

The Original Grinch

12-17-08

“Two Sizes Too Small!”

I. **INTRO:**

A. **Christmas Family Services:** 7 & 11pm (Kry; Candlelight service)

II. **THE ORIGINAL GRINCH!**

A. **THE 1966 GRINCH WHO STOLE CHRISTMAS!**

B. The **Grinch**, a bitter, cave-dwelling creature with a **heart** "*two sizes too small*," lives on snowy **Mount Crumpit**, a steep, 3,000-foot high mountain just north of Whoville, home of the merry and warm-hearted Whos.

1. His only companion is **Max**, his faithful dog. Envious of hearing the Whos' Christmas festivities below, he makes plans to descend on the town and, by means of burglary, deprive them of their Christmas **presents & decorations** and thus "**prevent Christmas from coming**". **However**, he learns in the end that despite his success in stealing all the Christmas **presents & decorations** from the Whos, Christmas comes just the same. **He then realizes that Christmas is more than just gifts and presents.** His **heart** grows 3 sizes larger, he returns all the presents and trimmings, and is warmly welcomed into the community of the Whos.
2. I wish Herod's end was the same!

C. **The Grinch personifies all those who view christmas with disdain** (i.e. Scrooge)

1. As loud as we celebrate the birth of Christ, others seek to have Nativity scenes torn down from public parks.
2. **I think the target behind the venom is that we tell the story as truth, not myth.**
3. And this truth has serious consequences:
 - a) **No danger in believing in Santa Claus. Eternal danger in not believing in Jesus.**
4. Christmas is a comfort for those who believe in Christ, it is a threat to many who do not.

D. **THE ORIGINAL GRINCH!**

E. **The 1 who wanted to stop Christmas in its tracks is a familiar Christmas villain, Herod.**

1. **He is missing from the manger scene, but not by his own choice.**
 - a) He would have been more than happy to find the little baby Jesus, but for his own purposes.
2. **Read Mt.2:1-12**

- a) (8) His **words** ring with sincerity **but** his **heart** was another matter. *2 sizes too small!*
- b) He wanted to **stop** the celebration before it ever **began**.

- F. Herod was the **first opposition** to Jesus, & he provides “*the other Christmas story*”, the unhappy Christmas story of fear, jealousy, & ruthless persecution.
 - 1. Herod is the reminder that God sent His Son into a world that **really didn't want Him**. - A world **threatened** by Him, who would eventually **finish** what Herod **started**.
 - 2. Herod is every man or woman who ever **rebelled against** God & His **rule over** his/her life.
- G. Some of us eventually **join** then angels, the shepherds, the Magi, & Simeon & Anna in rejoicing in His arrival. **Others remain** with Herod, at least in spirit.
 - 1. While many wish **Christians no evil**, **they also** wish **Jesus no power** in or over their lives.
 - 2. The coming of God is truly not only **glad tidings**, but first of all **frightening news** for everyone who has a conscience.
 - 3. It raises questions like...**If God *did* come to earth, what are the consequences of my disbelief or disobedience?**
- H. **If He truly was the Son of God come to our world to offer us salvation, then He cannot be ignored!**
- I. Herod was **afraid** of Jesus!
 - 1. (2) If the Magi had asked, “**where the baby Jesus had been born**”, Herod wouldn't have had a problem, but they asked, “**where the King of the Jews was born**.”
 - a) He **feared** Jesus, but for the wrong reasons. {Jealousy, felt threatened}
- J. Herod's **cruelty was legendary**. Over the years, he had eliminated by assassination every possible rival to his throne & his power, including his **wives** & his **sons**.
 - 1. **Read vs.16**
 - 2. **Jesus didn't just challenge Herod's position**. He challenged **all** who believe they can live **independent** of the rule of God, all who are ultimately **unwilling** to bow before the living Son of God.
 - 3. **Modern-day Grinches** are being pursued by **the Babe** in the manger, & because they aren't willing to **receive** Him, they must **reject** Him.

4. **Appl:** Instead of being angry at them we must begin to **understand *what is at stake* & *why*** they are so adamantly opposed to Him.
- K. The life of **Jesus** drowns out the accomplishments of **Herod** in a sea of insignificance.
1. The only reason most people remember Herod at all is in relationship to Jesus
 2. The king who built **splendid palaces, & structures** that still stand 2000 years later, is nothing but a **footnote** in the history of a baby in a manger.
 3. **Herod provides nothing more than a *black backdrop* against which **Jesus** might shine the brighter!**
- L. **H.G. Wells**, the famous *British historian*, was asked which person left the most permanent impression upon history, he replied that you need to judge a person based upon historical standards. “By this test,” Wells concluded, “Jesus stands first. I am a historian, I am not a believer. But I must confess as a historian that this penniless preacher from Nazareth is irrevocably the very center of History. Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in all of history.”¹
- M. It is difficult to worship the **Savior** & at the same time **exalt yourself**.
1. One must either **surrender** to Him, or **compete** with Him.
 2. Herod sought to **compete**, & he **lost!**
- N. The Magi **hadn’t** come to worship the aged & experienced political campaigner, Herod, but an infant king.
1. They brought **no gifts** to the esteemed & eminent King of Judea (Galilee, Iturea, & Traconitas).
 2. As a final insult, after keeping their mission the Magi **left** without saying **goodbye** to Herod The Great!
- O. Not everyone wants God to interrupt **their world & their lives**.
1. Where we see the **love** of God in the Babe in the manger, they see Him grown up & making claims on their lives, uncomfortable claims.
 2. They have nothing really to celebrate, even if the story is true, especially if the story is true.
 - a) They have said **no to Joy, no to grace, no to mercy, no to peace, no to the God** who humbled himself before them.

¹ Source Unknown. Taken from “In Search of the Real Spirit of Christmas”; Dan Schaeffer.

- P. When you hear “bah-humbugs” this year don’t **lash out** but be **sensitive** to the fact they don’t yet recognize that the Babe who was **born in our world** waits to be **born in their hearts** as well!
1. Can you remember when the message of Christmas meant little more to **you** **than** a holiday celebrated with trees & presents?
 2. Yes, Jesus waited patiently until **you** learned that He had been born for you!
 3. Pray for the Grinches that you see while waiting in lines, or where ever. You may be the only one that does this Christmas season!
- Q. **Grinches** are afraid that Jesus has come to **take** something from them.
1. We need to gently remind them that He came to **give** them something - something they can’t live without!