

Luke 2:21-38 Matthew 2:1-12

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 22 December 2019

[0 : 00] Okay, take your Bibles and turn with me, turn back with me to the book of Luke, Luke chapter 2. Luke chapter 2. This morning we will be finishing up a four-part series which we have been looking at, The Miracle of Christmas.

And we have been going through some of the miraculous events, which really we include in the Christmas story. The first of those being that the silence was broken. Zechariah at the temple when God had been silent for over 400 years.

All of a sudden, Zechariah is burning incense at the altar of incense, which is a representation of the prayers of God's people ascending to the throne room of heaven. And the angel Gabriel comes and stands to the right of the altar and tells Zechariah that his prayers have been heard and will be answered.

And it was the announcement of the coming of John the Baptist. And it is a miraculous event in that God speaks to man. And we've seen that after 400 years of silence, God was saying the same thing because exactly how the Old Testament ends in the book of Malachi with the announcement of the coming forerunner, the New Testament account picks that up with the announcement of the coming of the forerunner.

Now we have the privilege of just turning a couple of pages, or depending on the copy of Scripture you have, you may have a title page in there, or you may have a, if you have a study Bible, it has kind of a history of the intertestament time.

[1 : 19] And we go from Malachi all the way over to the book of Luke, and it's not that hard. We begin to see how these things come together. But we understand that there were 400 plus years of God not saying anything that led up to that point.

And it was a miraculous event in that God spoke to man. And we've seen that that is a miraculous event all the time. Anytime we hear a word from God, it is a supernatural event that God chooses to speak to us because He doesn't have to, right?

And then we begin to look at how God accomplishes the impossible with the virgin birth of Christ and the announcement, again, of Gabriel to Mary and how what was impossible from man's standard was exactly possible according to God's standards.

And it is just like God. It is consistent with the character of God that God consistently does the impossible. God is in that type of business. That is not saying that we name it and claim it.

And when we come to a problem, we say, well, God's going to meet that problem. We just understand that that is a characteristic trait of God, that God is a God who accomplishes the impossible. I mean, bushes can be on fire and not be consumed.

[2 : 27] Red seas can be parted, right? Manna can fall out of heaven. Quail can come from nowhere and land in the midst of feet of multitude. Water can come from a rock. And all these things that we understand that God does the impossible.

And it is a miraculous event. Last week, we saw in the third part that God chooses the unlikely, that the unlikely are chosen. The shepherds which were out in the field and they received the angelic announcement.

When the multitude of angels surrounded them, that was the least likely of people that anyone would have chosen to have the announcement of the coming of the Messiah so that they would be the first to proclaim the gospel.

Because the gospel is what? The good news. The very first that we see that proclaims the gospel is Gabriel. Gabriel announces the coming of Jesus. But we can expect that because Gabriel is an angel, an archangel of heaven, who does what God calls him and sends him to do.

He announces it to Zachariah and he announces it again to Mary. And then we have the angel who appears to Joseph in a dream. We don't know if that was Gabriel, but we do know that the angels were proclaiming the good news. But the very first human to ever proclaim the gospel were

shepherds.

[3 : 38] Those which did not have the legal right to go into the temple, could not enter into the presence of God, had no right to testify even in a court of law, so they were not seen as consistent testimonies even in the legal system.

God chose them to proclaim the good news for all that would listen. And we have seen the miraculous and that God chooses the unlikely. And we saw the truth that if God did not choose the unlikely, the reality is that none of us would be here.

Because none of us are really worthy of God's choice. And we've been looking at this miraculous event which we call Christmas and seeing the application that it has to each and every day. So this morning, as we wrap it up, I want you to see what is probably, according to the Christmas story, the most miraculous event.

And it is that the sovereign is approachable. The sovereign being the title. That the sovereign is approachable. Agree with him or not, or like it or not, if you were to go to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C., you did not have the right to walk up to the White House.

You have the right to walk up to the fence that surrounds the lawn of the White House, but you do not even have the right to do what you want to at that fence that surrounds the lawn of the White House. In days gone by, it was not always that way.

[4 : 55] The White House was open. You could come to it. You could approach it. You could go to the leader of our land. And you could go into his or their presence if they happen to be there.

But that is not the case anymore. And around the world, man does not have the right just to walk, whoever wants to, into the presence of the leader of that land, especially a sovereign leader, one who is completely in charge.

But we understand that the sovereign of all sovereigns, that is the king of kings at the Christmas time and at the season in which we enjoy, made himself approachable.

John puts it this way, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we call him what? Emmanuel, which is God with us.

We see here in Luke chapter 2, starting in verse 21, this miraculous event of the sovereign being approachable. And we'll also tie it, if you're there, you can take a page or your finger and put it in the book of Matthew, Matthew chapter 2, starting in verse 1.

[5 : 59] Again, we will read two gospel accounts of a similar theme. So, we're in Luke chapter 2, starting in verse 21, reading to verse 38. And then we will turn over to Matthew chapter 2, verses 1 through 12.

Do not let the disorder that they are found in your scripture say, Well, Matthew comes before Luke in my Bible. Yes, it does. But the chronological order is the order in which we are about to read them. So, if you're physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you'll join with me as we stand together and we read the Word of God, found in Luke chapter 2, starting in verse 21.

And we'll go down to verse 38, and we'll turn to the book of Matthew. The Word of God says, And when eight days had passed before his circumcision, his name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

And when the days for their purification, according to the law of Moses, was completed, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. As it is written in the law of the Lord, every firstborn male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord, and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons.

And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. And this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel. And the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

[7 : 22] And he came in the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the child Jesus to carry out for him the custom of the law, then he took him into his arms and blessed God and said, Now, Lord, you are releasing your bondservant to depart in peace according to your word.

For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel. And his father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about him.

And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel and for a sign to be opposed. And a sword will pierce even your own soul

to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.

And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage and then as a widow to the age of 84.

She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. At that very moment, she came up and began giving thanks to God and continued to speak of him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

[8 : 33] Go with me, if you will, to the book of Matthew, Matthew chapter 2. Matthew chapter 2, starting at verse 1. Now, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?

For we saw his star in the east and have come to worship him. When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

They said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what has been written by the prophet. And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah. For out of you shall come forth a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.

Then Herod secretly called the Magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared.

And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, Go and search carefully for the child.

And when you have found him, report to me so that I too may come and worship him. After hearing the king, they went their way, and the star which they had seen in the east went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the child was.

[9 : 41] When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. After coming into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell to the ground and worshipped him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the Magi left for their own country by another way. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for this opportunity which we have to read your word.

Lord, to hear your word. And we pray, Lord, that we would begin to understand it more and more, that the truth of it would captivate our hearts and minds. Lord, that the miraculous event which we are beholding before us written in ink would be a truth that is applied in us on a daily basis.

Lord, that we would stand amazed at the truth that it contains, and you would be glorified and honored. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. We have read two accounts, one found in Luke chapter 2, and another found in Matthew chapter 2.

The account in Luke chapter 2 took place when Jesus was about a month old, because if you go back and you look at the law of purification, the law for purification for Mary would have been longer since she gave birth to a male child.

[10 : 51] So this is an account which happened when Jesus was approximately a month old, and it happened at the temple in Jerusalem. They would have left Bethlehem and came to Jerusalem to fulfill the requirements of the law.

The second account found in the book of Matthew, the wise men or the Magi from the east would have probably taken place when Jesus was sometime around two years old. You say, well, how do you get the age of two?

Because we read, if we were to keep on reading, you would see that Herod issues a decree that all of the male children ages two and under would be slaughtered based on the time that was given him by the Magi.

We don't know exactly that Jesus was two years old, but we know that there has sometime has passed because he is no longer referred to as a baby, rather he is referred to as a child and he is no longer in a manger, now he is in a house.

And there's all these things and these questions and we're not here to talk about them. What we want to do is just be captivated by the reality that Jesus is Emmanuel. He is God in the flesh and being God in the flesh, he is approachable.

[11 : 52] We see here three or two accounts of a multitude of individuals approaching the King of kings and Lord of lords, having the ability to walk into his presence and to be welcomed into that presence.

This is something that we need not take lightly because anywhere we read in Scripture and we find the angel of the Lord, especially in the Old Testament, but we find it also in the book of Revelations. I don't know how many of you are following the same Bible reading, that my wife and I are, but if you are, then you're reading through the book of Revelations, which, by the way, today would have been an amazing day because you would have read also Zechariah chapter 9 and then you would have been able to correspond with that in John chapter 12.

In Zechariah 9, you saw the prophecy concerning the King coming to you lowly and riding on a donkey. And in John chapter 12, you saw the fulfillment of the King coming into Jerusalem, what? Riding on a donkey.

That's why I follow that reading plan, by the way. Robert Murray and Machines read the Bible through in a year. That's an unashamed plug right there, okay? You read the Old Testament once and you read the New Testament in the book of Psalms twice.

You say, well, that's too much. I can't do it. Yes, you can. So it's okay. It causes a little bit of discipline. It's hard, but it's okay. We can do it. But we see here also in the book of Revelations, it's the same thing, the angel of the Lord.

[13:10] But there's this consistent theme all throughout Scripture that any time the angel of the Lord shows up, which is, we refer to it as a theophany or a Christophany, an appearance of Jesus Christ, even before his incarnation.

In the Old Testament, even after his incarnation, we see it in the book of Revelation. What I'm trying to get across to you is that when God shows up, let's just put it bluntly, man always does the same thing. They fall on their face and they say, woe is me for I am a sinner.

And I live among people with unclean lips and I have unclean lips too, to say what Isaiah says.

Every time God shows up and man realizes he's in the presence of God, man gets scared.

And the reason man gets scared is because God is holy and perfect and we know in the presence of perfection how imperfect we are. We understand that we are not what we yet should be.

It is just like any craft we may have or skill we may have honed, whatever that is. Take me, for instance. I am really privileged to have the opportunity to be called to preach. And I try to do the work of an evangelist at times.

[14:13] I try to study to show myself approved. And I'm always opening up to scripture and I try to discipline myself for study. But it does not take me very long to be in the presence of someone who can really preach. And I go, wow, this man is great at what he does and I'm not yet there.

But any skill or any craft we may have, as good as we think we are, when we get in the presence of someone who's perfect at it, we realize we still fall woefully short, right?

How much more so when we as imperfect sinners stand in the presence of a perfect, holy God.

Every one of our imperfections are highlighted. So man does not have the right to run into the presence of God or into the presence of the King.

But with the coming of God in the flesh, which is Christmas, all of a sudden the sovereign of the universe is approachable to all. We are blown away at the fact that the shepherds were able to come and to see the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in the manger.

And they saw him and they approached him. I mean, that's God right there. That's not just a baby, right? We're blessed to have babies here today. And even if I was to walk up to one of those babies, if I was a shepherd smelling like sheep, looking like a shepherd, I mean, let's just be honest here, okay?

[15:23] I'm not trying to degrade anyone. Some of you who walked in with a precious little baby this morning probably wouldn't be real happy with me walking up saying, let me see that child.

They're like, wait a minute, stay back, right? I want my child to stay healthy, which means I need some distance between you and my child.

But Jesus laying in the manger, all of a sudden they come into his presence. But now we see some other accounts, two other accounts, of what it looks like with Simeon and Anna and the Magi, how all of a sudden the sovereign, and I hope you're getting excited about this, has made himself approachable when we could have never dared go into his presence before.

I want you to see a few things. And I know we have the Lord's Supper this morning, so I'm going to make it very quick, okay? Because I don't want us to degrade that at all, and I don't want us to rush through that. I want you to see just a few things as we look at the sovereign being approachable, and you'll have to take them in context of everything we've read.

And I'm not going to take time to take you through it verse by verse, but I want you to take these truths and see it. Number one, we see the sovereign is approachable when there is an anticipation. There was an anticipation.

We see the anticipation with Simeon. Simeon was a righteous man, devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, right? So Simeon was looking. Anna was waiting.

[16:36] Anna, by the way, men, we see this again, this very wise theme we need to understand here. Do you know? Anna is what we refer to as advanced in years. You notice that the Bible never says women are old.

I don't know if you've caught that, right? Zacharias says, I'm old. My wife's advancing. Elizabeth was advancing. Now again, we have a second thing that Anna was advancing. Anna had been married as a young woman.

She had lived with her husband seven years. After seven years of marriage, her husband died. And now she had lived, we don't know how old she was when her husband died, but only after seven years of marriage, her husband died. And she lived as a widow to the age of 84.

And she had just advanced. So she had advanced to the age of 84 and says she never left the temple, but she was daily committing herself to fasting and prayers. Why? Because she was waiting.

Simeon was looking. Anna was waiting. And the Magi were searching. What we see is an anticipation, someone that was looking for something. Simeon was looking for the constellation of Israel.

[17:35] Anna was waiting on this hope for her nation. The Magi were looking to the heavens and searching to the heavens for this sign. It's amazing when you go through the history, there's this man that's well known in scripture.

And I know I have to give you this or you won't really understand it. This is one of those things you have to just bear with me and give me a little bit of time. There's this man that's well known in scripture. His name is Daniel. Daniel was a man who was given insight from God of all gods to have an interpretation of dreams.

Daniel went and hung out at a place called Babylon, not by his choice, but against his will, right? And Daniel began to tell the king his dreams. And he began to give interpretation of dreams, even when the king didn't tell him his dream.

Daniel, because of the insight which God gave him, walked in and said, Daniel said, King, you dreamed this and it means that, right? It's amazing. So Daniel was promoted. And what Daniel was promoted to would have been the chief of the Magi or the wisest of all wise men.

Daniel had certain writings that he took with him from Jerusalem. We refer to them as the Pentateuch or the first five books of the Bible. And within the Pentateuch, in the book of Numbers, Numbers chapter 24, I believe it's verse 17, there is this great prophecy that says that I see him, but not yet.

[18:49] I see him approaching and he is a king and his star shall arise out of Judah. Now to us, we're like, okay, that's great. The scepter shall never depart from his hand. It is his proclamation, by the way of this false prophet who was hired to proclaim a curse against the nation of Israel, issued this proclamation of a king that would rule for all of eternity.

And he put this sign, a star. Now to the rest of the Jewish people, star didn't mean anything. But if you were a Magi, you know what you did? You looked at the stars. You were an astrologer.

That's essentially what you did. So you were always looking at the stars, trying to interpret history through the stars. Well, these Magi would have had a chief Magi in the past named Daniel who would have left those scrolls and they would have opened that up and said, wait a minute.

He speaks here of a star who will always reign and the world will be reigned by him. And now all of a sudden we see this star. It must mean something. What I'm telling you here is that all of these who approached the sovereign were those who were living with anticipation.

Simeon was looking for the hope. Anna was waiting on it in the temple. And the Magi were searching the heavens to find it. Friend, listen to me. This is one thing I have found. Let's bring this application on back home.

[19:57] Let's move out of history and come back to today's time. God is always approachable to those who are living with anticipation. I ask you, this morning, did you anticipate meeting the sovereign when you woke up?

I mean, did you anticipate it? We find this. How many people, you know what amazes me, not so much those who walked up to him, what amazes me is how many people walked by him in the temple.

How many people just passed by and didn't see anything? It's because they weren't living in anticipation. Anticipation always leads to the second one that is preparation.

Because what you really anticipate, you will prepare for. What you really anticipate, you will prepare for. Which means, if I anticipate meeting the sovereign today, then I would have prepared before I came to meet him.

If you know the hour, Jesus says, when I come back, you will be ready. But no man knows the hour nor the time, nor the season, nor the year. So you ought to live in this eternal preparation, right? Anticipation always leads to preparation.

[21 : 03] It says, Simeon was a righteous man, devout. He was living his life accordingly. Anna was praying and fasting and she was doing all these things. Why? Preparing to meet. Think of the preparation that the Magi would have had to make.

They made a journey. We don't know how long. We know they came from the east. That would have been the region of Babylon and some others. We know they came from the east and we just assume, reading the biblical account and even history, that they probably traveled for over two years.

It took them that long to get there. How much preparation do you have to make to go somewhere for two years? It is, with our family, quite often, I like flying because you get there quick, but sometimes it's impossible for us to fly places because someone in our family likes to pack a lot of things when we go so that we can be prepared for anything.

So we can't put all those bags on the plane. So the preparation requires us to drive. I used to make fun of her for that. I used to make fun of my wife for, why do we need a first aid kit to go to the beach?

And the very day I did that, I was going down the boardwalk and I ripped my foot open. I said, can you get that first aid kit out because I need a band-aid. So from that point on, I've never blamed anyone, never mocked her, never said anything.

[22 : 09] You bring whatever you need, honey. We'll get a bigger vehicle if we need to because preparation pays off, right? So we understand this, that how much preparation it takes to go somewhere for a week versus how much preparation it takes to go somewhere for two years.

But to them, the cost was worth it. I don't care how long it takes us to get there, I'm going to see this king. Friend, listen to me.

Jesus tells us what? To prepare our hearts to live in a season of preparation so that that sovereign is approachable to those who have prepared themselves to be in his presence. So not only do we have anticipation, preparation, and I'm going through them quickly, I would like to go through them slower, but I'm going through them quickly.

We also have third, revelation. Revelation. One thing we find about Simeon is that he was full of the Holy Spirit. It says that the Holy Spirit was all around him, by the way.

It says here in verse 25, And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the constellation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

[23 : 13] So we find this, he has the presence of the Holy Spirit. Now here's this revelation, and it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. That's an amazing revelation, but let's go on any further.

And he came in the Spirit, that should be a capital S, right, into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to carry out for him the custom of the law, then he took him into his arms. What I want you to see is Simeon had a revelation from the Spirit, he was led by the Spirit, and the day he came into the temple was the day that Mary and Joseph brought in the baby Jesus.

If that's not a revelation, I don't know what is. And think about the temple of the Lord. It's a busy place, right? There are sheep and pigeons and doves and all these things, and we know there are money changers there.

At some point, there's a lot of things going on, a lot of activity, and there's this baby, a month old, being carried through the crowd, and there are probably more than just one baby, but Simeon being led by the Spirit to that child so that God could reveal to him, this is the one you're looking for.

[24 : 16] And as he holds him in his arms, and he issues this prophecy, which by the way is not a warm fuzzy prophecy because there's Mary, a sword's going to pierce your heart, right? And he's offering this prophecy, at that very moment, Anna walks by.

I mean, Anna's been living in the temple for all of these years and fasting and praying, and all of these people are in the temple, but all of a sudden, Anna comes by and she says, oh, that's the one I've been waiting on.

So Anna begins to tell everybody that would listen. I mean, think about this. And then you have the Magi in the east where it says, we have seen his star, we have followed his star, and I wish I had time to take you through it step by step, and people all the time are like, Pastor, don't worry about how much time you take.

Yeah, you say that until I take it. And then you're like, Pastor, worry about how much time you take, okay? So just stay with me. The Magi from the east, they followed his star, they got there and they're talking, and they went to the only place that you would if you're looking for a king and you're going to the nation of Israel, you go to Jerusalem, right?

That's where the temple is, that's where the temple of the Lord is, that's where the throne is. So they're going to Jerusalem, and they get there and they talk to King Herod, and we know the story, Herod's not really excited to hear about this, for one, because he's not even Jewish, but he's the king of the Jews.

[25 : 24] He had purchased it and killed people to maintain it and all this other stuff. And they're there, and it says they saw the star. After they talked to Herod, the great says that they walked out, this is this thing, they walked out, and the star moved.

They followed the star until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. And tell me, friend, this is one thing I have always been just baffled over.

You mean to tell me nobody else saw a star moving and decided to follow it? The truth that I get from that, maybe I'm just too simple.

Only those anticipating and preparing and looking for the sovereign received the revelation of where the sovereign was. Do you know why there's so many people who have no idea about Jesus Christ, even though they live in a land which they would hear?

You know why there's so many people who can hear the truth and can have the truth thrown at them and they can walk in the land and they, listen, they can have Bibles and Bibles and Bibles and Bibles and Bibles and Bibles and never really know? It's because having eyes they will not see and having ears they will not hear.

[26 : 29] Why? Because they are not living with anticipation. They have not taken the right steps of preparation and therefore they do not receive the revelation. My friend, before I ever came to Christ, I opened up my scripture and I tried to read my Bible and all I found was jumbled up words.

I mean, it didn't make any sense to me but I read them and they still didn't make any sense to me and I read them and I finally got tired of reading things that didn't make sense to me so I put it down. The moment I gave my life over to Jesus Christ, all of a sudden there was this power of surrender where I began to see a revelation and now I open up things to scripture and I'm like, wow, isn't that amazing?

It's like the star is moving across history and I'm just following it. I'm Simeon who walks into the temple and the spirit says, there he is and then I'm Anna who just happens to be passing through the crowd about the time Simeon holds him up and oh, there he is and it's all this revelation.

The sovereign is approachable out of revelation. Why? Because the spirit wants you to approach him and to me that's miraculous.

No one comes to fatherless. He be drawn to the father, right? And that to me, he wants you to run into his presence. You're not waiting on an invitation.

[27 : 41] You already have an invitation. He is calling you into his presence and now we have fourth and finally there's the anticipation, the preparation, the revelation and we can't leave this without seeing this fourth one that is the celebration.

That is the celebration. I don't know if you've noticed it or not but every one of these miraculous events of Christmas ends with some type of celebration, right? Christmas is a celebration. It is to be a celebration of this truth that the sovereign is approachable.

So we have the celebration of Simeon. Simeon grabs him and says, now oh Lord, you're allowing your bondservant to depart in peace. Well he's just saying, I can die right now and I'll be happy.

That's a celebration, right? Lord, just let me die.

I've lived long enough. I see him. Here he is. This is a one month old baby. This is my Savior, my Messiah. This is God in the flesh. Now I can die in peace. Thank you, O Lord, for bringing me here. And then you have Anna who comes in and I love what it says about Anna. She began to proclaim to everyone that would listen and all who were looking for the hope and the consolation of Israel.

[28 : 41] Not just everyone, but to the people who were looking. In the preacher circles, we call that fruit ripe for the picking. There are some people who are searching and Anna said, if you're one of the searchers, I want you to know I have found it, right?

I have found it. If you don't care, if you could care less, then I'm not going to tell you, right? But if you want to know the truth, I have found the truth. Simeon was holding him over there. He's an amazing little fella. I need to tell you about this truth, which I just found.

And she's rejoicing and celebrating. And I just get this picture of advanced aged 84 year old lady dancing in the temple and celebrating. There he is. Simeon, I don't know how old he is, and there he is.

And then the Magi from the east who have traveled for two years and they're there and they come into his presence. When they saw the stars, it says, they began to rejoice with exceeding joy. They didn't just rejoice, they rejoiced with exceeding joy.

I mean, I'm talking like touchdown, celebration, exceeding joy, right? Like just one at all. There it is. And they came into the house where the child was at, and it says, and they fell on their face and worshiped him.

[29 : 42] And they opened up their gifts and their treasures and they presented to him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And they rejoiced in him. Friend, listen to me.

When we understand who it is we walk into the presence of, we cannot help but celebrate. If you can walk into the presence of the sovereign with a downcast face, your lip dragging, and not get a little bit excited, then I think you have sorely missed the point of whose presence you're walking into.

This is not just the one who can fix it all. This is the one who created it all. This is the one who sustains it all and holds it all together in the palm of his hands.

And there is celebration. What a miraculous event. At Christmas, we find the truth that the sovereign is approachable. Not was approachable, past tense, but is approachable, present tense. We have the right to come into his presence. And that right is found in Jesus Christ. We're going to take a moment. We're going to pray. We're going to have a hymn of invitation.

[30 : 57] And this hymn of invitation is important. Every hymn of invitation is important. But this hymn of invitation is important. because now we're going to approach him through the partaking of the Lord's Supper, which Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, which we will look at shortly as we're doing it, we are not to take lightly.

We are going to celebrate his death. We've been rejoicing in his birth. We're going to take time to celebrate his death because his birth is great. His death is our renewal, right?

It is why we can be reborn because without his death, there would be no resurrection, either his nor ours. So in this next few moments, I want you to take this time to think about the reality that you can approach the sovereign of the universe.

Allow him, as you approach him, to search your hearts and minds and see if there will be anything that you need to confess, anything you need to repent of, so that you may be prepared to partake of the Lord's Supper. Let's pray together. Lord, I thank you so much.

We rejoice in these miraculous truths which we have seen. God, we thank you for the opportunity we have to gather together as a church body to celebrate and to proclaim the truth.

[32 : 01] Lord, as we come into your presence, we realize we can come boldly through the blood of the Lamb. And Lord, what a privilege that is. Oh God, here we are.

Search us. Try us and know us. Help us to know ourselves in your presence so that as we meet you in the next few moments, it would be for your glory and honor, not just for our routine or habit.

We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[33 : 58] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.