

Sermon Notes - December 7th

Candle Lighting:

The Advent season celebrates Jesus' birth and points to his future arrival. We are currently living between the two arrivals.

Light Advent Candle - Peace

Isaiah 9:6-7: *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

Pray

Welcome

Story: David coming home - response to arrival

Our response to a person's arrival can reveal a lot about what is in our hearts.

As we jump into our text today, we are going to see three different responses to the arrival of Jesus.

Matthew 2:1-12

Our response to Jesus reveals our true king

Matthew 2, we see three groups respond to the same news — *"The King has come."*

Three responses:

1) Indifference/Apathy - scribes, chief priests and Jerusalem (knowing but not acting)

- These are the men who studied Scripture every day... but when the Scripture was fulfilled, they did nothing. They knew the birthplace was Bethlehem, but never went there.
- And this fulfills what John says in John 1:11: *"He came unto his own and his own did not receive Him."*
- Knowledge without obedience leads nowhere

We see this when we know of Jesus or about Jesus...but don't move towards Him.

- There isn't hostility or anger...it just often shows up as indifference or a preoccupation with other things.

- When we prioritize other things over meeting with Jesus
- When we find ourselves going days and weeks without praying or talking to Jesus.

It's possible to know the Bible and completely miss Jesus.

It's possible to know the truth and remain unmoved.

It's possible to have Scripture in your head but no King in your heart.

ASK: So let me ask you gently but honestly:

Have you become indifferent to Jesus?

2) Control/Hostility - Herod (protecting our own throne)

Herod heard the same news the religious leaders and scribes did, but his response was different: Fear, Threat, Jealousy, Panic...

Why? Because Herod ran his life like many of us do: **"If Jesus is King, it means I'm not."**

- If Jesus is King, I lose control.
- If Jesus is King, my plans aren't ultimate.
- If Jesus is King, my desires don't get the final vote.
- If Jesus is King, my throne has to come down.

So Herod does what controlling people do: He manipulates, deceives, lies, schemes, etc. He does everything he can to protect his own throne.

Now most of us aren't ordering the execution of infants — but we do

- Forging forward on something and ignoring conviction
- Hiding sin and manipulating the truth
- Inventing our own reasons as to what is best and trying to convince others
- Blame shifting
- Resisting surrender

When we are king, Jesus becomes the enemy of our kingdom.

So ask yourself:

ASK: Whose kingdom am I building?

When we put Jesus on the throne...our response changes.

3) Worship/Surrender - Wise Men/Magi respond in the way God invites all of us to respond:
Worship

What is worship? Showing reverence and adoration for God above all things.

Worship requires faith.

- They saw a star — a small piece of revelation — and they acted on it. They traveled hundreds of miles not because they had everything figured out, but because they wanted to find the One worth finding.
 - They trusted and believed the ancient prophecies
 - They chose to take a step toward Jesus in faith. When Jesus is King we move toward Him in faith.
- **Hebrews 11:6** - *"Without faith it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."*
- If we are going to worship God we must have faith in who He says He is and His character.

Worship requires surrender.

- They bowed low before a child. Verse 11 says, *"They fell down and worshiped Him."*
 - Their posture tells the story of their surrender to Him: He is King... and they aren't.
- **Proverbs 3:5-6**: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him and He will make your paths straight."*
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Worship requires sacrifice.

- They opened their treasures.
 - Gold — acknowledging His kingship.
 - Frankincense — acknowledging His deity.
 - Myrrh — acknowledging His sacrifice.
- **Romans 12:1** - *"And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him."*
 - God wants visible, lived-out, bodily evidence that our lives are built on his mercy. Just as worshipers in the Old Testament denied themselves some earthly treasure (a sheep, a goat, a bull), and carried their sacrifices to the altar, so we must also deny ourselves and carry ourselves — our bodies — for Christ's sake to the places and the relationships that He has for us.

Who is your King?

Three groups encountered the same Jesus.

- The indifferent missed Him.
- The hostile resisted Him.

- The wise worshiped Him.

Three responses — but only one leads to life: the hope, the peace, the joy and the love that we talk about in the advent season.

Who is king of your life and heart?