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Adventure

*"An unusual and exciting,
typically hazardous, undertaking."*

"ADVENTure: ...Hazardous..."

Matthew 2:1-23

Sunday | December 9th, 2018 | Pastor Patrick Bowler

CONSULT THE SCRIPTURES

Matthew 2:1-23

(Other texts cited: Prov. 25:20, Lk. 2, Is. 9:2-6, Jn. 3:19-20, Lk. 2:34-35, Rev. 21:3-4)

[Suggestion: This particular sermon was a difficult one. Begin by just leaving people room to respond more broadly (e.g. What resonated with you?)]

DISCUSS

1. Read Proverbs 25:20 and discuss. How did Pastor Patrick apply this to Christmas?
2. Pastor Patrick said that there needs to be room for sorrow in Christmas. What did he mean? Why is this important?
3. As a group, from what you know of the Christmas story (i.e. the birth of Jesus), identify its "hazards;" what hardship, pain and sorrow can be identified in the story?

4. Read Matthew 2:1-23 and discuss. What emotions are stirred as you read this story? What do you think “Rachel” is feeling? What do you think she needs? Are you able to relate in any form? What do you need?

5. Read Luke 2:34-35 and discuss. Mary’s Son was spared that night in Bethlehem, but she would one day know “Rachel’s” grief. What do you think Mary was feeling? And at the cross (c.f. Jn. 19:26)?

6. Author Zack Eswine wrote, *“In a fallen world, sadness is an act of sanity, our tears the testimony of the sane.”*¹ What do you think he means? How does this help?

7. As a church, as a community group, how can we rejoice together this season while still leaving room for sorrow and grief?

8. Below is a list of ways sorrow serves us; if helpful, consider and discuss:
 - a. Sorrow teaches us to resist trite views of what maturity in Jesus looks like.
 - b. Sorrows deepen our intimacy with God.
 - c. Sorrows enable us to better receive blessings.
 - d. Sorrows shed our pretences.
 - e. Sorrow exposes and roots out our pride.
 - f. Sorrow teaches us empathy for one another.
 - g. Sorrows allow small kindnesses to loom large.
 - h. Sorrows teach us courage for others who face trials.²

Notes:

¹Zach Eswine, *Spurgeon’s Sorrows* (Scotland, UK: Christian Focus, 2017), p. 30.

²*Ibid.* p. 139-141.