

Peoples Church Small Group Questions

Date: December 18, 2016

Speaker: Pastor Dale Oquist

Finding Christmas: The Wise Men

Looking Back

God chose to speak to insignificant shepherds and non-Jewish wise men in a time of great instability in the world. Matthew 2:1-12.

1. If you were God, how would you start a world movement? Wouldn't you want to wait until the present time, when the planet has instant, world-wide communication ability?
2. If you were God, wouldn't you talk to the media and all the influential people and rulers?

Digging Deeper

The Magi (from the Greek 'magos') were astrologers-astronomers-magicians-sociologists from the area of present-day Iraq (900 miles from Jerusalem). They were people of influence, employed by the King. After seeing the sign of the star, they prepared for and made the long journey to Israel, probably taking a year or longer to arrive. We don't know their exact number and they may have come to see Jesus when he was approximately two years old at his house, but they came for the purpose of worshipping Jesus. These non-Jews took a slow 900-mile journey to search for the truth. Jeremiah 29:11

3. Are you searching for the truth this Christmas season with all your heart? What does that search look like?

The Magi were using astrology to search for meaning and for truth, something that was forbidden to the Jews. Deut 4:19 - God used what they were doing in error (and in ignorance) to help them find the truth. Pastor Dale emphasized, "You may find God amidst your pursuit of other gods."

4. Do you judge non-Christians who are searching for the truth using "non-Christian" methods?

Taking it Home

Pastor Dale said if he hid a 100 dollar bill in the church, who would search with all their heart for the bill? Only a few raised their hands, proving his point that you would search only if you had great need. Likewise, we may not even be aware of our spiritual needs. The Jewish religious leaders knew exactly where Jesus would be born, but they had no passion. Pastor Dale said, "You may find Jesus amidst the knowledge you already have." But it all depends on your hunger to change your life.

5. Are you a diligent seeker, or just one with a casual interest?
6. Do you know what your need is? Are you willing to be humbled to come to Jesus? The pictures of the birthplace of Jesus had a very short entrance, requiring you to bend the knee to enter. If you are not hungry, don't expect deep discovery in life.