Herod the Great had ruled—plus Syria!
 - **Herod Agrippa the First** is the Herod we meet in Acts.
 - He is the one who killed James, and then imprisoned Peter to please the Jews.
 - Shortly thereafter as he was receiving honour from his subjects, he was struck by an angel and eaten with worms.
 - Later on in Acts, Paul meets with another Herod Agrippa—
 - **Herod Agrippa the Second.**
 - He is the one who was “almost persuaded” by Paul to become a Christian.
- Hopefully, all this information will help you sort out who the various Herods are that we meet in the Bible.
 - But now I must move on and show you some things to learn from the account of Herod Antipas given to us in Matthew 14.
 - Here we find him reacting in fear upon hearing a report about Jesus!
- It is quite obvious that due to a troubled conscience,
 - He tells his inner circle of servants:
 - “This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him.”
 - Matthew tells us all about what is driving him to say such a foolish thing!

- He plagued with guilt for having ordered John's head to be chopped off when John had done nothing but preach the truth!
- Herod is troubled because of his guilt!
- His conscience is struck!
- Jesus is a terror to him.

TRANS> So what can you learn from this account about Herod's fear?

I. First of all, learn from this account that Jesus is a terror to the rebellious.

A. As I mentioned last week,

- in dealing with Jesus you must recognise that He is not only the Lamb of God but also the Lion of Judea!
1. He is both the Saviour of His people and the Judge of all people.
 - He not only was found wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger...
 - but also in the thunder and lighting on Mount Sinai when even Moses was made to tremble,
 - and again in the temple when Isaiah cried out,
 - "Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips!"
 - Though He is the meek and lowly one who forgives sinners,
 - He is also the One from whom heaven and earth will flee away when He comes in His glory to judge the earth!
 - He will appear with sword in His mouth and with blood stained garments from trampling out the winepress of God's wrath upon His adversaries.
 2. He is the One that every person ought to fear because the Father has put all judgement into His hand.
 - We ought to fear Him because we are sinners and He is holy.
 - We are the sons of Adam who have rebelled against His righteous rule and we are deserving of His judgement.
 - This is what made even Moses and Isaiah,
 - two of the holiest men that ever lived,
 - tremble with terror when they met Him in a glorious appearing...
 - How much more ought the rest of us to tremble before Him!

TRANS> But I say,

- He is not only the One before whom every soul **ought** to tremble,
- He is also the One before whom every person **does** tremble!

B. There is not a person alive that does not, at least to some extent, tremble before Him.

1. This is true because every one of you has a conscience.

a. That conscience tells you that you came from God.

- It tells you that you sin against God.
- It tells you that you will have to answer to Him for that sin.

b. You can see the conscience operating in all people...

- even in those who have never been exposed to the written revelation of God.

1) You see them accusing others of wrongdoing, and then doing the same things themselves.

- You see them in a whole variety of ways trying to defend their own actions and deal with their own sins.

2) Paul speaks of this in Romans 2:14-15:

- He says that even those who do not have the written law show the work of the law written in their hearts...
 - “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*.”

c. Everyone has a conscience...

- Sometimes this conscience is a very poor and blind guide...
 - Sometimes it has been violated again and again until it is seared...
 - Sometimes it has been trained by a corrupt society until it is almost ruined...
 - but still it is there, speaking as it does into the life of every person!
- And to whatever extent it still speaks,
 - a sinner is filled with terror of the Son of God.
 - Even though they might have never heard the name of Jesus,

- He is the One who is the light of every person that comes into the world.
 - He is the One by whom and for whom all things were created...
 - He is the member of the Trinity who reveals God to us...
 - not only through prophecy,
 - but also through nature.
2. But there is an even greater terror of Him that is found in those who have not only learned of Him through nature, but also through prophecy.
- a. By prophecy, I mean that they have been exposed to special revelation.
 - Natural revelation is what is known of God through conscience and creation alone...
 - But special revelation is Christ speaking on earth to us.
 - This He did through prophets and apostles until at last He appeared Himself and revealed to us the fullness of the gospel.
 - Then He sent forth His apostles and prophets to record for us that revelation in written form that it might be more easily preserved and carried to all nations.
 - And He commanded that the word be preached to all men everywhere.
 - b. In this special revelation, He speaks to all who come in contact with it...
 - In it, his commandments are set forth so that we see clearly how we have gone wrong...
 - And He shows forth His judgements so that we see what punishment our sins deserve...
 - And, best of all, He shows us what He Himself has done to redeem sinners...
 - How He has suffered for our sins on the cross...
 - And that whosoever believes in Him will be saved.
 - c. When, like Herod, you are exposed to this special revelation,
 - you are shown the reality of Jesus even more than conscience and natural revelation alone can reveal Him.
 - 1) Herod, of course, had not even met Jesus in person,
 - but like you, He had heard a report about Him and what He was doing.
 - What's more, He had met John the Baptist who proclaimed the Word of Christ to Him,

- and John had very pointedly told Herod that it was sinful for him to have Herodias as his wife.
- She was married to one of Herod's brothers who was not a ruler,
 - and Herod had fallen in love with her and she had agreed to divorce her husband and marry him if he would also divorce his wife.
 - Herod agreed and so not only committed adultery, but also incest.
- You can be sure that Herod knew that what he had done was wrong...
 - And many of the people of his dominions were offended by it...
 - but there were few who would dare to tell him so to his face.
 - John the Baptist was entirely different!
 - He feared no man (a trait Herod could not understand!)
 - and he told Herod repeatedly that what he had done was wrong.
 - In verse 4, the continuous tense of the verb could be brought out by translating it:
 - "Because John **kept saying** to him, 'It is not lawful for you to have her.'"
- You see how this faithful prophet brought the Word of Christ to Herod to convict him even more of his sin...
 - And now after killing John, Herod receives this report about Jesus and the signs and wonders He is performing among the people!
 - Herod is terrified by this!
 - He supposes that John must have risen from the dead!

2) When the Lord brings special revelation to you,

- It brings a deeper conviction than what nature and conscience alone can accomplish.
 - The law was given, in part, to show us our sin—to awaken our consciences!
- Paul speaks of a person who comes to church being convicted of all he has done and having the secrets of his heart revealed!
 - That is what the Word of Christ does to sinners...
 - The light of Jesus exposes what you are before God and you are convicted of sin.

- You are also shown the danger that you are in because of God's judgement against your sin.
 - You are taught to tremble before God.
3. Now I want you to realise this fear is not a bad thing.
- It all depends on what you do with it!
- a. If you see your sin and the danger you are in because of it, and this drives you to Christ for salvation—
- If you say, “I see that I am worthy of God's judgement, but I see that Christ died in the place of sinners. I must go to Him and be saved”
 - Then you are the better for your fear—
 - it is a very good thing that you feared!
 - God has graciously taught you to fear!
 - It was God's leading of you to repentance.
- b. But if, on the other hand, you respond to your fear by trying to suppress it—
- If you try to avoid the voice of Christ and resist it and deny it and drown it out, then it is all the worse for you that you have heard!

TRANS> And that is what I want to show you next from this passage...that:

II. As long as you refuse the call of Christ, it will only get worse for you.

A. Oh yes, there are all sorts of methods you can employ to try to suppress the voice...

- These fall under two categories and Herod uses them both.
 - I will call them “parties” and “persecutions.”
 - Let's look at them in more detail...
1. First parties.
- You can try to suppress the voice of Christ with “parties.”
 - a. Herod clearly used parties in this way.
 - 1) What I mean is, he used them as a diversion tactic—
 - He used them to try to drown out the voice of Christ.
 - 2) In our text, we find him having a birthday party after the style of the Romans and the Greeks—something the Jews did not approve of...
 - It was a party where there was drunkenness and revelry...

- A party that involved women dancing in a sensual and ungodly manner.
- b. Now I want you to understand that there are two kinds of parties that are diametrically opposed!
- 1) Jesus Himself went to an entirely different kind of party than Herod...
 - He went to parties where God's goodness and salvation were the focus of the festivities!
 - God commanded His people to go to parties like this!
 - There was wine, but not drunkenness.
 - There was lots of food and fellowship, but not gluttony and sensuality.
 - He went to parties on Israel's great feast days to celebrate God's deliverance of His people out of Egypt...
 - and parties to rejoice in the joining together of a man and woman in holy marriage and to pray for God's blessing upon them...
 - and parties on the Sabbath Day to rejoice in God's creation of the world and to give thanks for His bounty toward us.
 - These were parties that were given to draw near to God and to give thanks.
 - 2) But the kind of parties Herod went to were exactly opposite to this.
 - They were parties that were aimed at forgetting God and avoiding God...
 - They were parties aimed at ignoring what God was doing and saying instead of focusing on it.
 - They were parties at which the Lord was not welcomed.
- c. Of course there are many things that can fall under this category of parties.
- It is anything you do to try to escape from God.
 - to try to silence the voice of conscience and to forget what you are.
 - It is an escape mechanism.
 - This is what is behind all the additions we have in our society today—
 - whether it is a hobby, sports, drugs, eating, drinking, computer games, pornography, movies, or whatever...
 - if it is done to get away from God and to drown your conscience (or at least escape it)

- it is likely to end up becoming so attractive to you that you will not be able to stop it.
- Of course, only you can see your heart...
 - but you must be very careful that you do not deceive yourself!
 - People can even go to church as a diversion from the true God!
 - In fact, many people go to church for that very reason!
 - They go to hear soft words that will still their conscience—
 - not the voice of the true gospel, but smooth words that put the conscience to sleep.
 - The real test is whether your parties are leading you to Christ for salvation, or away from Him?
 - If there is sin involved in the party, it ought to be clear...
 - If there is, for example, drunkenness and sensuality at the party, it is the wrong kind of party...
 - If there is idolatry in a worship service, it is clearly the wrong kind of worship service.
 - If there is covetousness and selfishness in the hobby so that (for example) you impoverish your family to support your hobby,
 - it is clearly a wrong use of the hobby.

TRANS> So you see how a person can suppress the voice of Christ with parties.

2. The second way you might try to suppress the voice of Christ is by persecution.
 - a. This is, of course, what Herod was attempting to do when he killed John the Baptist.
 - 1) John was a real irritant to Herod, and even more to Herodias, because, as I showed you before,
 - John kept telling them that their marriage was unlawful!
 - They were trying to pretend it was okay, but John wouldn't shut up about it.
 - 2) Matthew tells us that Herod had wanted to put John to death, but was afraid of the people.
 - a) He was an uneasy ruler because his subjects were not very supportive of him, and he feared a revolt if he should do anything to John.
 - The people had, for the most part, regarded John as a prophet—

- Herod also (according to Mark) feared John because he saw the marks of a prophet in him.
 - He was willing to silence him by shutting him up in a prison, but he was not willing to kill him.
- b) But Herodias could think of nothing else but putting getting rid of John altogether!
- It bothered her greatly to have John trying to ruin her marriage!
 - It seems that she truly was in love with Herod,
 - for she later went with him into exile even though she was offered a way out by the Roman Emperor.
 - While her loyalty may have been due to injured pride,
 - she was, for whatever reason, attached to Herod and did not want to have the marriage broken up.
 - She was highly offended with John—
 - so much so that she was looking for an opportunity to do away with him.
 - And in our text, we are given an account of what she did when that opportunity finally presented itself.
 - It appears that she planned the whole thing—
 - to have her daughter (probably around 13 years old) dance a sensual dance...
 - to have Herod offer her a reward of her choosing...
 - and for that reward to demand the head of John the Baptist!

TRANS> You see then how Herod and Herodias attempted in various ways to put to silence the voice of Christ by persecution...

- Herod by putting John in prison...
 - Herodias by having him executed.
- b. There are many other forms that persecution may take!
- 1) There are those who persecute the prophets today by trying to discredit the Bible...
 - They claim that the prophets did not truly speak the Word of God...
 - They argue that the Bible is full of contradictions...
 - or that it has things that are inconsistent with history or science...

- or that the people who wrote it were not evil and self-seeking.
 - This is the persecution of the prophets in an effort to still the voice of Christ.
- 2) Then there are those who try to silence the voice of Christ by finding fault with Christians.
- Have you ever noticed how excited the world is when a Christian falls?
 - Have you noticed how ready people are to criticise a godly person or a minister of the gospel?
 - How ready they are to take up a rumour about them?
 - This is persecution to still the voice of Christ and their own conscience.
 - It is also an attack on Christ.
- 3) Yes, even Christians who are resisting the will of God will persecute other Christians...
- a) They will start to criticise them and find fault with them—
- One sin leads to another and another!
 - First there is the initial sin that is reprovved...
 - Then there is the attack against the one that reprovves them!
 - Do you children ever do this?
 - Your sister corrects you and instead of welcoming the correction and repenting,
 - you start attacking her instead?
 - You should attack your sin, not your sister!
 - There is a wretched progression in evil as there was with Herod.
 - First there was the unlawful marriage...
 - Then there was the imprisonment of John for telling the truth...
 - Then there was the murder of John.
- b) Beware of resisting the voice of Christ!
- It is the first step toward murder!
 - Have you not found yourself resenting a godly person who has exposed your sin?
 - Matthew Henry said,

- “Faithful reproofs, if they do not profit, provoke.”
- How true it is.

TRANS> And so you see how sinners may try to suppress the voice of Christ by parties and persecutions.

B. But I want you to see from our text how utterly ineffective these methods are!

1. It is like a child on the beach trying to keep back the tide with a wall of sand.

- No matter how hard he works, the tide will still come in and destroy his little castle.
- You can persecute and you can party,
 - but the Word of Christ will just keep on coming!

2. Just look at poor Herod!

- He is an absolute mess!
- a. It would seem that he tried to use John to vindicate him at first,
 - He wanted John’s support of his unpopular marriage,
 - He wanted John to ease his conscience about it...
 - He assumed that John would be intimidated by him as others were...
 - but instead of getting an assurance of pardon from John,
 - he got a rebuke!
 - John’s boldness made him all the more convicted of his sin!
- b. Now poor Herod is torn in different directions...
 - He is afraid of John because of John’s obvious sincerity, wisdom and courage.
 - He is afraid of the multitudes because they think John is a prophet...
 - he is afraid to let him go and afraid to kill him because of what they might do.
 - He is afraid of his wife because she will make life miserable for him as long as John lives.
 - And now he has made this oath to his step-daughter,
 - and he is afraid of what his guests will think if he doesn’t keep his promise...
 - and afraid of having to face Herodias if he backs out.
 - Yet he is still afraid to do the deed.

- And then after the deed was done,
 - He was afraid of what the consequences would be!
 - What about the multitude?
 - What about his conscience?
 - What about this report of this miracle worker that is among the people!
 - Surely it is John the Baptist, risen from the dead!

TRANS> Despite all his efforts to put to silence the voice of Christ,

- that voice just keeps on popping up everywhere!

3. I have something to say to Herod and all who are like him!

- That voice is only going to get louder and louder until you repent!
 - a. Persecutors always find that voice comes back...
 - They hear it in the converts that follow the one the persecuted!
 - How disturbed the high priests were when they crucified Jesus only to hear his disciples preaching in his name!
 - They had done all they could to get rid of the voice, and now here it was again!
 - b. Partiers also find that the voice comes back...
 - They have their moment of ecstasy at night and then the morning comes and the voice is back...
 - The neglected bills, the neglected work, the neglected family—everything is worse after the party is over than it was before.
 - The voice of Christ is still there, even louder now.
 - They turn to get another drink!
 - c. And I want you to know that this is only a foretaste of what is to come!
 - 1) On the Day of Judgement you will meet Christ face to face and you will hear that voice that you already know.
 - And that voice will be so clear and so distinct and so powerful that there will be no way to even think of escaping it.
 - If only you could murder Him, but there is no way.
 - If only you could get another drink, but there will be no drink.
 - The party will be over for you.

- All your diversions and all your methods of suppression will end.
- 2) You can dismiss the preacher, you can kill the prophet, you can avoid the Bible,
- But the word of God will not be silenced.
 - It will keep coming back until it comes to abide against you forever and ever—
 - and then it will all be over!

III. The only solution is it to yield to the voice of Christ!

A. Settle it once and for all, my dear friends!

1. There is only one voice to obey!

a. You must obey this voice and all will be well!

- The voice of Jesus is the voice that convicts you of sin,
 - but it is the very same voice that promises you salvation if you will repent and believe!
 - He says, “Come unto me, all you that are weary and heavy laden, and you will find rest for your souls!”

b. You must realise that this is the only voice that matters!

- All other voices will be brought to silence!
- 1) Does the voice of the world call you to find security in your wealth?
- I tell you, Jesus is the only rock of refuge where you can run for safety!
 - He calls you to come to Him and find refuge.
 - Your riches will perish with you if you trust in them.
- 2) Does the voice of your passions and lust call you take your fill from steamy romance novel or a centrefold?
- I tell you, Jesus is the bread of life.
 - He calls you to come and feed on Him if you want to find out what real living is all about!
 - Take your fill from Him and you will find true satisfaction!
- 3) Does the voice of ambition and pride call you to follow your dreams and make a great name for yourself?

- I tell you, Jesus is the true shepherd who leads you to greatness!
- You will lose your way if you follow your own ambition and pride.
 - The people at Babel tried to make a name for themselves, but God came to Abraham and said,
 - “I will make your name great!”
 - If you want true greatness, you will find it in Jesus.

2. The voice of Christ is the only voice that matters!

a. Stop listening to all the other voices and hear Him!

- His sheep hear His voice and they follow Him.
- They know His voice and they will not follow the voice of a stranger.
- They follow Jesus alone and He gives them eternal life and they will never perish.

b. Herod was sorry to kill John.

1) But he was not sorry enough.

- He was sorry because of the multitude and the trouble that might come of that...
- And yes, he was sorry because of the voice of his conscience and the voice of Christ.

2) But the problem was that he was not sorry enough!

- He was not so sorry that he repented.
 - He feared offending his conscience and the multitude...
 - But he feared offending his wife and losing face before his fellow partiers even more.
- That is always the problem!
 - You are muddled whenever Christ’s voice is not the only voice!
 - When you are partly following this voice and partly following that voice...
 - When you are measuring and calculating what you think will be the outcome if you offend this one or that one...
 - That is the way to become completely muddled!

B. Just look at the beautiful simplicity of John!

1. Compare him with Herod!

- a. John already knew which voice to follow.
 - It was not question with him—it was all very simple.
 - He knew the Lord and John had made it his purpose to do no other will but the will of his Lord.
 - He was not afraid of Herod, even though Herod was powerful and rich and John was poor.
 - He was not afraid of the multitude, though he was not their ruler, but Herod was afraid of them.
 - John did not need the multitude for his security because he had Christ.
- b. As a result, John did not vacillate the way Herod did...
 - He was not torn between opinions because he only needed to know one opinion.
 - He was not trying to please conflicting voices,
 - because for him the voice of Christ was the only one he heard.
 - It is a sign of a very sick Church today (in North America at least),
 - that we are often the ones who are insecure and tentative and embarrassed and hesitating about what we have to say as Christians.
 - John knew that he was speaking the truth about Herod's marriage,
 - and he knew that Herod knew that he was speaking the truth.
 - John was the not the one who needed to be insecure, but Herod!
 - The world will put on airs of cockiness—
 - Herod was no different...
 - But John was not deceived by it because he knew that he had the truth that the Lord Himself would back.
 - He knew that Herod's conscience was on his side.
 - I am sure John knew Psalm 119:45-47 which says:
 - Psalm 119:45-47: I will walk at liberty, For I seek Your precepts. I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings, And will not be ashamed. And I will delight myself in Your commandments, Which I love.

TRANS> John did not vacillate because there was only one voice to follow...

- c. Neither was John troubled the way Herod was when he heard about Christ and saw Him advancing...
- Quite the opposite!
 - Herod, like his father, was troubled, but John greatly rejoiced.
 - Even as a babe he leaped in the womb when Jesus came near.
 - John's whole life, you see, was not about trying to advance himself as Herod's was.
 - John was not only willing, but pleased to decrease in order that Christ might increase.
 - John's disciples struggled with jealousy toward Jesus for John's sake,
 - but John was perfectly content so long as Christ was honoured.
 - His life, you see, was clearly not about trying to advance himself.
 - You will be uneasy all the time if that is your goal in life because you do not have the power to advance yourself.
 - The Lord will be a terror to you because you will be fighting against Him all the time—
 - and you will find that He is too much for you...
 - Peace will come only when you learn like John, not to advance yourself,
 - but the Lord Jesus.
 - That was John's only purpose and ought to be your only purpose

TRANS> There was a beautiful simplicity about John—

- in contrast with a wretched complexity about Herod!

2. And let me ask you, which of these ways was best?

a. Who is better off today?

- 1) Was it Herod who laboured to secure his riches and his romance and his position and honour?
- 2) Or was it John who gladly surrendered all these things to please Christ?

b. I say, which one is happy today and which one is full of sorrow?

- Which one has regrets about his choices and which one is pleased with the way he chose?

- Which one has the better future?
 - The one who was terrified when he heard about Christ?
 - or the one who rejoiced when he heard His voice?
 - The one who tried to escape that voice?
 - or the one who followed it to the end?
 - The one who was at the head of the party?
 - or the one whose head was served on a platter at that party?

I tell you my friends,

- The voice of Christ is truly a fearful voice for us sinners!
 - But it is not a voice to run away from as so many do to their own hurt.
 - It is a voice to come to and rejoice in.
- In what way are you trying to suppress this voice?
 - I tell you, do it not!
 - and you will find rest for your souls.
 - Jesus is a terror to the rebellious,
 - but He is a dear friend to all who repent and come to Him.
 - That is what He is among us.