



INTRODUCTION

Down to Earth—Part 1

Though Jesus was the Son of God and Creator of the universe, He chose to enter this world under amazingly modest circumstances—as a baby, born to an ordinary couple, and placed in a trough. The angels even announced His birth to the humble shepherds, not to civic or religious leaders. Although the details are simple, the birth of Jesus is remarkable.

This new series, Down to Earth, will explore how this extraordinary event has had an impact in all of our lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did you like best about Christmas when you were growing up? What did you like least?
2. Read Matthew 2:1-13. Consider for a moment the different responses to the announcement of Christ's birth. How would you describe Herod's response? How would you describe the response of the religious leaders?
3. Do you think most people today are like Herod, the religious leaders, or the magi when it comes to their response to Jesus? Explain your answer.
4. Why do you think the religious leaders didn't go to Bethlehem to see if the Messiah had been born?
5. Read Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6-7, Micah 5:2, Daniel 7:13-14, and Matthew 2:11. What do we learn from these verses about the identity of Jesus? Why is it important we understand who Jesus really was and is?
6. Read Matthew 2:9-12 again. How would you describe the Magi's response to the birth of Christ? How was their response different than that of Herod or the religious leaders? What can we learn from their example?
7. What lesson(s) can you apply to your own life as a result of this study?
8. What are some things you might do to honor Christ during the Christmas holiday season?

APPLICATION

The Christmas story is remarkable for many reasons. The idea of God entering this world as a baby and living among us as a man is incredible. Equally amazing is the way in which the entire story unfolded—the Creator entered this world in such a humble way. But why does this matter?

In today's message, we learn that the Magi went to great lengths to find Jesus. God told the Israelites that they would find Him if they search with all their heart, and the Magi were willing to do this. God desires that we look for Him and find Him. If we don't know where we stand with God, or wonder who Jesus really is, we can follow the example of the Magi. God is looking for people who will humbly receive and apply His word to their lives. It takes faith to understand that if we give to God, He will provide for us.

KEY VERSES (HCSB)

Matthew 2:1-13
Micah 5:2
Acts 17:26-27
Isaiah 7:14
Isaiah 9:6-7
Daniel 7:13-14