

THE CURE OF CHRISTMAS

Candlelight Service

December 21-24, 2023

Pastor Brian

Matthew 2:1–16 (NLT)

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.

¹³ After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother,” the angel said. “Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

¹⁴ That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, ¹⁵ and they stayed there until Herod’s death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: “I called my Son out of Egypt.”

¹⁶ **Herod was furious** when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men’s report of the star’s first appearance.

The Characters of Christmas:

- The **Magi** sought to worship Him.
- The **religious leaders** knew about him but didn’t actually know Him!
- **Herod** wanted to destroy Him.
- His **parents** were provided to protect Him.
- The **BROKEN** desperately needed Him.

"My plans are broken. My DREAMS are SHATTERED." (Job 17:11, GW)

"I am IGNORED as if I were dead, as if I were a BROKEN pot." (Psalm 31:12, NLT)

"...My HEALTH is BROKEN. I am exhausted and completely crushed." (Psalm 38:7–8a, NLT)

"[They] have...BROKEN my heart, and I am in DESPAIR. If only one person would show some pity; if only one would turn and comfort me." (Psalm 69:20, NLT)

"My GRIEF is beyond healing; my heart is BROKEN." (Jeremiah 8:18, NLT)

1. THE WISE MEN TEACH US THAT GOD REWARDS SINCERE SEEKERS.

"...Where is the newborn king of the Jews?"

"It is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who SINCERELY SEEK him." (Hebrews 11:6, NLT)

Sincere seekers...

- Read the SIGNS.
"...God is patient, because he wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost." (2 Peter 3:9, CEV)
- Ask the right QUESTIONS.
"For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds..." (Luke 11:10, NLT)
- Follow THE TRUTH wherever it leads them.
"And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32, NLT)
"Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." (John 14:6, NLT)

2. WHEN WE FIND THE TRUTH, WE ARE FACED WITH A CHOICE.

"When they entered the house, they saw the child...they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." (Matthew 2:11, GW)

The birth of Jesus tells me...

- God sees my PROBLEM.
"LORD, see my anguish! My heart is BROKEN and my soul despairs, for I have rebelled against you..." (Lamentations 1:20, NLT)

- God sent a **SOLUTION**.
*“For **God so loved** the world that he **gave** his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16, NIV)*
- I must make a **CHOICE**.
*“To all who did **RECEIVE** him, to those who **BELIEVED** in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—” (John 1:12, NIV)*

*“Seek the LORD while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near.”
(Isaiah 55:6, NLT)*

ACTION STEPS

RECEIVE THE  OF JESUS!

Follow Him in believer's **baptism**.

Take **1st Base**.