

Suspicious Worshippers

The Gospel According to Matthew. The Path of Feigned Worship. Message Magazine's Online Devotional for Tuesday, November 27, 2018

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"Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you find Him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship Him." After they were gone, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Get up! Take the child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For Herod is about to search for the child to destroy Him"" (Matthew 2:7-8, 13, HCSB).

Wily Worshipers

Worship is not a joke! We were born to worship. Unfortunately, some worship self, money, unholy pleasures, sexual habits, entertainment, people, false gods, and the status quo. Some who claim to worship God, really are antagonistic to all that is godly and are displaying "... a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Timothy 3:5).

Today's theme passage chronicles an example of what lies, deceit, and hatred produces in those who claim to worship God. We all have heard the story during the holiday season. Herod felt threatened by baby King Jesus, feigned worship, and sought to kill Him instead. Is there any principle we can learn from this story?

While none of us are probably insecure monarchs who feel our thrones are threatened or are willing to commit mass murder to protect our legacies, some of us fear our pride will be dismantled by God, so we keep up appearances like we are true worshippers, but we really are not. In fact some of us have actually experienced the power and presence of God, but turned away from Him; and by virtue of that fact, "...seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." (Hebrews 6:6). Pretending to worship God, but living in un-repentance is just like crucifying Jesus.

Hope for Prideful Pretenders

Yes, stories like Herod's are interesting, and even may provide information for our understanding, but we must adapt them so we can apply godly principles to our lives. Among the many principles we can apply from the story, one bubbles up to the surface: false worship or pretend worship of God leads to a host of atrocities. Therefore, it is our privilege to get to know our Creator and not give in to pride, fear, or self righteousness. We can commit to asking God daily to introduce His beauty and character to us, so love, power and trust will result. Remember, it's a daily journey, and God is with you every step of the way.

This has been the gospel according to Matthew. Be transformed by it.