

What Are You Seeking?

Matthew 2:1-12

What is that you are seeking?

- What is it that you are seeking? Everybody is seeking something.
- That is why Google is one of the most profitable companies on earth.
- People go to Google every day to search for information about an astounding array of subjects.
- People are seeking more information on the latest crisis in the news.
- They are seeking gossip about their favourite celebrity.
- They are seeking information about a specific model of car that they are considering buying.

Everybody is seeking something

- Even terrorists go to Google, we are told, to find terrible new ways to wreak havoc on civilized societies.
- Everybody is seeking something.
- What are you seeking? Maybe it's not information.
- Perhaps you are seeking for truth. Or peace. Or hope.
- Maybe you are looking for that great new product that is going to make your life everything you'd hoped it would be. At least, that is what the ads suggest.
- Maybe you are looking for a new mate.
- Christianmingle.com promises to find God's perfect match for you. Good luck with that.

Google does not provide all answers

- A young woman was sitting in a coffee shop expounding on her idea of the perfect mate to some of her friends.
- “The man I marry must be a shining light when with friends. He must be musical. Tell jokes. Sing. And stay home at night!”
- A little old lady at the next table overheard and spoke up, “Girl, what you just described is my computer.”
- A perfect mate is hard to come by.

We are all seeking

- What is it that you are seeking?
- We are all seeking something.
- Our lesson from the Gospel for Epiphany is the beloved story from Matthew 2 that begins like this:
- “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 when it rose and have come to worship him.’”

Herod started seeking for the child

- When King Herod heard about their quest he was disturbed.
- He, in turn, consulted the chief priest and teachers of the law.
- They pointed the Magi toward Bethlehem.
- Then Herod adds these chilling words, “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.”

What's our motives

- Of course, the last thing that Herod intended was to worship the child.
- His motives were far more sinister.
- But the Magi finally did find the child, and when they found him, they bowed down and worshiped him.
- Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.
- Their search was over.
- They had found the newborn king.

But we must seek Christ in faith

- Let's return to our opening question.
- What is it that you are seeking?
- Everybody's seeking something in life.
- **It's clear what Herod was seeking.**
- **Herod was seeking to preserve his power.**
- Herod was a bloody tyrant.

HEROD SEEKING TO KILL

- History records that Herod murdered many of his own family including his favourite wife -Mariamne (he had ten), her grandfather, her brother, and some of his own children by Mariamne.
- On one occasion he had the whole Sanhedrin, the ruling body of Jewish government, assassinated.
- On another occasion he had every notable man in Jerusalem murdered.
- He was very capable of the horrendous crime reported in the Christmas narrative.

THE OBJECT OF HEROD-TO KILL

- This fact shows just how much of a monster Herod really was. Just imagine!
- He would not even be around when this child king being sought would inherit the throne, yet he felt threatened by the reports of such a child.
- Herod was a man possessed by a lust for power. He was suspicious, savage, and warped.
- Note that when Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem **and its vicinity** who were two years old and under ([Matthew 2:16](#)). He was a mad man driven by his need to dominate. Don't think that Herod's character has no relevance to our world.

Many Herods everywhere

- Herod was seeking to preserve his position of power.
- Power is still a dangerous motive in people's hearts.
- There are Herods in company offices.
- There are Herods in service institutions.
- There are Herods in many homes.
- Herod was driven by a need to maintain power.

Herod consults the priests and scribes

- **The chief priests and teachers of the law, on the other hand, were simply seeking to maintain the status quo.**
- Herod was disturbed after the visit by the Magi and 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.
- And they, of course, spoke correctly.
- Christ was born in Bethlehem.

The chief priests and scribes.

- The chief priests and scribes. They knew the Scriptures; they could answer Herod's question at once; they told him where the Christ should be born.
- But they were blind guides; they knew and did not go.
- Their religion was a lifeless theology, a dead orthodoxy.
- They showed Others the way to Christ; they sought him not themselves.
- They taught the Gentile Magians; the disciples profited, the teachers were callous and unmoved.
- It is a sad thing when the preacher does not feel the saving power of the words which, by the grace of God, bring life to the listener.

Herod sends the Wise Men to Bethlehem

- He sends the Wise Men to Bethlehem. He goes not there himself; he will come, he says. He bids others search diligently; he remains at home.
- So men put off the great work of life; they do not seek Christ now; they say they will do so; but the future recedes further and further; the end comes, they have not sought, and so they have not found.
- He will worship him, he says. He believes in a way, he half believes; it is, at least it may be, the expected King.
- But he is a traitor; in his intense wickedness he talks of worship while in his heart he is plotting death;

When we genuinely seek Christ ,it requires some things of us.

- It takes effort to seek Christ
- They had to make a long journey and overcome some great obstacles.
- They had to deal with difficult religious leaders and the self –absorbed and dangerous King Herod.
- It takes time to seek Christ
- It took a lot of Magi’s time. Seeking Christ is not a one time experience -it requires that we spend time with him.
- It takes sacrifice to seek Christ-sacrifices on your part.

When we seek Christ , we will find him

- And you will seek Me and find me , when you search for me with all your heart. Jere.29:13
- How do we seek him? Here are a few things we can do.
 - 1 .Pray
 - 2.Spend time daily in God's word
 - 3 .Maintain a daily quiet time.
 - 4.Attend church regularly

How did they get off track?

- You know the story well. When the Magi reached Jerusalem, they sought help with their search.
- Assuming that the newborn king would be born in a palace, that is where they headed for directions
- Upon arriving in Jerusalem, they went to the palace.
- This seemed like a logical place to find a king.
- Following our own opinions instead of the scriptures

Don't follow your feelings

- They turned from following the star to following their feelings.
- Many are like the magi.
- They start their journey well .
- Instead of following Christ they follow their own feelings.
- Do you remember a time when this happened to you?

What brought the magi back?

- Herod reacted to the search of the magi?
- He called the chief priests and the scribes for advice
- They quoted Scripture to magi (Mica 5:2)
- The magi immediately obeyed
- They departed for Bethlehem and saw the star
- In returning to the Scriptures they saw the light

We can worship Christ throughout the year

- How do we worship Christ?
- We can learn from some things from these Magi.
- Let us make Him the focus of our worship
- Let us submit our life to Him as the magi did .
- Let us give our all to Him as the Magi did with their expensive gifts to Christ.

WHO NEEDS CHRIST

- The learned need a Saviour as much as the ignorant; the Magians must come to Christ as well as the shepherds.
- The best and holiest need him as much as the most sinful, the blessed virgin as much as the publican and the sinner.
- **They were rich. They brought rich gifts — gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The rich must come as well as the poor.**
- They must bring their free-will offerings, giving largely, gladly, with a willing mind.
- Almsgiving is an important part of Christian duty, an element in Christian worship.

WHAT ARE YOU SEEKING?

- Herod was seeking power
- The chief priest and teachers of the law were seeking to maintain the status quo.
- But the Magi were seeking the newborn King, so that they might worship him.
- And so I ask one last time, what is it that you are seeking?
- Here in this building we seek and worship Christ.

Conclusion

- The wise men of the past sought the Saviour.
- They worshiped Him as deity and gave Him the very best they had.
- If you and I would be wise, we likewise would seek the Saviour.
- He alone is worthy of worship.
- He alone deserves the very best of our time and talents and treasure.
- Let us make the decisions that we need to make this day that we might follow in the trend of these wise men.

Surrendering all to Christ

- My guess is that you have come here this day genuinely seeking God.
- You realize the dangers in life of seeking anything else.
- Power, wealth, pride, even an attachment to the status quo can be the enemy of God.
- We must lay every other motive in life before the child of Bethlehem.
- Our prayer must be, “Take my every thought, O Lord, everything I am and everything I hope to be, and help me focus on one thing, your kingdom and your righteousness. For it is in the name of the child born in Bethlehem that we pray. Amen.”