

MENDING Christmas

Where there is Pride and Self-rule

Matthew 2:1-12

1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem 2 and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." 3 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. 5 "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: 6 "'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'" 7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. 8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." 9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east 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 and of incense and of myrrh. 12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Some historical perspective

1. The Parthian Empire (where the magi probably came from) and the Roman Empire were both well established "superpower" _____ at that time.
2. Consequently, when the magi caravan arrived in Jerusalem, Herod dared not create an international _____ and risk a border _____ with the Parthian Empire.

3. Herod was never accepted as the true king of Israel because he was not of _____ descent.

Some practical applications

1. There is a Herod-spirit within each of us that refuses to give up _____ and insists on protecting our _____.
2. Like the wise men, unless I can get past "Herod" I will never be able to discover the _____ of _____.

This morning's "takeaways"

- In what areas of my life am I protecting my own throne, insisting on remaining in control?
- Am I willing to confess my selfishness, my pride, and my arrogance and ask the Lord's forgiveness?
- Do I need to go to a family member, a friend, or someone in my church and ask them to forgive me for my stubborn attitude?