
**Study Questions for the December 5, 2021 Sermon:
“Reclaiming Christmas: Peace”
Matthew 2:1-18, Micah 5:2-5**

1. What is symbolized by the act of baptism? (Some reference verses are: 1 Peter 3:21, Acts 2:38, 1 Corinthians 12:13, & Galatians 3:27)
2. Pastor Paul said that the Hebrew word for “Peace” – Shalom, refers to a more profound state of peace than just the absence of conflict. Philippians 4:7 refers to ... *the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding*. If you have ever experienced that Shalom peace during a time when the external circumstances of your life were far from peaceful, share your story.
3. Pastor Paul said that the most effective missionaries did not have charismatic personalities, nor extensive financial resources. Name a character like this in the:
 - a. Old Testament.
 - b. New Testament.
4. Micah, Chapter 2, prophesizes that the coming Messiah will be someone ... *Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting*. What other scriptures indicate that Jesus had a pre-incarnate existence?
5. Colossians 1:20 states ... *and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross*. Is this verse consistent with the many references by Jesus to a coming time of eternal separation, not reconciliation (wheat vs chaff, sheep vs goats, gold & silver vs wood & hay.)?
6. Matthew 2: 1 & 2, tells of wise men from the east (probably Babylon) who are looking for the king of the Jews. Why would gentiles from Babylon know about Hebrew prophecies, and take them seriously?
7. In Matthew 2:11, the wise men offer Jesus their treasures. What was some treasured object, relationship, or behavior that you offered up to Jesus?
8. Homework check: There were 3 assignments: 1) Seek Jesus and worship him. 2) Live in the peace Jesus provides, not 1 foot in the kingdom, 1 foot in the world. 3) Make sure we share the peace of God. If you carried any of these out, share your story.

9. In Matthew Chapter 2, “We see here three different responses to Jesus:
- Herod displayed an open hatred and hostility toward Jesus.
 - The chief priests and the scribes were indifferent toward Jesus.
 - The wise men sought out Jesus and worshipped Him” (From the David Guzik commentary.)

How did your feelings about Jesus change after he saved you?