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The King Who Sought Christmas

THE KINGS OF CHRISTMAS

They came to the house where
the child was and saw him with
his mother, Mary, and they
bowed down and worshipped
him They opened their gifts and
gave him treasures of gold,
frankincense, and myrrh.
— MATTHEW 2:11

So God raised him to the
highest place. God made his
name greater than every other
name so that every knee will
bow to the name of Jesus—
everyone in heaven, on earth,
and under the earth. And
everyone will confess that
Jesus Christ is Lord and bring
glory to God the Father.
— PHILIPPIANS 2:9-11

The appearance of the Magi in the Gospel of Matthew is rather shocking. By race, they are Gentiles; by profession, they are astrologers—dabbling in religion considered profane. Their appearance foreshadows a theme that will run throughout Matthew’s account—the theme that the despised of the world are often more eager to place faith in Jesus than the devout.

In Matthew 8, a Gentile centurion comes to Jesus on behalf of a critically sick servant. Jesus responds by saying, “I’ll come and heal him.” And the centurion says, “You don’t need to come—all you’ve got to do is speak the word and my servant will be healed.” And Jesus said, “I haven’t found this kind of faith in all of Israel. And I tell you men are going to come from the east and from the west and sit at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” (Matthew 8:11)

WELCOME

Do you enjoy this time of year, or do you find the holidays difficult? What are your plans?

WORSHIP

Once you’ve found the King of kings, you’re not going to hesitate to bow and praise Him. “Worthy, You Are Worthy” (232), “You Are Lord of Creation” (577), “Lord, I Lift Your Name on High.”

WORD

Read Matthew 2:1-12

1. Since the Magi were pagan astrologers, why would they leave Persia in order to follow the sign that pointed to find the one who was born king of the Jews? What is Matthew’s point in including the search of the Magi in his gospel?
2. Have you ever been shocked by someone’s coming to faith—someone who seemed uninterested, if not even hostile toward God? Explain.
3. What “divine travel guides” has God used in your own life to bring you to a deeper relationship with His Son?
4. What accounts for the difference in the attitude of the Magi and the religious leaders toward the birth of Jesus? How is their response different or similar to your own?
5. Someone has said, “Show me your day-timer and your pocketbook, and I can tell you a lot about your commitment to the Lord.” Do you agree or disagree that the way in which we spend our time and treasure are lordship issues? What would your calendar and checkbook suggest about your own priorities?

WORKS

How “passionate” are you about your pursuit of Jesus Christ at the moment? Regardless of where you find yourself in your spiritual walk at the moment, the best place nurture your relationship with God is through regular time in His Word. Now is a great time to consider a plan for reading through the Bible (or a specific portion of it) next year. Spend time in your group sharing ideas and encouraging one another along these lines.