

“Let Us Adore Him!”

Select Passages from Matthew 2 and Luke 2

Intro. – The great artist, Rembrandt painted a picture of the nativity scene. In this portrait, Rembrandt focuses the examiner’s eye solely on the Babe in the manger. He did this by painting a shaft of light so that it falls exclusively on the Christ-child. Now, other figures are included, but they are shrouded in the shadows. Obviously, Rembrandt wanted nothing to “upstage” the main figure. Now upstaging can be good (e.g. Jesse Owens in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, Germany...). But, anytime the Lord is “upstaged” something has gone terribly amiss.

How about you and me? Do we permit anything or anyone to upstage Jesus Christ? Years ago an interesting sign was seen hanging in a store window during the Christmas season. The message said, “Let’s make this the best Christmas yet!” Underneath, some perceptive person had penned a great response. It said: “How will we top the first one?!”

It would be wise on our part to not permit anything or anyone to “upstage” the Lord’s presence in our lives. Certainly, even at His birth into this world, Jesus was adored and recognized as to Whom He was and what He had come to do. In turn, do we understand this? Do we recognize why this Christ-child was adored and do we adore Him in turn?

Purpose: to look at four groups &/or individuals who give us reason as to why we too must adore Him

I THE SHEPHERDS ADORED HIM (Luke 2:20)

A. An Angel Appears

1. Of all people to have been selected to receive this message... shepherds probably most unlikely...
2. Shepherds had reputation of being a wandering lot who couldn’t be trusted...
3. Because they didn’t “count” for much at all, may be very reason chosen – simple, everyday people
4. Shepherds at home amongst animals – much more so than that of a palace...
5. To such a group “an angel” came informing/announcing the birth of Jesus = divine announcement!

B. Multitudes Appear

1. Heavenly host = angels, who in heaven having been associated with Christ, knowing His glory, riches, and majesty... AND knowing now the laying aside of these to provide redemption!
2. In awe = this heavenly host gives glory to God – all in full view of the shepherds!

C. They Appear

1. Shepherds told to *go and see* – they go and see the very things just announced divine fashion...
2. Shepherds told to *go and tell* – (vv17-18) make clear this was something they did no hesitating...
3. Returned to their flocks, changed never again to be the same – they saw... they went... told!...

Note with me – the shepherds *adored* Him!!

II SIMEON ADORED HIM (Luke 2:25-35)

- name means “one who hears and obeys”

A. A Man of Prediction

1. Holy Spirit revealed Simeon would not see death until he saw the Christ...
2. Being *devout and righteous*, Simeon looked for *the consolation of Israel.*”
3. In the midst of darkness, despair (loss political independence, cruel King Herod, legalistic scribes and Pharisees...) looked toward the promised One Who would change darkness into light!

B. A Man of Prayer

1. As held child in hands – prayer thanks for salvation personified in person of Jesus!
2. Simeon yields to God, who in fulfillment of His promise, permitted Simeon not only see and touch but also to *hold* Him!

3. Peace was never realized more in Simeon's life – here held hope his people and for rest of world!
4. What Simeon experienced that day will be the thrill Xtians will experience when witness X return! Simeon adored Him! Please, make no mistake about it!

III ANNA ADORED HIM (Luke 2:36-38)

- yet another figure recorded to have added further word of welcome to Christ's coming:

A. A Woman of Experience

1. Mean this in the best of senses – her very name means *grace*.
2. Prophetess – one used by God to herald the coming Messiah – eyewitness to what herald...
3. She was widowed at a young age and was now *advanced in years* – married young (7 years then husband died) had been widowed 84 years or was at present 84 years old...
4. Either way, she was a woman of vast experience.

B. A Woman of Service

1. At the right "moment" (i.e. not an accident or happenstance...) came face to face with Messiah!
2. Filled with awe, she returns praise and thanks and then goes and tells all He has come!

What patience and prayerful anticipation does Anna demonstrate! She too adored Him!

IV THE WISE MEN ADORED HIM (Matthew 2:1-12)

- what an account – king defeated by a baby, a throne overthrown by a manger, power drained by weakness, craftiness outsmarted by innocence and ambition destroyed by selflessness.

A. Men Who Followed

- star was followed – detail concerning which is purposefully left out to emphasize the WHY came..

B. Men Who Worshipped

1. Whoever they were, wherever they came and who knows how many there were... they came to **WORSHIP CHRIST!**
2. Excellent text to show primary matter of worship is *GIVING*... point: came prepared to worship!

C. Men Who Listened

1. Contrast is so evident:
 - a. Herod had babies slaughtered but Jesus came as a baby to grow to manhood to SAVE!
 - b. Herod: "You die so I can live..." Jesus: "I'll die so you can live..."
 - c. Herod was grasping... always taking... – Jesus was caring... always giving...
2. Wise men then and now know which One to bow.
3. God said to the wise men "do this..." and the wise men did as God instructed

The wise men adored Him!

Conclusion: A little girl needed surgery. She, understandably was nervous at the prospects of this. To encourage a better attitude, her parents promised her something she had asked for a long time – her own kitten. The surgery went well, but as the anesthesia was wearing off, the little girl was heard to have said, "This sure is a lousy way to get a cat!"

As the world celebrates "Christmas"... I can't help but think "This sure is a lousy way to show thanks!"

Think with me the ramifications behind the fact that God came in Person – baby Jesus, Master Teacher, crucified Lamb, risen/returning King... And truly He shall reign forever and ever...

We've looked at four groups of people. How wonderfully they illustrate there is but one fitting response to celebrate the birth of Jesus...

O, COME LET US ADORE HIM!!