

Chesswood Baptist Church

Where Everybody is Somebody

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MINISTRY OF THE WORD

THEY DEPARTED; AND, LO, THE STAR...WENT BEFORE THEM

PASTOR HOWARD DANIEL, JR.

SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 29, 2019

SCRIPTURE READING: **MATTHEW 2:9-18**

Matthew 2:9-11, *When they had heard the king, **they departed; and, lo, the star**, which they saw in the east, **went before them**, till it came and stood over where the young child was. **10**: When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. **11**: And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.*

1. BACKGROUND

- a. The **Gospel of Matthew** was written primarily to the Nation Israel.
- b. It was first written in Hebrew, the author being Matthew in 50 to 70 AD.
- c. It was directed primarily to the religious men of that time.
- d. Matthew presents the program of God as it relates to the Kingdom of Heaven.
- e. The Kingdom of Heaven is the theme of this Gospel.
- f. The One who is going to establish that Kingdom on Earth is the Lord Jesus Christ.
- g. The **Gospel of Matthew** contains three major discourses concerning the Kingdom of Heaven.
- h. The **Sermon on the Mount** looks back into the past. It is the Law of the Kingdom.
- i. The **Mystery Parables** contained in **Matthew Chapter 13** reveal the condition of the Kingdom of Heaven in the world during the present age in which we live.
- j. Our Lord tells us that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a sower, like a mustard seed, like leaven, and so on.
- k. **The Olivet Discourse** looks at the future to the return of the King and the things beyond this Age.
- l. We do not go to the **Book of Matthew** to obtain our Church doctrine.
- m. It is contained in other passages of scripture, primarily **Romans** thru **Philemon**. We must remember we are commanded to continue stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine. **Acts 2:42**, *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* **Jude 1:17**, *But, beloved, remember ye the **words** which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;* **2 Timothy 2:2**, *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

- n. Remember, the Kingdom of Heaven and the Church are not the same.
- o. It is important to know Matthew in order to understand the Bible.
- p. Some themes in the Book of Matthew are:
 1. Jesus came to save both the Jews and the Gentiles.
 2. There is one true God, but expressed in three persons, the Trinity; God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. 1 John 5:7, For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.
 3. The standards of God are high, but the examples he gave us in Jesus Christ are perfect.
 4. **Christ is sufficient for whatever needs the Christian or believer may have. 2 Corinthians 12:9, And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Colossians 2:10, And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: Philippians 4:19, But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**
 5. The ways of God are infinitely higher than the ways of the world or man. Isaiah 55:8, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.
 6. Jesus willingly laid down His life to redeem a sinful world with His perfect and acceptable sacrifice unto God. John 3:16, For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Galatians 4:4, But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, Hebrews 10:12, But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; John 10:18, No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. We must remember the Lord Jesus came the first time to save the Soul. At his second coming he will redeem the body. Hebrews 10:39, But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. James 5:20, Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

2. INTRODUCTION

Refer to the morning message December 29, 2019

You may have noticed the core of our music are the old hymns of the faith. As an example, "Amazing Grace", "Burdens are Lifted At Calvary", "There is Room At the Cross For You" and "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus", just to name a few. The amazing thing behind most of the old hymns of the faith, there is a story. It is for this reason that we decided to give you the history behind the amazing song "I Have Decided To Follow Jesus."

The Story behind the lyrics to
"I Have Decided To Follow Jesus."

<https://emailmeditations.wordpress.com/2014/08/23/499-the-story-behind-the-song-i-have-decided-to-follow-jesus/>

This story is from the book *Why God, Why?* by Dr. Peramangalam Job. Dr. Job (1945-2012) was an internationally known evangelist. He has been called the "Billy Graham of India," preaching in 129 countries, sometimes to crowds of 500,000 people. He also became a global voice for persecuted Christians in Muslim and Communist nations. The story below speaks of faithfulness in the face of severe persecution, persecution which Dr. Job himself faced. Hindu militants in India failed in an attempt on Job's life in 1999, but in June of that year they killed his 21-year old son, Michael, by running him down with a car near the medical school where he was studying to become a doctor. Job died of a heart attack in August of 2012 while on a preaching mission in Hungary.

About 150 years ago, there was a great revival in Wales, England. As a result of this, many missionaries came from England to northeast India to spread the Gospel. The region was known as Assam and comprised hundreds of tribes. The tribal communities were quite primitive and aggressive. The tribesmen were also called head-hunters because of a social custom which required the male members of the community to collect as many heads as possible. A man's strength and ability to protect his wife was assessed by the number of heads he had collected. Therefore, a youth of marriageable age would try and collect as many heads as possible and hang them on the walls of his house. The more heads a man had, the more eligible he was considered. Into this hostile and aggressive community, came a group of Welsh missionaries spreading the message of love, peace, and hope of Jesus Christ. Naturally, they were not welcomed. One Welsh missionary finally succeeded in converting a man, his wife, and two children. This man's faith proved contagious and many villagers began to accept Christianity. Angry, the village chief summoned all the villagers. He then called the family who had first converted to renounce their faith in public or face execution. Moved by the Holy Spirit, the man sung his reply, "I have decided to follow Jesus. No turning back."

Enraged at the refusal of the man, the chief ordered his archers to arrow down the two children. As both boys lay twitching on the floor, the chief asked, "Will you deny your faith? You have lost both your children. You will lose your wife too."

But the man replied, again singing, "Though none go with me, still I will follow. No turning back."

The chief was beside himself with fury and ordered his wife to be arrowed down. In a moment she joined her two children in death. Now he asked for the last time, "I will give you one more opportunity to deny your faith and live."

In the face of death, the man sung, "The cross before me, the world behind me. No turning back. No turning back."

He was shot dead like the rest of his family. But with their deaths, a miracle took place. The chief who had ordered the killings was moved by the faith of the man. He wondered, "Why should this man, his wife and two children die for a Man who lived in a far-away land on another continent some 2,000 years ago? There must be some supernatural power behind the family, and I too want that supernatural power."

In a spontaneous confession of faith, he declared, "I too belong to Jesus Christ!" When the crowd heard this from the mouth of their chief, the whole village accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior.

John 6:68, *Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the*

words of eternal life. **2 Corinthians 4:11-13**, For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. **12:** So then death worketh in us, but life in you. **13:** We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; **Revelation 14:13**, And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

I HAVE DECIDED TO FOLLOW JESUS

I have decided to follow Jesus (3x)
No turning back, no turning back

Though none go with me, still I will follow (3x)
No turning back, no turning back

The world behind me, the cross before me (3x)
No turning back, no turning back.

3. FOUR POINTS TO THE MESSAGE

c. They departed; and, lo the star, went before them.

1. **Matthew 2:9-11**, When they had heard the king, **they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them,** till it came and stood over where the young child was. **10:** When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. **11:** And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.
2. The star stood over the house, not the stable as Christmas card's picture today.
3. The wise men and shepherds were not together at the manger of Jesus Christ.
4. It was a particular and important period when Jesus was born. It was tax enrollment time. A large crowd was gathered, which was the reason there was no room for them at the inn.
5. After a period of time and the arrival of the wise men, the tax enrollment time was over, the crowd was gone, and the city was back to normal.
6. Joseph and Mary stayed in Bethlehem and moved into a house.
7. These wise men came to the house and presented their gifts to Jesus.
8. **Matthew 2:2**, Saying, **Where is he that is born King of the Jews?** For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.
9. Notice, they saw the star in the east. It was not an eastern star. The star led them westward.
10. **Matthew 2:9**, When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.
11. Notice it does not say a babe in a manger. It says "over where the young child was."
12. I do not believe this was an ordinary star. I think it was a star that was different

- from any other star that would appear in the sky.
13. God, in His providence, used this special star to guide the wise men to the Lord Jesus.
 14. There are several other examples where the Lord prompted people to move to a certain location.
 15. In **Acts 8** God used Philip to guide the Ethiopian eunuch to the Lord. **Acts 8:26**, *And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. Acts 8:35*, *Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.*
 16. Jesus also appeared to Paul. In **Acts 26:18**, Jesus told him to go to the Gentiles, *To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*
 17. God uses Christians today to guide lost people to the Saviour, and we must be sensitive to God's will. He says in **2 Corinthians 5:20**, *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. John 6:29*, *Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*
 18. The mission of Chesswood Baptist Church is to get the message to a lost and dying world.
 19. As the wise men obeyed and followed the star, we must also obey and get the Gospel out to the world as the Lord Jesus has told us to do according to **Matthew 28:19-20**, *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. 20: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*
 20. In **Matthew 11:28** He says, *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

d. And when they were come into the house, fell down, and worshipped Him.

1. Let's correct an error that has been perpetuated throughout Christian circles. In **Matthew 2:11**, it says, **And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.**
2. **The wise men came from the east to worship Jesus and not Mary.**
3. These wise men are not with the shepherds. They are alone at Jesus' home. Upon their arrival, the star stopped over the house. They went in and found the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. If we think about it, this scene reminds us of the local Church. According to **1 Timothy 3:15**, *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth.*
5. These wise men were seeking truth. They were seeking the Lord Jesus Christ. **John 14:6**, *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*
6. They found Him, and they did not hesitate to go in to worship Him.

7. Notice they did not worship Mary as one of the world's religion teach. They say she is a saint to be worshipped. This is simply not so. Mary indicated that she needed a Saviour. **Luke 1:46-47**, *And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47: And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.*
 8. The truth is that Mary was saved by grace just as you and I are saved. **Ephesians 2:8-9**, *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*
 9. In our salvation process we must come into the house. We must come to the Lord Jesus Christ. **Acts 2:47**, *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*
 10. **Matthew 2:11**, *They fell down and worshipped Him.*
 11. In **Matthew 1:21**, we have a verse that means a lot to us. *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*
- e. The angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream.**
1. **Matthew 2:12-15**, *And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. 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. 14: When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: 15: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.*
 2. Herod's destructive plan did not work because Joseph was warned in a dream to take Mary and Jesus and flee into Egypt until the death of Herod.
 3. Herod was seeking to destroy the young child's life.
 4. Notice Joseph traveled by night to be undetected and departed into Egypt.
 5. We must remember that was a fulfillment of prophecy because the prophets said, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son."
 6. Herod dies an unsaved man, and Joseph brought Jesus into Nazareth. To slip into eternity without the Lord Jesus Christ it would have been good that a man had not been born. **Matthew 26:24**, *The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.*
- f. Then Herod, was exceedingly wroth, sent forth and slew all children.**
1. **Matthew 2:16-18**, Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. 17: Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, 18: In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.
 2. Herod's decree was to destroy all children under two years old. It did not say to destroy just male children as some teach.
 3. This means the destruction of the children under two years old was not only for

the local area, but extended to surrounding areas as far north as Ramah. In **Jeremiah 31:15**, *Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.* The prophets indicated there would be weeping in Ramah.

4. We must remember it was at least a year-and-a-half to two years before the wise men got to the location to speak to Herod about the Christ child. **Matthew 2:7**, *Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, **inquired of them diligently** what time the star appeared.*

4. CONCLUSION

- a. Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sin and mine. He physically rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and presented His blood at the Throne of God.
- b. Today we can have salvation if we trust Christ as our personal Saviour.
- c. In the words of a great song, "Oh, come let us adore Him. Oh, come let us adore Him. Oh, come let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord."
- d. He is the living Saviour today, sitting at right hand of the Throne of God making intercessions for you and I.
- e. **1 Timothy 3:16**, *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.*
- f. **Romans 3:23**, *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*
- g. **Romans 3:10**, *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*
- h. **Romans 10:9-10**, *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. **10:** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*
- i. *Let's reflect on some verses on eternal security. The Bible plainly teaches that once you are saved and born again, you are saved forever! **1 Peter 1:4**, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, **John 10:27-29**, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: **28:** And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. **29:** My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. **2 Timothy 1:12**, For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. **Romans 8:38-39**, For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, **39:** Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. **1 John 5:13**, These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*
- i. Would you come to Jesus today for your salvation?
- j. Please stand.

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