

DECORATING THIS CHRISTMAS?

Matthew 2:1-12; John 1:9-18

“I believe...Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary...” **Apostles Creed**

“When we were children we were grateful to those who filled our stockings at Christmas time. Why are we not grateful to God for filling our stockings with legs?” **G. K. Chesterton** (My favorite ‘Christmas quote’- John Brown)

“God became man to turn creatures into sons; not simply to produce better men of the old kind but to produce a new kind of man.” **C. S. Lewis**

“He took the form of a servant while He retained the form of God! It is exactly that which makes our salvation possible and achieves it.” **William Hendrikson**

“The hinge of history is on the door of a Bethlehem stable.” **Ralp W. Sockman**

2 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ²“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.” ³When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet: ⁶‘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.’”

⁷Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared. ⁸And 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.” ⁹After 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. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹After coming into the house they saw the

Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned *by God* in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way. **Matthew 2:1-12 NASB**

“In spirit I go with the Wise Men and the shepherds to look and wonder. I see a baby that looks much like any other baby. No halo, no beautiful smile (newborn babies do not smile). No frills or talcum powder either. Just a baby in the swaddling clothes of a peasant. I fall down with the Wise Men and worship. I worship not only because I am in the presence of God but because I am beginning for the first time to see what God is like. And I am overwhelmed. I want to turn my head away for I am appalled at his humiliation. And yet I want to look, for I am glad with all my heart that He has done it. He has become one of us. He has not despised the virgin’s womb. He has been born of a woman, made under the Law. He has come to live among us, to suffer and to die. So I worship. And with my cracked voice, as well as I can, I sing with the heavenly host who adore Him: Glory to God in the highest. Oh, comes let us adore Him, Christ the Lord. *Jesus, my mind recoils from the facts of your coming into such demeaned human circumstances. But my heart swells with joy at what that coming meant. Thanks be to you, glorious Lord Christ. Amen*” **John White**

⁹ There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

The Word Made Flesh

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’” ¹⁶ For of His fullness we

have all received, and grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*. **John 1:9-10 NASB**

“What is Christmas? It is a tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future.” ***Agnes M Pharo***

- The wise interior decorator at Christmas.