



Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



Episode 019: Who Are These Guys?

Matthew 2:1-12

Two-Liner: Who were the wise men and why did they gather their gifts and travel afar to worship the young King of the Jews? Why did King Herod gather his soldiers to ride to Bethlehem with a gift of their own?

Discussion Page: The birth of Jesus was revealed to a relatively small number of people, but the way they responded to that news made a huge impact on many others.

Some of these witnesses had very little influence over the people around them such as the poor Jewish shepherds watching over their flocks at night, or a man named Simeon, or an elderly woman named Anna worshipping at the temple. But some were people of great influence and power, particularly the wise men from the East and a king named Herod the Great.

The wise men traveled many miles from their country to bow in worship before the young King and offer their gifts, while King Herod sent His soldiers to destroy Him and left something like a dozen families grieving the senseless slaughter of their young sons in Bethlehem.

Even today people have extreme reactions to Jesus Christ.

- What are some different ways you see people respond to Him?
- When have you found it difficult to bow down to His rule in your own life?
- How would you witness to a friend or family member who refuses to bow down to Him today?

Matthew shows us King Herod's influence when he writes, "When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him" (Matthew 2:3).

Though the shepherds and Simeon and Anna may not have had the far-reaching influence of Herod or the wise men, they spread the word about the Christ child to their families, friends, and acquaintances.

- Discuss some people with whom you have great influence.
- Describe the way the Holy Spirit can use our social networks to spread the good news of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection around the world.
- What are some different ways you can effectively witness to those with whom you have influence?

(Order Dr. Paul Maier's book, "The First Christmas" here: http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=3304X&kw=3304X&event=PPCSRC&p=1010575&cm_mmc=Idearc--osmx--Academic--3304x)