

## Christmas – Week 4 – Pastor Bill

1. How do lights impact your life?
2. How do lights impact your Christmas?

*Matthew 2:1-12 - Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, <sup>2</sup> “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.” <sup>3</sup> King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup> He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?” <sup>5</sup> “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they said, “for this is what the prophet wrote: <sup>6</sup> ‘And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.’” <sup>7</sup> Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. <sup>8</sup> Then he told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!” <sup>9</sup> After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! <sup>11</sup> They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.*

3. How did God send His Light to the magi? How did He send His light to Herod?
4. What’s different about how the magi and Herod responded to the light they were given?
5. How has God sent His light to you?
6. Herod was raised a Jew and ruled for Rome over the Jews, the magi were most likely Persian Astrologers. Rome and Persia were at war from about 54 BC – 628 AD. How do you think Herod felt having his enemies travel into his territory to worship a child born ‘King of the Jews’?
7. Both Herod and the magi were far from God, but both responded differently to His Light. When have you been far from God?
8. How have you responded differently to God’s Light throughout your life?
9. How does God use others to shine His Light in our lives?
10. God shines His Light for all (Romans 1:20), but we have a choice how to respond. What was Herod’s initial response to the Light? (Matthew 2:3)
11. What was the magi’s response to the light? (Matthew 2:2, 10)
12. What feelings have you experienced in response to God’s Light?
13. Pastor Bill mentioned that we cannot control our initial emotions, but we can control how we respond to them. How have you experienced this in your life?
14. How have you seen the Light of Jesus this Christmas season?
15. How can you shine the Light of Jesus this Christmas season?
16. What do you think God would have you do in response to His Light this Christmas?
17. What can you do to shine the Light of Jesus this week to your neighbors? To your family? To your coworkers?