

**JOURNEY TO THE MANGER****Week 4**

December 21-22, 2019

Adam Waite

**WARM-UP**

What is your favorite tradition for New Year's? If you don't have one, what was your most memorable New Year's celebration?

**Read Matthew 1:18-21**

- ⇒ What is the main idea of this passage?
- ⇒ What do you think about these things:
  - What the conversation between Mary and Joseph might have been like.
  - Joseph's initial plan after hearing the news from Mary.
  - What the angel said to Joseph.
  - The way Mary became pregnant.
- ⇒ Is there anything you would like to discuss or clarify in this section?
- ⇒ What does this information mean to you personally?

**Read Matthew 1:22-25**

- ⇒ What is the main idea of this passage?
- ⇒ Look up Isaiah 7:14 and compare with Matthew 1:23.
  - Describe what you think of when you hear the name "Immanuel."
  - What part of "God with us" (Immanuel) do you think the Jewish people were longing for?
  - Even though they had heard Isaiah 7:14 before, how quick do you think people would have been to believe Mary's story?
  - How do you think you might respond if you were one of the people who heard her story?
  - Describe some examples of how we might hear biblical truth that we have heard before, but it just doesn't "click" with us.
- ⇒ Is there anything you would like to discuss or clarify in this section?
- ⇒ What does this information mean to you personally?

**Read Matthew 2:1-6**

- ⇒ What is the main idea of this passage?
- ⇒ What do you think about these things:
  - The wise men and their journey.
  - The response of Herod and the people of Jerusalem.
- ⇒ Read Micah 5:2 and compare with Matt.2: 6.
  - Why do you think Bethlehem wasn't the expected place for the "king" to be born?
- ⇒

- ⇒ Do you think Herod knew the prophecy about a Messiah?
- ⇒ Is there anything you would like to discuss or clarify in this section?
- ⇒ What does this information mean to you personally?

**Read Matthew 2:7-12**

- ⇒ What is the main idea of this passage?
- ⇒ Discuss what you think about these things:
  - Herod's actions
  - The decision of the wise men.
  - The worship and gifts the wise men offered.
- ⇒ Is there anything you would like to discuss or clarify in this section?
- ⇒ What does this information mean to you personally?

**NEXT STEPS / ACTION**

This wraps up our series "Journey to the Manger." As we think about the last few weeks and the challenges that Pastor Adam has given us, which of these has resonated most with you?

- God uses people who listen.
  - God uses ordinary people.
  - God uses generous people.
  - God uses willing people.
- ⇒ As you have progressed through the last few weeks, what has God changed in you?
    - How has he challenged you?
    - What action steps have you taken?
  - ⇒ How this study affected or changed your outlook of the Christmas season and the birth of Jesus?

This week's message is about being willing to make room for what God calls us to do.

- ⇒ As you think about moving into 2020 and you reflect on this journey to the manger, what change do you see that you need to make so that you have space to say yes to what God wants you to do?

**PRAYER**

Pray that God would show you clarity of vision as you wrap up 2019 and look forward to 2020. Pray that his will would be done and that his gospel would be carried forward in the ministry that is all because of Jesus, the Messiah—the One who was born in Bethlehem so long ago.



## PERSONAL GROWTH & NEXT STEPS

### PERSONAL STUDY

- The Christmas story is familiar to almost everyone. How can the familiarity of the Christmas story minimize the real message of what occurred on the first Christmas?

There are some parts of the story that we have filled in over the years as we attempt to piece together the “scene” and understand Jesus’s birth. Christmas plays might talk of an innkeeper, but what was translated as “inn” in some Bible translations was probably more like lodging for guests in a home (it’s the same word that was translated “upper room” in the story of the last supper). But the point is, *someone* had to tell Mary and Joseph the comfortable lodging was full. And *someone* had to make room for them among the cattle. Let’s take a few minutes to pause and consider how we can “make room.”

#### Read Luke 2:4-7

- What are some ways the person who gave Mary and Joseph a place to stay showed grace and was willing to help? What are some of the excuses this person could have made about not having room for Mary and Joseph?
- How do you think things might have been different if their host knew and understood that the Savior of the world was about to be born?
- Think of ways that our actions are similar to those who turned away Mary and Joseph when it comes to making room for Jesus in our lives.
  - Read the following verses: **Acts 20:24; Colossians 4:6; James 2:23; Luke 8:36;**
    - What is God saying to you about grace?
    - Why can that be frightening?
  - What is God calling you to have a willingness to do?
  - Where and to whom is he asking you to show grace?
  - Evaluate where your life is right now during this Christmas season. What things are the “busy things” that are keeping you from making complete room for Jesus to work in and through you?

### OPPORTUNITIES AND NEXT STEPS

Looking to grow in your faith? Join us at **The River** in January! We’ll explore how we can know God better, grow in character and community, and live like Jesus.

Register at [www.redcedarchurch.com/theriver](http://www.redcedarchurch.com/theriver)

### GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

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