

Authentic Worship

When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah 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 shepherd 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 search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

-Matthew 2:4-8

Christmas is a wonderful season to worship. Even those who are not regularly involved in church, or don't make a habit of worshipping consistently, find time to do so during the Christmas season. Despite how commercial the holiday has become, there is still something about the season that compels people to worship.

However, if we're not careful, our holiday and seasonal worship becomes nothing more than self-righteous "box checking." We'll go to church, sing the songs, hear a few sermons, and be reminded of the meaning of Christmas, but in the back of our minds we know it's not really going to change anything for us. The story of baby Jesus lying in a manger is sweet, but we all too easily believe that it doesn't effect anything about our daily lives.

Unfortunately, this is the same mindset of Herod. Herod's desire for worship wasn't genuine; it was lip service for him to appease the wisemen and hopefully to hunt down a rival to the throne. We may not be trying to hunt down Jesus in the same way as Herod, but often times our worship becomes so routine it's not genuine worship; it's only us trying to appease others or even God Himself. Yes, the Christmas story is old. Yes, most of us know the story inside and out. However, let the simplicity of the message and the significance of its truth lead you to real and authentic worship this season.