



These notes are from a sermon given by Wayne Flowers at Smythe Street Church on Sunday January 5th, 2020 entitled "The First Star Trek."

Introduction: A bit of trivia!

On September 8, 1966 the TV series called Star Trek debuted.

Followed the voyages of the starship USS Enterprise

Five-year mission, the purpose of which was "to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations...to boldly go where no man has gone before!"

What does that have to do with the message?

Very little except...

Today I would like to tell you about "The First Star Trek."

These "trekkies" pre-dated the crew on the Enterprise.

They too were on a journey of discovery.

They too sought to discover a new order.

They too boldly went where they had never been before.

There was no interplanetary travel, but there was a divinely placed star.

A star that God used as means to bring these men to himself.

Their story goes like this...

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "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." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: "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." Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And 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." After 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. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And 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. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Matthew 2:1-12

There are several powerful lessons and truths to be learned from this story.

1. What you are looking for in life matters.

Your life is defined by what you are looking for, where you are looking for it and what you are willing to do to find it.

3 Different scenarios:

a) Looking for the wrong things in the wrong places.

- Fame, power, self-gratification.
- Tragic and destructive!

b) Looking for the right things in the wrong places.

Illustration...

The wisemen's journey was a journey to see and know God and what He was doing in the world.

They were sadly mistaken to think that they would find assistance and encouragement from King Herod and his political regime.

Their trek for truth was exploited by an ego maniac called Herod.
He tried to exploit their spiritual pursuit for his own ego centric goals.

Lesson...

There are things and people who will assist us in our pursuit of God and there are things that will detract and deter us.

If we will follow the star (God's leading) we will find what we are looking for. What are the stars in your life?

After a slight detour they got back on track.
God was leading them to himself!!

c) Looking for the right things in the right places

* Which leads me to the next point...

2. Certain pursuits are of infinitely greater importance.

The point to be made here is...

The greatest pursuit for all of mankind is know, to love and to serve God.

"Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee."
Augustine of Hippo (354 – 630)

In regard to fulfillment and life transformation, the litmus test of your pursuit is whether or not it leads you to the one who created you.

Besides the fact that this journey was divinely guided by the star and by means of the dream, there were other things that point us to the fact that this was life changing for the Magi.

- a) There was deep and sincere joy at the recognition of God's leading.
- b) They bowed in worship before Christ.
- c) They gave gifts of value to show their respect, honour and devotion.

3. God leads and draws all people to himself.

Spiritual hunger is everywhere.

If you find these pictures somewhat uncomfortable...good!!

We could easily say...there is no spiritual hunger there! You might be right.

You might wrong too!!

Bias and prejudice in the faith community in regard to who the seekers are is not helpful.

God is telling us something through this story!

These men were from a different culture and a different religion and yet God spoke their language!

They were not Jews...they were Gentiles.
Yet, there was a hunger to know God!

For the shepherds it was an angelic choir.
For these wisemen it was a star that spoke to them.

They would have been readily dismissed upon hearing that a "star" was their key means of finding their way. Divination!! Astrology!! They would have been judged harshly. Those who had the knowledge had no motivation to seek the Christ child for themselves or encourage those who were!

Conclusion...

God knew their heart.

He knows your heart!!

He went to extraordinary means to bring them to himself.

So today...the cross remains as God's extraordinary means of leading you to himself!

Questions...

Has God been drawing your heart?

Do you feel you are on a journey?

Jesus is present right now. He is the one you have been looking for.