



-- Herod's response to Christ was murderous _____ (v. 16).

- v. 1-6 –Herod knew that this baby of whom the Magi spoke would have no rivals to his throne.
- When the possibility of Christ became the reality of Christ, Herod's response was selfish ambition.

-- Those _____ by Christ always rage against Him.

- Proverbs 19:3, Psalm 2:1-3
- Secular animosity is almost always directed against Jesus Christ.
- The animosity of contrary religions is greatest against Christians.
- There are really only two responses to the Lordship of Christ: submission or scorn.

-- When human selfishness wars against Christ, _____ always get caught in the crosshairs.

- When threatened by the increase of the Jews in Egypt, Pharaoh decrees the murder of every newborn Jewish boy (Leviticus 18:21, Isaiah 57:5).
- v. 16 – In his selfish pride, Herod orders the death of every small child that might possibly threaten his self-interest.
- Children remain in the crosshairs of selfish ambition today.

-- _____ is an altar of human selfishness and pride.

- 1.) It is an attack against the blessing of life (Psalm 127:3).
- 2.) It is an attack against the virtue of love (1 Corinthians 13:6-7).

- 3.) It is an attack against the promise of faith (Luke 18:16-17).
- 4.) It is the hallmark of a culture of death (Deuteronomy 30:19-20).

-- The sacrifice of children on the altar of self-interest is _____ to God (v. 18).

- As the mother of Benjamin, Rachel represents the mothers of all the children slaughtered by Herod's rage.
- In Rachel's woeful weeping, we see God's heart for children.
- In her distress, we see the horror that happens when children are caught in the crosshairs of the god of self.
- Mother Teresa – "It is a poverty to decide that a child must die so that you may live as you wish."

-- We manifest the love of God when we take a stand for _____.

- The love that God has given us for children must be seen in who we are and demonstrated by what we do.
- v. 15 – God compares Joseph's protection of the child Jesus to His own protection of Israel.
- Joseph walked away from worldly comfort and security to fulfill the calling of fatherhood.
 - In going to Egypt, Joseph was walking away from everything he had known and relied upon (except God).
 - Rather than taking the easy road of self-interest, Joseph chooses the path of parenthood.

-- The calling of _____ falls on the church as a whole.

- A vibrant culture of life ought to characterize our congregation.
- Our joy in welcoming children ought to be obvious.
- A passion to communicate Christ to their little hearts ought to be palpable and pervasive.

-- Luke 18:16 – *“Jesus called the children to him and said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.’”*