

What’s the wisest decision you ever made?

- The time you listened to your parent’s, instead of everybody else?
- A teacher’s suggestion about a career path?
- To avoid what everyone else was doing because it was illegal?
- To buy a home, to sell a car?
- To marry your spouse?

Actually, the wisest decision ever made in your live, wasn’t even made by you. It was made by the Holy Spirit, and it was the decision to believe in Jesus! Because you’re a natural born enemy of God and dead in your sins, it was impossible for you to make that decision.

The Bible says: **“No one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit.”** And just in case that wasn’t clear enough, Jesus says: **“You did not choose me. I chose you.”** As a believer in Christ, give credit where credit is due – the Holy Spirit is responsible for the faith created and cared for and strengthened in your heart.

So then, what’s the wisest decision you made today? Being here, or watching, or listening to this service! Why is that such a wise decision? You get to kneel next to your Savior’s cradle and unload your shortcomings and secret sins; and then receive stain-free status at your Savior’s cross.

Christmas was 2 weeks ago. But don’t walk away from the manger. This manger may not be here much longer, but you can still make return visits. You need Jesus ... you need his forgiveness, his grace and guidance. According to the Bible, realizing your need for Jesus, makes you wise for salvation. That means **Wise Men and Women ... Still Seek Jesus!** 1) *While the search for Jesus can be demanding,* 2) *the destination is priceless.*

(1)

Our lesson starts out: **After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi (wise men) from the east came to**

Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

Did you catch the amazing facts packed in these verses? The Magi set out for a land ... *they didn’t know*. Following a star ... *they didn’t know*. Looking for a King ... *they didn’t know*.

They don’t sound very wise, do they? But the Bible describes them as wisemen, Magi. They were wise because they listened to the promises of God and weren’t willing to give up even though their search for Jesus got demanding.

Which brings us to our own spiritual journey to Bethlehem. Where are you? Have you been there and done that over Christmas, but still struggle to figure out how the birth of Jesus fits into your life, or changes your life?

The wise men searched for Jesus by following the signs God gave them. They carefully followed a star in the sky, along with the OT prophecies. They noticed this star because they studied the sky. As far as the OT goes, being from the area of Babylon, they could have heard about the one **“born king of the Jews”** from the Jews who had been taken into captivity 500 years earlier, during the time of Daniel. In his day, Daniel is described as **“the leader of the wise men.”**

We know that Daniel fearlessly worshiped the true God, even if it meant being lunch for some lions. It would be shocking if he didn’t share the true God and the hope of a Savior with his captors.

What about us? We also find Jesus by following the signs God gives us. We shouldn’t expect God to put another star in the sky. We should expect him to provide divine answers for our daily problems from Scripture, and then plug that Word into our lives.

Our search for Jesus can also get demanding. The excitement of the Christmas season and our

enthusiasm for worship may be wearing off. We may feel burned out, or just plain burned by our holiday expectations. But that's exactly when and why we need to go back to the manger and hear God's Word to find strength in God's Son with the rest of God's people.

Once there, we see what Immanuel, God with us, did for us. He was born to live for us, to die for us and rise from the dead for us. He was born to give eternal life in heaven as a gift to all believers. Yes, **Wise Men and Women ... like us ... Still Seek Jesus, even though the search can get demanding.**

(2)

Many people wonder what they'd do if they won the huge PowerBall drawing. Do you wonder what you'd do if God appeared to you, and offered you anything you wanted, like he did King Solomon?

Would you ask him to pay off your Christmas credit card debt, plus some extra for spending? How about better health ... better job? Would we ask for wisdom? That's what Solomon asked for.

Most confuse intelligence and wisdom. Intelligence is knowing the facts. Wisdom is putting those facts into action. Intelligence knows it's important to come in from the cold. Wisdom is walking into a warm house. The wise men knew that Jesus was important as their Savior and they did something about it ... ***the destination is priceless.***

Once they reached their destination, the excitement of their faith was obvious: **On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.**

Did you catch some more amazing facts? Even though they had traveled at least a thousand miles, they didn't want to rest, freshen up and wait until morning. These men, known for their wisdom, did what every wise man and woman does, without hesitation they bowed down and worshiped their Savior.

And because Mary's child didn't only enter their universe; but their hearts as well, they needed to show their love, so they brought gifts. No one told them to give gold ... the most precious of all metals. No one told them to give incense ... an expensive substance that smells great when lit. No one told them to give myrrh ... a rare perfume. From their perspective, only the best gifts were appropriate for the best Gift this world had ever seen.

Once you reach your destination, how do you respond? Without excuses or hesitation do you bow down and worship your Savior? Do you also bring your best for the Best Gift of all?

- Does your best include both personal time and group time with your Lord in his Word?
- Does your best include listening to a message from God's Word and not thinking, "*They needed to hear this,*" but rather, "*I needed to hear this*"?
- Does your best include an offering that is appropriate for a Savior who not only entered your universe, but your heart, as well?
- Does your best include skills, abilities and talents faithfully used and happily shared?

It can't be any other way for wise men and women, can it? You have a guaranteed reservation at an eternal destination, along with the assurance of his daily presence until you get there. That is priceless!