

12/13/20 Message

Part of Counterfeit Character

December 13, 2020

Message: Counterfeit King

Series: Counterfeit Character

Recap: We're in the 5th message in our ***Counterfeit Character***. Counterfeit (by definition) means made in imitation of something else with intent to deceive. Do you know any counterfeit people? Around 50 A.D. a coup was rising in the first century church. The Judaizers were robbing the church of their freedom through legalism. The false teachers were claiming to be saved, in addition to believing in Jesus, you also must keep the law of Moses (Mosaic Law). Paul wrote to the Galatians (many churches in the region of Galatia) to tell the truth and combat the lies of "another" gospel. The theme is by grace alone, through faith alone.

Context

The virgin Mary had conceived a child with the Holy Spirit of God. It is what we call an immaculate conception. Joseph was called by God to be the baby's earthly father, and to lead his family, and to marry Mary.

Joseph and Mary had traveled from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea because of the census. While there, Mary gave birth to Jesus in a manger, which we know was most likely a cave where animals would typically be kept.

God brought me back to one of my most favorite Christmas messages when I was praying about how to close out Counterfeit Character. He took me to a fella who was an imitator... he was a pretender... and his very nature was entrenched in deception. This dude had it all... position, power, wealth, status... he had every reason to be real, but he turned his back on the truth and instead chose to be the poster child of a counterfeit character.

Matthew 2:1-12 (NLT)

1 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking,

2 “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.”

3 King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem.

4 He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

5 “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they said, “for this is what the prophet wrote:

6 ‘And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.’”

7 Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared.

8 Then he told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!”

9 After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was.

10 When they saw the star, they were filled with joy!

11 They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

12 When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

King Herod was the counterfeit king! He lied to the wise men and tried to trick them into leading him to Jesus (v8).

The Wise Men

Matthew 2:6 quotes Micah 5:2 – out of Bethlehem will come a ruler who will shepherd God’s people!

- The wise men were following a star, and they were led to a SAVIOR
- The wise men were following a star, and they were led to a STABLE
- The wise men were following a star, and they were led to WORSHIP

Wise Men Seek Jesus

This entire story is a test of faith. Not just the faith of Joseph and Mary, but also the faith of the wise men. Instead of finding a King on His throne, they found a young boy playing or maybe sitting beside His mother. It leads me to ask you the question this morning. What happens when you follow a star and find a stable?

—Pastor Chad

- You LOOK for God
- You OFFER your very best to God
- You CHANGE your direction

This morning, you're on a journey. You've followed a star. You've found a stable. You know the truth. The rest is up to you. What are you going to do?