

# The Death of a Conscience

Mark 6:14-29

According to Jesus, John the Baptist was one of the greatest people who ever lived (Matthew 11:11). He was an extraordinary man dedicated to God from before his birth. When John burst from the wilderness and onto the national scene, he boldly denounced sin and called the people to radical repentance in preparation for the coming Messiah. It was inevitable that he would collide with the corrupt Herodian dynasty, its present degenerate leader Herod, and that ruler's wife Herodias.

John was austere and simple; Herod was flamboyant and ornate. John was righteous; Herod was a debauchee. John was a man of immense moral courage; Herod was a man who lived in spineless relativity. John was a man who kept his conscience and lost his head. Herod was a man who took John's head and lost his own conscience. It was the story of the life and death of a conscience—of the death of a soul.<sup>1</sup>

**A sensitive conscience (19-20)**

**A broken conscience (21-26)**

**A guilty conscience (14-16)**

**A dead conscience (Luke 23:6-12)**

When we silence our conscience, we bow to the wishes of the crowd. We allow others to manipulate us to use our power to satisfy our lusts.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Mark: Jesus, Servant and Savior, vol. 1*, by R. Kent Hughes. Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1989, p. 139-140.