

Fulfilled

HIS PROMISE KEPT. OUR LONGING MET.

OPENING UP

What's the greatest Christmas gift you've ever received?

TEXT**A King from Bethlehem? | Matthew 2:1-11**

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel."

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

MESSAGE OUTLINE

Big Idea: In Jesus, the least can become the greatest.

1. Greatness isn't based on our reputation. (vv.1-6)
2. Greatness isn't based on our identity. (vv.7-10)
3. Greatness is based on our relationship. (vv.6 & 11)

DISCUSSION



- God uses *insignificant* people and places for *significant* purposes in the kingdom of God. We see this to be true throughout the Christmas story. In what ways have you seen this be true in your own life or in the lives of those around you?
- Bethlehem had a poor reputation and was a small insignificant town, an unlikely place for a Savior to be born. Many people feel like Bethlehem! They struggle to feel good enough or doubt that God could use them because of their reputation. At times when we feel insignificant, how does it affect the way that we interact with others? The way that we are willing to take risks or not? The way that we receive God's love for us?
- Greatness doesn't come from your individual identity – *who you are*, but rather *whose you are* and how you respond to Jesus! We often try to find our “greatness” in other things. What area of your life do you find it easiest to place your identity in to help you feel great?
- Greatness is found in our relationship with Jesus. As we enter the Christmas season, what does your relationship with Jesus look like? What would it look like for you to stop striving for greatness and rest in your relationship with Jesus?
- Read Philippians 2:5-11. In the kingdom of God, greatness is about being humble and lowly. How did Jesus model this for us and, starting with his birth, show us how the least are the greatest in the kingdom of God?

LIFE CHALLENGE



In today's world there is so much pressure to be “great.” During the holiday season we see many friends and family that we don't normally see. We can easily find ourselves striving to impress them with things like our latest promotion at work, our most recent personal achievement, or our best, trendy holiday look!

What would it look like this holiday season for you to find your greatness in Jesus? How might your humility and heavenly focus take the pressure off others and change the nature of your conversations? In the busyness of this week, take time to reflect upon where you place your greatness. Spend time in the presence of the Lord and rest in who he says you are – His! Ask God to open your eyes to who you can share the greatness of Jesus with at your next Christmas gathering.

CLOSING PRAYER



Heavenly Father, thank you for choosing to use the very least and insignificant people to do great things for your kingdom. In the busyness of this season, help us to slow down and see where you might use us to share your love and light with the world around us. Help us to take time out to spend in your presence, that we might rest in the truth that our greatness is found in You! We love you, Lord. Thank you for sending Jesus to redeem us and to show us how to live the best life possible. Amen.

FULFILLED WEEK 2