

## MEN WHO MISSED THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

### INTRODUCTION

- A. Few experiences are more tragic than missing something important when there was no real reason to miss it.
  - 1. Yet, that is the experience of many people.
  - 2. It is the experience of some who missed the birth of Christ.
    - a. There are many who miss Christ today.
- B. Let's look at some who missed Him.

### I. THE INNKEEPER. Luke 2:6-7

- A. The innkeeper is not mentioned specifically.
  - 1. Obviously there was one.
  - 2. In the hustle and bustle of the ones arriving to be taxed, he missed the most important birth in the history of the world.
- B. He should not have missed it.
  - 1. The decree of the Emperor Augustus brought the parents of Jesus to his town, his doorstep, perhaps into his waiting room, under his very nose.
  - 2. The child was born in a manger [stable] at his inn.
- C. His preoccupation with his business kept him from it.
  - 1. *The Magnificent Defeat*, Frederick Buechner (back page)
- D. The world is full of such people.
  - 1. Materialistic people who miss the Christ because they are too busy. So called Christian people.
  - 2. Mark 4:18-19

### II. HEROD. Matthew 2:1-8

- A. There was nothing likable about Herod.
  - 1. He was guilty of many murders, including at least one wife and three sons.
  - 2. He probably had no religion and was a cynic.
  - 3. He knew the traditions of Israel, but he only half believed them.
  - 4. He should have found the Christ if only because he had such a large stake in the coming of the Messiah.
- B. Herod was at home when news reached him that the wise men had come from the East.
  - 1. He was well aware that they were speaking of the Messiah and he knew of no such birth.
  - 2. After talking to the religious leaders, he instructed the wise men. Matthew 2:8
  - 3. He knew of the birth and knew of its significance.
  - 4. He missed it through his greed and self-interest.
- C. Today, many people miss practically everything good because of greed and self-interest.
  - 1. They miss friendship, beauty, love and happiness.
  - 2. They also miss Jesus, Mark 8:36.
  - 3. Are we missing Christ because of our greed for physical pleasures?

### **III. THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS. Matthew 2:4-6**

- A. They, of all men, should not have missed His birth.
  - 1. They had the Scriptures, Micah 5:2; Isa 7:14; 9:6-7
  - 2. They were able to tell Herod that the child would be born in Bethlehem.
  - 3. Yet, they didn't leave their own homes or the palace to investigate His arrival.
- B. We do not know why they did not go with the wise men, but perhaps it was their pride in the fact that they had all the answers.
  - 1. Many of us have the answer for every Bible question.
  - 2. Yet, we may have no real hunger after God.
  - 3. Knowing the Bible is not enough.
    - a. We must look beyond the Book to the Author.

➤ ***THERE WERE MANY WHO DID FIND CHRIST:***

### **IV. THE SHEPHERDS. Luke 2:8-16**

- A. They were not important in the social structure of the ancient east.
  - 1. They could not even testify in a court of law because they were considered to be unreliable.
  - 2. They saw the angels and went to find out.

### **V. THE WISE MEN. Matthew 2:9-11**

- A. Not even Jews – everybody knew that God's promised salvation was of the Jews.
- B. Yet, they saw the star and followed it.

### **VI. SIMEON. Luke 2:25-32**

- A. A devout man but unknown to us in any other reference.
- B. No one would have given him a second thought.

### **VII. ANNA. Luke 2:36-38**

- A. Similar to Simeon – unknown and not considered to be very important.

### **CLOSING.**

- A. Why did these people find the Christ?
  - 1. They were honest enough to admit their need for a Savior.
    - a. The self-sufficient would never have made the trip to the manger – they don't do it today.
  - 2. They were humble enough to receive the Lord when He came.
    - a. There must have been levels of understanding. Perhaps they did not know too much.
    - b. Whatever they heard, they received.
    - c. We are told in each case that they praised God.
- B. The wise men today are those who realize their need and humble themselves enough to receive the Lord Jesus as their Savior.

## **THE MAGNIFICENT DEFEAT**

“I speak to you as men of the world,” said the innkeeper. “Not as idealists. Do you know what it is like to run an inn – to run a business, a family, to run anything in this world for that matter, even your own life? It is like being lost in a forest of a million trees and each tree is a thing to be done. Is there fresh linen on all the beds? Did the children put on their coats before they went out? Has the letter been written, the book read? Is there money enough left in the bank? Today we have food in our bellies and clothes on our backs, but what can we do to make sure that we will have them still tomorrow? A million trees, a million things … Finally we have eyes for nothing else, and whatever we see turns into a thing.”