



GREAT LENGTHS

GREAT LENGTHS, PART 3: LITTLE HEROD

Maybe you wandered away from the church. Maybe the church pushed you away. You lost interest. You got busy. You got hurt. You thought you were done with God forever. But then you started to miss the peace. Despite everything you had experienced, you sensed a light out there. The doubt, the anger, the disappointment with God, the sin, and the shame didn't put out the light. And here you are in church again. *How did that happen?*

BIG IDEA: [What will your story be in relation to the light of the world?](#)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some ways you connect with your Heavenly Father during the Christmas season? Why are those ways helpful for you?
2. What are some things that cause people to drift away from God and the church?
3. Talk about a time when you felt distant from God. What were some of the factors that caused you to feel disconnected?
4. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read [Matthew 2:1-16](#).*

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'" Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son." When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

[Matthew 2:1-16 \(NIV\)](#)

5. In verse 3, it says that "When King Herod heard the news, he was disturbed and all Jerusalem with him." Why was King Herod disturbed? Why was Jerusalem disturbed?
6. During the holiday season, is it easy for you to get disturbed when things don't go your way? Tell about a time which your holidays were *disturbed*.
7. During the message, Chris said, "I believe there's a little King Herod in all of us." What do you think that phrase means? In what ways are you tempted to focus on building your own kingdom instead of participating in God's kingdom?

8. Our life is best when we're not the most important person in it. In Herod's case, he wanted to be in control of everything and build his own kingdom. In what ways do you struggle with wanting to control everything? Can you honestly control everything? Why or why not? Is it refreshing or tiring to always be in control?
9. What will your story be in relation to the Light of the World? Will you have resisted or worshiped?
10. Will you have built your own kingdom or participated in a kingdom? Chris said, "You can't serve God's kingdom while building yours."
11. Will you have clung to what would eventually be taken away or surrendered and allowed God to do something bigger than you?
12. One day, somebody will tell your story in relationship to the Light of the World. What story do you want told?
13. What are some obstacles to you fully surrendering to Jesus? What would it take for you to overcome those obstacles?
14. What would it look like for you take a step to reengage or engage for the first time with the Light of the World?
15. What is one thing you can do this week to engage or reengage with Jesus? What can this group do to support you?

MOVING FORWARD

What will your story be in relation to the light of the world? Do you want to build your kingdom or participate in God's kingdom? Do you want to cling to what you can't keep or surrender what wasn't yours to begin with? Do you want your way or his way? There is good news: the darkness has not put out the light of life in you. Take a step to reengage or engage for the first time with the light of the world.

WEEKLY READING

This week, spend some time reading and reflecting on [Matthew 2:1-20](#), [John 1:1-14](#), [Luke 1:5-80](#), [Luke 2:1-40](#).

