

UNWRAPPING CHRISTMAS

WISE GUYS.

The Son of God and Savior of humanity enters the world - and who comes to worship Him?

First, a ragtag group of smelly shepherds.

Second, a few elderly people in the temple.

And finally, a group of foreign astronomers, often times referred to as the "wise men."

The hope of these wise men was not in Jesus. Their hope was in the stars. Their hope was in their own intelligence. They weren't raised in the traditions, promises, or stories of the Old Testament. They certainly weren't the most righteous or holy.

They simply knew to worship this baby.

There's hope for us too.

Even if you come to Christmas ragged, smelly, and hoping in other things. Even if you come to Christmas with an addiction you can't shake, an idol you keep going back to, or a grudge you're struggling to let go of. Even if you come to Christmas with very little knowledge, a horrible track record of time in your Bible, or a faith that feels flat - there is hope because **God wants you.**

He wants you to be a part of His story. He invites you to the stable. He welcomes you to experience and worship your King.

IN THE BIBLE.

Matthew 2:1-2

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi 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."

Matthew 2:9-11

9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. 11 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.

Isaiah 45:23

'As surely as I live,' says the Lord,
'every knee will bow before me;
every tongue will acknowledge God.'

John 3:16-17

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

QUESTIONS.

1. What are some things we can we learn from the wise men and their experience?
2. Has anything ever made you feel like you weren't welcome or allowed to worship Jesus in the manger? What was it?
3. What can we do to make sure people know they are welcome at the manger this holiday season?

Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?