



The Hope of Christmas

Matthew 2:1-12 (ESV)

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, 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. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Hope for Hopelessness:

I. Avoid isolation.

- Isolation screams you are the only one going through this; community says you are not alone.

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- It's hard for community and discouragement to occupy the same house!

2. Reject the world's math. (Matthew 16:26; Ecclesiastes 1:5-9)

- Everything - Jesus = nothing
- Jesus + nothing = everything
- Discouragement and depression can be a result of misplaced hope.
- Hope is never in things, but has always been in a person.

3. Incorporate worship into your morning routine.

(Matthew 2:9-11; Philippians 4:4; Lamentations 3:21-23; Psalm 95:1; Psalm 105:2)

- It's hard for worship and discouragement to occupy the same house!

4. Commit to a role of strategic service. (Matthew 20:28)

- It's hard for service and discouragement to occupy the same house!

5. Recognize that Jesus is a "Wonderful" Counselor.

Isaiah 9:6 (NIV)

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

- The wonderful counselor will use scriptures to help you complete the journey. (Matthew 2:4-6; John 6:63)
- Freedom and truth are inseparable. (John 8:32)
- It's hard for truth and discouragement to occupy the same house!