

Reading Matthew 2: 1-12

The arrival of the Magi

Wise, men, magicians, sorcerers, astronomers;

Following a strange star to go and worship a Jewish peasant king.

This was no accident but planned by God who is the architect of the world in all His splendour.

Refs. Ps 78:62 Ps 139:1-18 Ezk 37:24-28 Acts 17: 23
Ro 1:20

The expectation of the Magi

To arrive and meet Herod; but were met by surprise and fear.

What is Matthew's purpose in mentioning the Magi who were gentle, wise, men seeking out a Jewish king; the Jews would have known the OT scriptures didn't seek to properly honour the new son of David.

What does it mean for us? As Christians / members of the church what do people expect? Are we a people who are celebrating the universal significance of Christ's birth?

Identity in an All-Sufficient Christ

Compare Micah 5:2 with Matt 2: v 6 (the note in the NIV bible on this verse is worth reading.)

Where do you find your identity? (Easy to operate in worldly standards but good to remember we are in God by being His son in Jesus Christ.)

Who is he? Col 1: 15-20

The same as was worshipped by the Magi and who we worship today, made real by the eyes of faith.

Where do we find our identity? (Christ, a "sovereign foundation." John's Gospel gives images of the vine. As Christians we are inextricably bound up in Christ.)

Again, Col 1: 15-20.

Questions.

- 1 Read the bible references and discuss them in the context of the sermon.
- 2 Are we a people who are celebrating the universal significance of Christ's birth? How does this show itself to the outside world?
- 3 Finding your identity in Christ may sound an ideal goal to aim for. In practice, for individuals, there are many strands. How does this prove a challenge to your daily living?
- 4 What have your eyes of faith helped you do? What more would you like them to do?