

CHRISTMAS IS A TIME OF SEEKING

*Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came 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."*

Matthew 2:1-2

*When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.*

Luke 2:15-16

*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. ... For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

Isaiah 9:2,6 (NIV)

Seeking In All The Wrong Places:

1. The world seeks for fulfillment in WEALTH.

*The rich man's wealth is his strong city; but the poverty of the poor is their ruin.*

Proverbs 10:15

*Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.*

1 Timothy 6:17 (NIV)

2. The world seeks hope in POWER and INFLUENCE.

*Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save.*

Psalms 146:3 (NIV)

*This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the Lord."*

Jeremiah 17:5 (NIV)

3. We seek fulfillment in EDUCATION.

*The wise men shall be put to shame; they shall be dismayed and taken; behold, they have rejected the Word of the Lord, so what wisdom is that?*

Jeremiah 8:9

*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?*

1 Corinthians 1:18-20 (NIV)

4. We seek hope in RELIGION.

*Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting 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.*

Luke 2:25-26

*There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.*

Luke 2:36-38 (NIV)

Seeking This Christmas...

1. We must understand our NEED.

*There is no one righteous, not even one...*

Romans 3:10 (NIV)

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...*

Romans 3:23 (NIV)

2. We must understand His WORTH.

*And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts...*

Matthew 2:11

*"The kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."*

Matthew 13:44-46 (NIV)

3. Seek and you will FIND.

*God did this so that they would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from any one of us.*

Acts 17:27 (NIV)

*You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*

Jeremiah 29:13

The So What...

- 1) Am I seeking hope and fulfillment in the wrong places?
- 2) Do I truly understand my need for Christ and His worth?
- 3) Am I helping others who are seeking, find Jesus?

Closing Truth:

*Oh God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.*

Psalm 63:1