

SEEKER FRIENDLY

2024-12-25 • PASTOR MATT ROSE



Matthew 2:1-12

FOR THE LEADER

These questions help you run the conversation. They are not your study. Get into the passage yourself first, because your group needs what God taught you, not just a list of questions. These also lean on Sunday's message, so a few will not land for anyone who missed it. Watch it before you lead.

WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS ABOUT

The magi found Jesus for one simple reason: they were looking. Herod heard the same news and was disturbed, because getting close to Jesus stirs up resistance. Pastor Matt preached this on Christmas Eve and defended the nostalgia: God can use Hallmark movies, decorations, and family dinners to pull a person closer. Even the gifts made his point. Gold, incense, and myrrh were useless to a baby, but God can take anything we bring and put it to use later. The people who are not looking tend not to find.

To get started

- What Christmas tradition means something to you that you have never really examined?

Looking back at the message

This was preached on Christmas Eve. Keep it warm rather than heavy.

- 1 Pastor Matt said to stop trashing the family members who love the nostalgia of Christmas. Who does that describe in your family, and how do you treat them?
- 2 Pastor Matt said God can use even shallow things, Hallmark movies, decorations, nostalgia, to move a person closer to himself. When have you seen something small like that lead somewhere real?
- 3 The magi found Jesus because they were already searching the sky. What are you actually looking for these days? OPTIONAL

Looking at the passage

Read Matthew 2:1-12. Herod's reaction is as much a part of the story as the star.

- 4 Read Matthew 2:1-2. The magi were looking before they found anything. What got them looking?
- 5 Read verses 3-8. How does Herod react to the news, and what does that tell you about getting close to Jesus?
- 6 Verse 11 lists gold, frankincense, and myrrh. What use would a baby have for any of it?
- 7 Read Jeremiah 29:13. What condition is attached to finding God? OPTIONAL

Bringing it home

The family-dinner illustration is the practical one. Resistance shows up in ordinary rooms.

- 8 Pastor Matt said even getting one family meal to the table meets resistance: crying, complaints, chaos. Where do you feel resistance when you get close to something good?
- 9 What resistance have you hit lately that you did not expect?
- 10 What do you have that seems useless to God right now, that he might use later?
- 11 Are you searching for God, or waiting for him to interrupt you? What is the difference?

OPTIONAL

The group together

The magi traveled together. So did the shepherds. Nobody in this story goes alone.

- 12 Who in your family might be closer to God than you assume?
- 13 How could this group make Christmas an on-ramp for someone instead of a distraction?
- 14 Who could you invite next Christmas, and what would you actually say?

BEFORE YOU FINISH

What are you bringing to Jesus that you cannot yet see the use of?

You might pray about

- For family members who are near but not looking
- For the resistance that comes with getting close
- For what we bring to be put to use