

Jesus on the Issues



A Life Wasted

READ Mark 6:14-29

FIND some things that Herod wasted in this passage.

With the exception of Jesus, there isn't a single person who hasn't lived a life wasted, not even a pastor or a monk or a nun. Human nature leans in this direction. It's only the grace of God that keeps any of us on track at all. No matter who you are you've wasted time, money, anger and resentment, direction in life, insecurities...and the list goes on.

LIST some of the things that you've wasted in your life.

Assessment

READ Matthew 11:7-11a

Whether you just stepped inside a church for the first time or you've attended ever since you can remember, it's always good to periodically pause to assess where you are on your journey. It should be said that there's an underlying assumption that what Jesus constitutes as a significant life is a life lived in God's hands and by His guidelines. **LOOK** at this passage from Matthew. What were Jesus' thoughts about the value of John's life? What are some things you can infer about John's character?

STOP and **ASSESS** where you're at on your journey. God never intends for us to camp in one place. Maybe you've been camped out and bored and searching. It may be time for you to pull up stakes and begin to take steps again. **PRAY** for the Holy Spirit to show you what you're next step is. What comes to mind?

A Life Invested

READ 1 Corinthians 2:9

IMAGINE all the adventures that God has planned for your life...all the gifts, all the joy, all the love. In your wildest imagination, what are your dreams and hopes for your life? What if some of those things came true? How would you feel about that? **THANK** God for His love and care for you. Not all of those dreams will fall in line with God's path for you, but some of them will. He knows your heart, even the secret wishes, and He loves you dearly!

Let's **LOOK** at some small items from normal lives that God used in miraculous ways.

- ☐ A slingshot in the hand of David to free the Israelites (1 Samuel 17)
- ☐ An ox goad in the hand of Shamgar to deter God's enemies (Judges 3:31)
- ☐ A handful of flour and a few ounces of oil in the hand of a widow to sustain a prophet and feed her family for years (1 Kings 17:7-24)
- ☐ Two fish and five rolls from a boy to feed more than five thousand people (John 6:1-15)
- ☐ A boat from a fisherman to transport Christ from village to village (Mark 8:10)
- ☐ A staff in the hand of Dorcus to clothe friends (Acts 9:36-41)
- ☐ The private tomb of Joseph to temporarily house the Son of Man (Mark 15:42-47)

Although God can use your particular skills and gifting for His Kingdom work, what does He use in your life beyond that—the common and mundane elements? **IDENTIFY** something you have that can be used by God to bless others this week. Time, food, resources, love, a kind word, even simply acknowledging someone else's presence can be used in great ways by God. **NOTICE** the people God is placing in your life this week. What small thing can you **SHARE** with them? No matter where you are on your journey, you can always take a small step to share with others.

GO DEEPER

If you're interested in learning more about living a life of significance, there are a couple of great books to help you get started.

The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For? by Rick Warren

The Search for Significance by Robert McGee

Both of these books can be found in the JW bookstore.