

LIFE GROUP

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

As Our Shepherd December 15, 2024

Summary

In this message, Pastor Kyle explores the contrast between two kings: Herod, who ruled with fear, violence and selfishness, and Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who leads with humility, love and sacrifice. The story of the Magi seeking to worship Jesus highlights the choice we all face: to follow Jesus as our King or remain entangled in the demands of the world's kingdoms. Trusting Jesus means rejecting the fear-driven systems of Herod and embracing a life of faith, even amidst challenges. Jesus, who gave His life for us, invites us to trust Him fully as our Good Shepherd and King.

Scripture

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."

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. 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."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

LIFE GROUP

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Matthew 2:1-16 (NIV)

The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here. Matthew 12:42 (NIV)

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me." John 10:11-14 (NIV)

Let's Start

What is your favorite aspect of the Christmas season?

Gratitude and Prayer

How has God worked in your life since we were together?

Let's Talk

1. What impacted you most about the message? Was there anything you had never heard before?
2. How do the actions of the Magi contrast with Herod's response to Jesus?
3. In what areas of your life are you struggling to trust Jesus as your King?
4. How can we reject the "kingdom of Herod" and live confidently in God's Kingdom today?
5. Reflect on how Jesus' humility and sacrifice challenge the world's view of leadership and power.
6. What does it mean to you personally that Jesus is called the Good Shepherd, and how have you experienced His care in your life?

Let's Act

This week, identify one specific area in your life where you struggle to trust Jesus as your Good Shepherd and King. Write it down, pray daily for guidance and take a concrete step to surrender that area to Him. For example:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- If it's work-related stress, commit to spending time in prayer before starting your workday.
- If it's relationships, ask God for wisdom in showing grace or forgiveness to someone.
- If it's finances, practice generosity by helping someone in need or supporting a cause that reflects God's Kingdom.

End the week by reflecting on how trusting Jesus in that area has impacted your heart, decisions and faith.

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