

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

December 15, 2019

SPEAKER

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SERIES

I Wonder

PART

3

TITLE

I Wonder, How Will I Respond?

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 2:1-12



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Well as unique as we are as individuals, we all wonder about similar things. We wonder why in a crowd this large we can feel alone and we wonder why there's even such a thing as loneliness. We wonder why there's injustice in the world and why bad things happen to seemingly good people and kind people. We wonder why things are broken.

Our world would actually tell us that things are broken because people are insufficiently educated or insufficiently governed. In other words, if we simply knew enough or if we were watched enough, then all the problems of the world would go away. But truth be told and we could all tell this story is that every single one of us has done things we knew to be wrong when other people were watching us. You see, education and government and things like this, they may be a big protective barrier but the reality is they simply cannot answer the question. That is, why does the human heart actually desire things that cause such chaos in our own hearts and our lives and our families and in our culture, nor can they tell us the solution.

Now it takes the story of ages, that's found in the Bible that includes the story of Christmas to be able to tell that truth. You see God's word, it begins with a sentence and it's in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and we read through God's word that he created all things, animals and fish and trees and livestock and each time it says that he created them according to their kind. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image and our likeness, a man and a woman." It says that he did so according to his kind.

You and I, we have been created in the image of God with the ability to relate to him, to speak to him, and to hear from him and to live life in relationship with him. This was not only our gift from him, but this was his intention for life. You see, every single one of us, I assume you love Christmas lights. I love Christmas lights, but you know, they only work when they're plugged in. There has to be a source, otherwise, their intended capacity, it's never actualized and so it is with us. For you and for me, if we're not connected to the source of life, we simply cannot behave. We cannot belong the way that God wants us to.

Therefore, a time in the Garden of Eden, God and man and woman, they lived together in perfect harmony. Love was full. Life was full and free. God wanted to protect that fullness and freedom and so he gave instructions on how to live in his world. Inside those instructions, there was one restriction and somehow in the heart of man, we became tempted to look at that one restriction and to think that God was withholding his best. So instead of trusting and seeing the bounty of all that he had provided, we looked at the one thing and we said, we must have that to be happy, so we sinned against God and unleashed literally a tidal wave of brokenness into the world.

You see, not only did we sin against a Holy God, that sin severed our relationship with him and the lights went out and in the darkness, this wave of brokenness continues to sweep. Almost immediately, there was fear, there was insecurity, there was apprehension, there was shame, there was guilt that was felt upon the conscience and in the soul.

Soon thereafter, there was relational strife for the man and woman began blaming each other for all the problems that they had experienced. God said that we would, by nature, that we would become sinners and when we had children and that sin nature would be passed from one generation to the next only to ensure that more sin and rebellion would take place in every living generation, which is why for those of you who have parents or kids, you never had to teach your kids how to sin. It all comes standard and natural.

Then tragically, the Bible says that the end of that curse would be death. That we would die as a wage of our sin. God didn't intend this. This wasn't his design and everything in us that's been written upon our heart tells us so. That's why when you're in a relationship and there's tension in that relationship, you think it's not supposed to be like this. It's because it's not. When you feel insecure and anxious, when you feel apprehensive, when you feel depressed, you think life's not supposed to be live like this. You know why? It's because it's not. When you go to a funeral and you see somebody that you loved or loved one of a friend of yours and you look around, everything in you screams, it's not supposed to end like this, because it's not.

He didn't create us to die. He created us to live and so we would assume that there would be tragic consequences of brokenness when we, sinful people, or when we people became sinners and we rebelled against God, but what we cannot imagine is what took place next and that is that God, in that moment of offense, actually made a promise to send a rescuer. And page by page through the Old Testament of this book called the Bible, he gives us hints as to what we're supposed to be looking for, who this person is and where he would be born.

In the fullness of time, God sent his rescuer. His name was Jesus Christ and it was his only son. Jesus means Savior and Christ means the promised one. When we talk about Jesus, we're talking about the very one that God promised to bring us back into a relationship with God so that the lights can be turned back on.

This is why we love Christmas because he came. You see, Jesus was fully God and fully man, which is why one of the titles in the scriptures is son of God and another one of his titles is son of man. He came to mediate, to bring us back to God and so he was able to be sympathetic to God and to man. In 30 years, while he lived on this life on this earth, his life, there was no sin. There was perfect love. There was perfect justice, perfect righteousness that flowed from him. Then he took the hand of mankind and received all of our sin. He took the hand of his father and received all of the father's wrath towards sin. He took all the sin and all the wrath upon himself and he went to a cross and there he died for our sin.

He was buried in a grave and three days later, because he's the son of God with authority, he rose from the dead. When he rose from the dead, he rose with an invitation upon his lips and that is that if we would admit that we cannot save ourselves and we need a Savior, and if we would put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, that he would forgive us of all of our sin and give us all of his righteousness so that we could stand before him, so that when we do die on this earth that we can go to heaven. It's amazing what happens, is that sin nature, all of a sudden this reconstitute into a new nature, that instead of delighting in rebellion, it begins to learn to delight in love. This is what is available and the question is this. It's before all of us and it's how will we respond?

The Bible only tells us there's three ways to respond to the news that this cradle that held Jesus and this cross that held Jesus, there's only three ways to respond to this and receive all of those ways in Matthew 2. It says,

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod, the King, behold wise men came from the east 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 and they told him in Bethlehem of Judea and he sent them to Bethlehem, 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 they worshiped him.

Some people today in this room and in the world, they'll hear the story of Jesus Christ and they'll respond like Herod. Herod was the King and Herod had a plan for how he wanted life to be lived and he was working out his plan. He wanted to rule and he did not want any rivals. He didn't want anyone interfering and so when the wise men came and they asked the question, where is the King of the Jews? We heard he's born. Where has he been born? Instead of him hearing that as good news, he heard that as tragic news to his plans.

So tragic that in the days to come after Jesus was swept away to be protected, Herod himself was so cruel and evil that he killed all the boys two years and under and the region. Now, very few of us in the room have that level of cruelty or at least the power to act out in that cruelty, but there'll be many people who just like Herod, who hear this story and they'll respond with active resistance. They won't like it. They'll be angry about it.

Well then there's some people and they'll respond like the priests. The priests were thinking that they were earning their way to God and had no need of a Savior for they were a Savior in and of themselves. So when Herod came and they said, "You've been studying all your life, where the Messiah the Christ is to be born. Where is he to be born? We have people here who have come to worship him." They looked and they said, "Oh, he's supposed to be born in Bethlehem," and that was that. They didn't even go to check.

There'll be many people just like the chief priest who will hear these words and they'll wonder in any way is Jesus consequential to life and they'll respond with indifference and apathy. It's just more news. It's important to somebody else. But then there'll be others. There'll be others in the world today and others in this room this morning who will respond like the wise men, who heard the news that the baby had been born and they set aside their pride and they set aside their time and their comfort and they came along way in order to worship Jesus Christ. Even today there will be people who were here this news and like the wise men, they will respond in faith. They'll believe in him and worship.

Active resistance, apathy or belief in worship. How will you respond? We urge you this morning, I beg of you this morning to believe in Jesus Christ. The prophet says in Isaiah 9 he says, "For to us, child is born. Unto us a son is given and his name will be called, it shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace." When the words say for to us a child, it's to us. What that means is that for those who trust Jesus Christ, all that Jesus is becomes a gift to us. If you're here today and you say, "You know what I really need? I have a big decision this week. I have a big decision this month. I need a counselor." Well, Jesus becomes your wonderful counselor.

If you're hear and you say, "I need strength for the task." Well, he's the Mighty God. If you need to protector and a defender as a father, he's the Everlasting Father and if your heart this morning is riddled with a lack of peace, he is the Prince of Peace. He's ready to give himself to you, but you have to trust him. You believe him?

How you do that as you admit to him with words, "God, I admit I am a sinner and I need a Savior and I cannot save myself." You have to believe in Jesus Christ that what he did on the cross and when he rose from the dead was sufficient in order to save us and we have to confess him as Lord of our life.

Romans 10:9, says it this way, If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

We want to give you an opportunity for those of you who want today to receive Christ as your Savior and Lord and receive all the benefits of knowing him as Savior and Lord, we want to give you the opportunity to do that. We know that it can be a scary thing, all these people, and so I want to just encourage you with something. I want you to watch this. If you're here in the room today and you have already trusted Christ, you've already admitted that you need a Savior, you know Jesus Christ and you know his peace and you had command to the other people in the room, that Jesus Christ and trusting it is worth. It's worth giving your life to him, would you just raise your hand; if you have trusted Jesus?

Now, if your hand is not raised, just look around. All these people could commence you. They've studied the scriptures. They've heard the gospel. They say, Jesus has made a difference in my life and so would you bow your head with me? If you're here and you say, "I am ready to trust Jesus and to worship him like the wise men," then pray to him and you can say something to God like this.

Father in heaven, I admit that I'm a sinner and I believe that I cannot save myself, but I believe in Jesus. I believe that Jesus is the promised one. I believe that he has come in order to make things right. I believe that he came and he lived without sin, but he died for my sin on a cross. I believe that he was buried and I believe that he rose from the dead and I ask that you would be my Lord. I give you my life. I give you my future. I trust you. Would you forgive me in bring me safely home? I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Listen, if you just prayed to receive Christ, we want you to know that we are so excited as a people of God. We love Jesus Christ and so to have other people pray to receive Christ means that you have joined our family. We would love to be able to celebrate with you and encourage you and so the card that you filled out, if you have, if you haven't, please fill that card out. In the bottom there's several boxes, but there's not one that says, I trusted Christ. So this is what I want you to do. If you would have the courage and if you would want the help to sort of learn how to begin this relationship with God, I want to just encourage you to fill that out and at the bottom write three words. I trusted Christ. I trusted Christ. We would love the opportunity to be able to reach out to you.

You know this story of the ages, at least within the Bible, it begins in a garden and moves through a cradle. It moves through a cross and moves through an empty tomb and it gets to a throne and at the very end what we find, it says that people from every tribe and every tongue and every language, everyone who's ever trusted Jesus Christ here on the earth, one day will assemble in heaven. There the lamb of God, Jesus Christ will come to the throne and he will be enthroned forever and ever and ever and we will know that he is worthy for, we will see him with his face, but we see this within the scriptures and so we get to respond to this now.

So I want to ask you, we're going to finish our time responding, simply worshiping. So would you stand and would you sing to the only one who is worthy of it?



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