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The Promised One
A year through the Bible
The Shepherds and the Wisemen
The upside-down view of what's most important to develop in us.
June 25th, 2023

Production Notes:
Text in green goes on the screen.

This week:
The Shepherds and the Wisemen
The upside-down view of what's most important to develop in us.

Some people think the most important thing to develop in their kids is discipline. Others think it's athletic prowess. Other still think it's intellect. Some others believe it's leadership skills. These are all good... but you can have all these and still miss what's most important.

Opening Idea: Let me begin with a big idea.

Humility is the light that shows the way.
Pride is the blight that causes us to stray.

Have you ever had an “only God” can fix it moment? Years ago, Leslie and I were in a tight financial situation. As young poor pastors I remember her praying for God to make a way. I wasn't going to be able to pay our bills without a miracle.

What is your “only God” can do it thing? Maybe it's financial, medical, relational, or emotional?

To the Text:
The Shepherds
Luke 2:8–16 (ESV)

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016.

- These shepherds were enveloped by the presence of God and told the greatest of news for humanity. God is going to fix what only He can fix.
 - The glory of the Lord shone around them: The bright light that surrounds the presence of God himself, at times appearing as a cloud, a bright light or a burning fire (cf. Ex. 16:10; 24:17; 40:34; Ezek. 1:28; Rev. 21:23).²
 - I bring you good news: is Greek *euangelizomai*, the verbal form of “gospel.” great joy. Cf. 1:14.³
 - The idea here is to be totally captivated. I have a few memories of times like this. Leslie walking down the aisle at our wedding. I went from very aware of the crowd to completely forgetting anyone else was there.
- This begs the question. Why would God choose these people to tell something so important?
- Well-intentioned Christians may believe what makes the poor shepherds important to God was their poverty.
- The road to heaven is paved with humility. Ego and pride lead to depravity.
- Humility is the light that shows the way. Pride is the blight that causes us to stray.

Matthew 2:1–2 (ESV)

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”⁴

- On the other side of the “world” was a group of very wealthy, important scholars and spiritual gurus called Magi. God also chose to reveal Jesus to them.
- Well-intentioned Christians may believe what made the famous wealthy Magi important to God was their influence.
- Humility is the light that shows the way. Pride is the blight that causes us to stray.

Final Thoughts:

Some people think the most important thing to develop in their kids is discipline. Others think it’s athletic prowess. Other still think it’s intellect. Some others believe it’s leadership skills. These are all good... but you can have all these and still miss what’s most important.

² Crossway Bibles, [The ESV Study Bible](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1948.

³ Crossway Bibles, [The ESV Study Bible](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1948.

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016.

If you raise a brilliant leader who is fit and highly disciplined and miss developing humility and submission to God, you miss everything.

- Hosea 6:6 (ESV) For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. ⁵
- Psalm 149:4 (ESV) For the Lord takes pleasure in his people; he adorns the humble with salvation. ⁶

What God desires is a heart that knows it desperately needs him.

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Pride is the blight that causes us to stray.

⁵ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016.

⁶ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016.