

# *From My Bible*

Sermon Notes  
& Outlines

## *Christmas*

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## Introduction

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These messages are compiled from study notes and outlines of my own and many others. I hope they are a help to you.

I'm sure that all of us have at times "borrowed" or "used" a sermon we heard or read somewhere along the way. A thought, a word, or an idea jumped out to us from another preacher and we took that thing and ran with it. You have probably used an outline from a preacher brother but ended up preaching something that was uniquely different. Same idea, it just came out differently when you preached. Using your own thoughts, experiences, and illustrations.....the message became your own.

I heard an old-time preacher once say, "*Any message worth preaching ought to be worth preaching again!*" Well, I have certainly preached some sermons again and again. I have borrowed from others to preach theirs again too. Please use these messages as the Lord leads and preach His Word over and over again!

I make no claim of complete originality for this material. Also, please remember that these messages are not expected to substitute for your own personal study of the Word of God! The thoughts and ideas are given as a catalyst to help begin your ideas on a given passage of Scripture or trigger a seed thought to get you going. It is my prayer that the "stuff" contained here will further kindle the fire of God's message that is already in your heart. Your own thinking, praying, and studying will be necessary to guide you into the delivery of His Word to your own people.

May these sermons become *messages* from the Lord that He uses in your own life as He has used them in mine.

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# Having The Real Christmas Spirit

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Text - Eph. 5:18

**Introduction:** Many today are talking about having the Christmas spirit. Perhaps they have in mind being happy, generous, and joyful. We have all heard someone say, “We need to have the Christmas spirit.” Which Christmas spirit are we talking about?”

- To Ebenezer Scrooge, the Christmas spirit was a ghost.
- To the liquor industry, the Christmas spirit comes in a bottle, somewhere around \$75 million worth each month in America.
- I suppose for some people the Christmas spirit is expressed in a card that conveys a sentiment of well being. *Ninety-five percent of all Americans will be involved in sending five billion plus Christmas cards expressing these sentiments.*
- One little boy suggested that the Christmas spirit is really *contentment* because that’s what you need to be when you don’t get what you want.
- For many, however, the Christmas spirit is one of deep sadness, increased despair because all that is wrong in life is measured against the merriment of the time and seems even more painful.
- For most people, I guess the spirit of Christmas is giving presents, if the shopping mall is any indication.

I want to focus on the real "*Spirit*" of Christmas, the Holy Spirit of God. If the Spirit of God is in full control of our lives, then we have the true "*Christmas Spirit*."

**I. His Feelings** - The Holy Spirit is a Person. We are told in Eph. 4:30 not to "grieve" the Holy Spirit of God. To grieve Him is to hurt or offend Him. Certain things we do that are outside of the will of God for our lives cause offense to the Spirit of God. For example, wrong attitudes or actions grieve God's Spirit.

**II. His Fruit** - The "*fruit of the Spirit*" is mentioned in Gal. 5:22-23. Any child of God should want to be spiritually fruitful and productive as we live from day to day. But it does not just happen. It is in proportion to our relationship and fellowship with the Spirit of God. When we exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, then our lives produce the love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, faith, goodness, meekness and temperance that they should.

**III. His Forever-ness** - Being God, the Holy Spirit is eternal and, therefore, "*forever*." There is but one God but He reveals Himself in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The Spirit of God, as well as the Son of God is co-eternal, co-equal, and co-existent with the Father.

**IV. His Full Generosity** - According to John 14:26, He is revealed to us as the "*Comforter*." As He helps us, He gives all the grace, the peace, and the comfort we need. God is not stingy, but rather is generous and kind to His own people. No heart is bigger than the heart of God.

**V. His Filling** - Comparing Acts 1:8 and Acts 2:4, we see that the Spirit of God coming upon the waiting church, making them able witnesses was a "*filling*" of the Spirit. This "*facilitated*" or "*made possible*" for them to be witnesses.

# No Room at Christmas

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Text - Luke 2:1-7

**Introduction:** What a shame that there was no room in the Inn. Not long ago I read the following story:

*In the fall of 1775, the manager of Baltimore's largest hotel refused lodging to a man dressed as a farmer. The manager thought that his lowly appearance would discredit his Inn. The man left and found a room in another place. Shortly thereafter, the manager discovered that the man he had refused lodging was none other than Thomas Jefferson, then Vice President of the United States. Immediately he sent a note to Jefferson and invited him to return as his guest. Jefferson replied by instructing his messenger: "Tell him I have already engaged a room. I value his good intentions highly, but if he has no place for a dirty American farmer, he has none for the Vice President of the United States."*

In a similar way, when the Lord Jesus Christ came into this world, there was no room at the inn. After more than 2,000 years little has changed. There are still many "No Vacancies" signs displayed in many hearts and homes because there is simply no room for Jesus.

## 1. No Room Historically

## 2. No Room Symbolically

## 3. No Room Personally

## The Wonder of Christmas

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**Introduction:** If you haven't lost it by the time your thirty, then by the time you're forty, or fifty, be careful...it could go at any minute.

I'm not referring to your memory, or your marbles, what I'm talking about is that wide eyed, childlike, sense of wonder – something that for many of us, was so much part of our lives at Christmas when we were at children.

And that sense of wonder were enhanced by the Nativity scenes at churches. And that sense of wonder was enhanced too by the familiar Christmas carols: *Away in a Manger*, *Silent night*, *O little town of Bethlehem*. Even listening to Charlie Brown read the Christmas story from his King James Bible on national television helped create that sense of wonder.

We were wide eyed, full of awe, and we believed, intensely, with all our hearts that God Himself had entered our world. We were so full of wonder....but we are not the only ones:

1. Mary Wondered
2. Joseph Wondered
3. Shepherds Wondered
4. The Heavens Wondered
5. Angels Wondered
6. Wise Men Wondered
7. Kings Wondered (Herod)

## The Beholds of Christmas

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**JOSEPH** - *Matthew 1:20* But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

**ISAIAH'S PROPHECY** - *Matthew 1:23* Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

*Isaiah 7:14* Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

**THE WISE MEN** - *Matthew 2:1* Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

**FLIGHT TO EGYPT** - *Matthew 2:13* And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

**THE RETURN FROM EGYPT** - *Matthew 2:19* But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

**GABRIEL'S ANNOUNCEMENT TO MARY** - *Luke 1:31* And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

**MARY'S RESPONSE TO GABRIEL** - *Luke 1:38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.*

**ANGEL'S ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE SHEPHERDS**  
- *Luke 2:10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*

**SIMEON'S TESTIMONY** - *Luke 2:34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;*

# Christmas- A Time To Look

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Text - - Matt. 2:9

**Introduction:** When we think of the celebration of Christmas, there are many things to look at. We see the angels, a manger, Mary and Joseph, shepherds abiding in the field, wise men and a host of other things. As we travel across the countryside there are Christmas decorations on the lawns and houses. After thinking about where to look at Christmas there are four directions to consider.

## I. Look Back

Someone said, "*History is His story.*" First, look back to His conception (Lk. 1:35). What a miracle that Jesus was born without the aid of a human father—born of a virgin. We should also look back to His cross (I Pet. 2:24). It is through those stripes we are healed (Isa. 53:5). Since Christ took our place upon the cross, we through faith in Him can be set free. As well, you should look back to His coming forth from the tomb. Peter said at Pentecost, "It was not possible he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:24).

## II. Look Down

By this we mean to "look down and read your Bible." According to Rom. 15:4, what is written in the Bible is for our learning. As we see God work in the past, it gives us patience and hope in the present. As you look down and read your Bible, you can have the staying power to keep you anchored down during the storms of life.

### **III. Look In**

A little self-examination would help us all. We read in **Psalms 139:23-24** *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.* It is so easy to see the mistakes of others, to judge them, and not to judge ourselves. If you will make sure your spirit is right during Christmas, you may be able to successfully point family members and friends to Christ. The closer you get to Christ, the more you will judge yourself and the less you will judge others.

### **IV. Look For**

Take a look at **Titus 2:13** *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;* We are to be looking for the Second Coming of Christ. As surely as He came the first time to, He will come again. God's people have something wonderful to look forward to—an eternal future with God. Wake up each morning looking for Jesus to return!

## The Fear Nots of Christmas

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**Introduction:** Have you ever been afraid and fearful? *Afraid of animals?* Two explorers were on a jungle safari when suddenly a ferocious lion jumped in front of them. “Keep calm” the first explorer whispered. “Remember what we read in that book on wild animals? If you stand perfectly still and look the lion in the eye, he will turn and run.” “Sure,” replied and his companion. “You’ve read the book, and I’ve read the book. But has the lion read the book?”

*Afraid of the Dark?* 5-year old Johnny was in the kitchen as his mother made supper. She asked him to go into the pantry and get her a can of tomato soup, but he didn’t want to go in alone. “It’s dark in there and I’m scared.” She asked again, and he persisted. Finally she said, “It’s OK—Jesus will be in there with you.” Johnny walked hesitantly to the door and slowly opened it. He peeked inside, saw it was dark, and started to leave when all at once an idea came, and he said: Jesus, if you’re in there, would you hand me that can of tomato soup?”

Fear, *phobia*, here are the some common ones:

1. Agoraphobia - the fear of open spaces
2. Claustrophobia - fear of closed or tight spaces
3. Acrophobia - fear of heights
4. Mysophobia - fear of germs
5. Xenophobia - fear of strangers and foreigners
6. Necrophobia - fear of corpses or dead things in general
7. Brontophobia - fear of thunder or lightening
8. Carcinophobia - fear of cancer
9. Aviophobia - fear of flying
10. Arachnophobia - fear of spiders

In the Christmas story, there are several “fear not’s.”

**1. The “Fear not” to the Shepherds (Salvation to ALL)**

“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings...which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10,11).

**2. The “Fear not” to Mary (The Impossible)**

“Fear not, Mary, ... the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: ...For with God nothing shall be impossible” (Luke 1:30, 35, 37).

**3. The “Fear not” to Zacharias (Prayer is Heard)**

“Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John” (Luke 1:13).

**4. The “Fear not” to Joseph (Obedience)**

“Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife. ... Then Joseph ... did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him” (Matt. 1:20,24 )

# The Best Attitude At Christmas

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**Text - Luke 1:46-55**

**Introduction:** The best attitude at Christmas is an attitude of worship. For us as Christians we celebrate the birth of our Lord and our Savior. This time of all times is a time for an attitude of worship.

**Worship...**let me give you a simple definition...is an *attitude*. It is a spirit, something on the inside. It is an attitude of the heart filled with wonder and gratitude at what God has done and we ought to praise and worship Him. That's worship. What better time for this than Christmas?

Now to show us how to worship, Let's look—not at Zacharias or Elizabeth, not at the angels, not at the shepherds, nor the wise men, nor Simeon or Anna. Let's look at the one person most directly touched by His birth--His mother, Mary. Mary shows us how we should worship in what is commonly known as *The Magnificat*—her psalm of praise to God for the coming of Jesus Christ.

Mary, even though she is young, unmarried and pregnant, begins to lift her voice in praise to the Lord. Mary reveals a heart that is in love with the Lord and also a mind that has been saturated with the Old Testament Scriptures.

Her part of the Christmas story teaches us that we can praise the Lord in spite of our circumstances at the moment and that God's grace is sufficient even in the most troubled of times. It reminds us that the birth of Jesus is about far more than gifts, trees, myths like Santa Claus, Rudolph, Frosty, and the Grinch.

## **1-The Practice of Worship (v. 46-47)**

*An Inward Attitude*—but the whole person is involved—body, soul, mind, emotion, and will! The Spirit is in tune with God! **John 4:24** *God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

*An Outward Expression*—of genuine gratitude.

## **2-The Perspective of Worship**

We see Him as High and Lifted up!

We see Ourselves as humble and lowly!

## **3-The Person of Worship (v. 49-54)**

He is Mighty (v. 49, 51-52).

He is Merciful (54).

He is Master over His servant Israel (v. 54).

**Conclusion:** The Christmas season is about our relationship with the Lord and about learning to the best attitude possible—in one word—"worship!"

## Why Did Jesus Come As A Baby?

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Text - Luke 2:15-20

***Introduction:*** In an article at Christianity.com, one writer shared answers that children had given to the question “*Why Did God Send Jesus to Earth as a Baby?*” Here are some of the answers...

“I think a baby is a sign of love,” says Casey, age 9.

“God sent our Savior as a baby because when babies are born, everybody thinks they are special,” adds a youngster named Buck.

Yes, babies are special signs of love, but there’s more to the story, says Richard, age 9: “God sent our Savior as a baby because kings would want to kill him. If he was big, he would be easily tracked.”

“God sent our Savior as a baby because he wanted to show us that God is our Mighty God and that even a baby could lead us to the right path,” says Karly, age 11.

God’s way is different, says Stewart, age 12: “If Jesus didn’t come as a baby, people would be convinced immediately that he was the Son of God.”

“I think God came as a baby because He wanted us to know that He is humble and a servant,” says Will, age 11. I want to offer a few answers to this question myself.

**I. To Magnify His Humanity**

A. He Was Manifest In The Flesh

B. He Was Made In The Flesh

**II. To Signify His Humility**

A. His Submission To His Parents

B. His Surrender To His Path

**III. To Exemplify His Holiness**

A. Holiness In Regard To Prophecy

B. Holiness In Regard To Purity

**IV. To Typify His Heartache**

A. The Mention Of A Sword

B. The Mention Of His Suffering

**V. To Amplify His Hope**

A. Hope Of Sympathy

B. Hope Of Salvation

# Joy and Christmas

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## Text - Luke 1:26-55

***Introduction:*** In 1719 the great hymn writer Isaac Watts published his “*Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament.*” Included in it was a piece based on Psalm 98. It is entitled “*Joy To The World.*” The opening line is.....*Joy to the world! The Lord is come.....*

There may be no more joyful event than the announcement that a family is going to have a baby. And there was no such greater announcement than when Mary was told that the human family was about to be added to by the fruit of her womb. But this would be no normal birth, for God was the Father; and it would be no normal baby, for it would be the God-man. The events described in this text are often called the “*Annunciation,*” which simply means the foretelling of Christ’s birth. But this was more than a simple birth announcement; this was about joy. Notice...

### **I. The Announcement In This Story**

A. There Was A Messenger

B. There Was A Message

### **II. The Amazement In This Story**

**Luke 1:29** And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. (*troubled* - means to disturb wholly, i.e. agitate).

A. An Amazed Recipient

B. An Amazed Response

### III. The Aftermath In This Story

A. Mary's Journey

B. Mary's Joy

**Conclusion**: Even as Gabriel's announcement to Mary is often called the "*Annunciation*," Mary's words of praise in these final portions of scripture are often called the "*Magnificat*." These events and passages might appropriately be called by such names, but to me and to all who have savingly benefited and believed in the Christ who came, it is actually a message of "*Joy To The World!*"

I want to mention another song of joy written by Henry Van Dyke in 1907. Van Dyke said about his song, "These verses are simple expressions of common Christian feelings and desires in this present time ... a hymn of trust and joy and hope." It begins like this...

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love;

# Joseph and Christmas

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## Text - Matthew 1:18-25

***Introduction:*** A number of years ago my wife and I went to visit a local nativity scene. It was uniquely different from any I had ever seen. In the manger area the Baby Jesus was being held in the arms of Joseph, his foster-father. I had never thought about it but it did make perfect sense. Mary resting after the labor and pain of birth with Joseph helping with the baby. The scene really made me think.

As the Christmas story is repeated year after year, we always identify the role of Mary, the angelic host, the shepherds, and even the wise men that actually didn't arrive until sometime after the birth of Jesus. But, as one author stated, *"There is one person who normally receives little or no recognition in the drama of the incarnation. That individual is Joseph."* While Joseph is often overshadowed and subtracted from the Christmas story, the personal name Joseph means "adding," and I want to say with great confidence that Joseph adds to the story of Christ's birth.

### **I. Joseph's Dilemma (vs. 18-19)**

Several men named Joseph are mentioned in the New Testament, the most important being the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ (Matthew 1:16). In the first 17 verses, we learn about the patriarchs in his lineage, and then in verses 18 and 19 we are informed of the perplexities in his life.

It is written that when Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:18). According to Luke 1:56, Mary had spent about three months in the hill country with her cousin

Elisabeth and then returned home. It was probably upon her trip back that she told Joseph of her condition. Adam Clarke said, “What conversation passed between her and Joseph, on this discovery, we are not informed; but the issue proves that it was not satisfactory to him.”

## **II. Joseph’s Dream (vs. 20-23)**

While not much is revealed *about* Joseph, some very noteworthy things were revealed *to* Joseph. Like his Old Testament counterpart, Joseph was a man that God spoke to through dreams, for we find time and again that an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. One fellow said it this way, “*The first divine directive, given in Nazareth, was to ‘Marry Mary!’ (Matthew 1:20)*” “*The second angelic command is, ‘Escape to Egypt!’ (Matthew 2:13)*” “The third dream occurred upon the death of Herod. The command was, ‘*Proceed to Palestine!*’ (Matthew 2:19)” “The fourth revelation came in a dream while he was back in Israel. The command came to ‘*Go to Galilee!*’ (Matthew 2:22)” The first time was when his heart was filled with worry and distress. If anyone ever needed a word from God, it was Joseph at that moment. But at such a time as that, God sent a revelation of comfort and confirmation to Joseph saying, *Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:20).*

## **III. Joseph’s Devotion (vs. 25)**

Helen Rowland said, “Before marriage, a man will lay down his life for you; after marriage he won’t even lay down his newspaper.” But this certainly wasn’t the case with Joseph. He responded with obedience to God’s leadership. I wonder, how would you react if you learned

that your fiancée was expecting a baby, and you knew that you were not the father? How would you respond if you received supernatural and unusual instruction to go on with your marriage plans in such an event? We might attempt to bypass God's instruction and follow the dictates of our own hearts; but not so with Joseph. The best way to know God's will is to say, "I will" to God.

**Conclusion:** There is not a single word spoken by Joseph recorded in the Bible. I think it's safe to conclude that Joseph was physically able to speak. Perhaps the consciousness that God Almighty had a word and a work for a humble, unknown carpenter literally left Joseph speechless. Joseph may have believed with the psalmist that *there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether* (Psalms 139:4), and so felt that his words were unnecessary. Whatever the case, Joseph said nothing, but silently and submissively did what God had told him to do.

# Jesus and Christmas

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## Text - Luke 2:1-20

**Introduction:** Fanny Crosby lost her sight as a six-week old baby, but when she was saved at the age of 30, she could say with John Newton, “*I once was blind but now I see.*” Fanny Crosby wrote over 8,000 hymns, but only one stands out for Christmas: *Tell Me The Story Of Jesus*. Christmas is the story of Jesus.

### **1-God Prepared A World** Luke 2:1-4

1. Consider The Prophet Micah 5:2
2. Consider The Population Luke 2:1-3

### **2-God Prepared A Woman** Luke 2:5

1. She Was Espoused
2. She Was Expecting

### **3-God Prepared A Way**

1. A Way Of Deliverance Luke 2:11
2. A Way Of Delight Luke 2:10

**Conclusion:** Thinking again of the story of Jesus and Christmas, I'm reminded of the old song that says...*I love to tell the story of unseen things above, Of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love. I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true; It satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.* Praise the Lord!

# Jerusalem and Christmas

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## Luke 2:21-38

**Introduction:** The city of Jerusalem is mentioned over 800 times in the Bible. At Christmas, Jerusalem is often overlooked in comparison to Bethlehem. We often think about his link to Jerusalem during His ministry and during His last days, but the text before us reveals his very first visit there. As Mary and Joseph and Jesus came to Jerusalem, they encountered a few things.

### **I. They Encountered The Word (vs. 21-24)**

A. The Word Regarding Circumcision Luke 2:21

B. The Word Regarding Christ Luke 2:22-24

### **II. They Encountered The Worshipper (vs. 25-35)**

*Legend has been busy with the name of Simeon. Nicephorus tells us that, in reading the Scriptures, he had stumbled at the verse, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son" (Isa. vii. 14), and had then received the intimation that He should not die till he had seen it fulfilled. All attempts to identify him with other Simeons have failed. Had he been a High Priest, or President of the Sanhedrin, St. Luke would not have introduced him so casually as "a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon." The statement in the Gospel of the Nativity of Mary that he was 113 years old is wholly arbitrary; as is the conjecture that the silence of the Talmud about him is due to his Christian proclivities. He could not have been Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillel, and father of Gamaliel, who would not at this time have been so old. (F. W. Farrar)*

**III. They Encountered The Widow (vs. 36-38)**

A. Consider Anna's Tragedy Luke 2:36-37

B. Consider Anna's Testimony

1. The Testimony Of Her Life Luke 2:36-37

[Anna, a prophetess] It does not appear that this person was a prophetess in the strict sense of the word, i.e. one who could foretell future events; but rather a holy woman; .... (Adam Clarke)

*served* – Greek 3000. *latreuo*, meaning to minister (to God), i.e. render religious homage:--serve, do the service, worship (-per).

2. The Testimony Of Her Lips Luke 2:38

(Luke 2:38) And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

**Conclusion:** There is an old hymn called “*Jerusalem, Arise,*” written by Joseph Proud (1745-1826). The hymn says...

*Jerusalem, arise, The heavenly glory view;*

*The light is come, lift up thine eyes,*

*All things are now made new.*

## Jealousy and Christmas

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### Matthew 2:1–18

***Introduction:*** In this portion of the Christmas story, we are introduced to some new individuals, all of which are mentioned in Matthew 2:1. Because we are told in verse 22 that Herod's son was Archelaus, we know from a historical standpoint that the king Herod we are introduced to in vs. 1 is Herod the Great.

Herod was the family name of several Roman rulers who served as provincial governors of Palestine and surrounding regions during New Testament times. The first Herod, known as Herod the Great, was the Roman ruler of Palestine during the days of the Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus when Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1; Luke 3:1). All the other different Herods mentioned in the New Testament were the sons or grandsons of this Herod. Herod the Great (ruled 37–4 b. c.) was known as a master builder, organizer, and developer, although his policies were considered cruel and ruthless by the Jewish people. His most notable achievement was the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem – a project that required almost fifty years. (*Nelson's Complete Book Of Bible Maps And Charts*)

We are also introduced to these wise men. The word “wise” in verse 1 is the Greek term magos, meaning an Oriental scientist or magician. The plural “Magi” is often used to refer to these men who came seeking Jesus.

*Christian tradition* has elaborated the Biblical account; it has set their number as three, perhaps from their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh; it has called them kings, perhaps from Psalms 72:10,11 and Isaiah 49:7,23

considered as prophecies; and it has given them names, Caspar or Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar.

Although the wise men didn't find Jesus until sometime after his birth, we generally associate them with the Christmas story. And the leading light of the star, the love of the wise men for the child Jesus, and the lavish gifts they gave blend together in Matthew's record to show the poignancy of this marvelous event.

As we consider these individuals as well as Mary, Joseph, and Jesus, we see...

**I. A Request Of Wisdom** (vs. 1-2)

**II. A Reality Of Worship** (vs. 9-12)

**III. A Rejection Of Wickedness** (vs. 3-8,16-18)

**Conclusion:** "In the Middle Ages many tales were written about King Arthur and his knights." There are "many themes within these so-called Arthurian romances," but one of the recurring realities in these stories is that "Arthur is Britain's one true king." (*From The Official Graham Phillips Website*)

You'll either fall down to bow before this King named Jesus or you'll rise up to battle against Him.

# **Journeying and Christmas**

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## **Text - Matthew 2:13-23**

**Introduction:** As we think about the Christmas Story, the final chapter must mention a Journey. The journeying of this extraordinary family that resulted from the divine dreams in Matthew 2 certainly teaches us a lesson about obedience. But I also believe that Joseph and Mary's journey with Jesus presents an interesting picture of every Christian's journey with Jesus.

Let's compare Mary and Joseph's journey with Jesus to our journey with Jesus. Even in a foundational way, we see certain comparisons...

### **1. The Movements Of Our Journey**

Just as divine leadership guided Mary and Joseph's journey, divine leadership guides our Christian journey.

### **2. The Motive Of Our Journey**

Just as Mary and Joseph's took their journey for Jesus' sake, our Christian journey is made for the Jesus' sake.

### **3. The Message Of Our Journey**

Just as God called Mary and Joseph to leave Egypt, He calls us to forsake the world, of which Egypt is a type, and obey Him.

**Conclusion:** The purpose in this journey is not so much about place as it is about a person. The Person is Jesus!

