**2024 12 15 NOTES Jon Farrimond Christmas Message**

**Four reactions to the coming of Christ**

The Christmas account is one we all know so well but what is your reaction to the Christmas message?

We will consider 4 reactions to Christ’s incarnation and apply that to our own lives.

**Herod the God hater not God fearer**

Matthew 2:3: “When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him”

⁃  Why was Herod troubled?  Was it his desire to retain power, or more an uneasy conscience?

⁃  He seemed to be familiar with the biblical prophecy of a coming Messiah, whose place of birth was even foretold (Matt 2:6)

⁃  Herod should have been humbled but instead he had evil intentions against Christ

⁃  So keen was he to hold onto his current life that he did all he could to erase the Saviour from the face of the earth

Matthew 2:16 - he slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under”

**Application**

⁃   People today are openly antagonistic to the Bible, to God.

⁃   **Why?** Because like Herod, if there is a God, they would have to consider him, consider their own ways, and feel their shame and guilt.

-  **Be careful** – you may not be like this now, but sin has a corrupting influence and can sour and decay character over time.

**The people wondered but went no further**

Luke 2:18. “And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds”

⁃  The events surrounding Christ’s appearance were truly marvellous

⁃  The Messiah born in their time, announce by angels

⁃  That he should be born in a stable and not in a palace, and news of it to poor shepherds and not to the chief priests.

⁃  The people ‘wondered’ .  That’s a start but we fear they never enquired any further about the Saviour, their duty to him, or advantages by him

⁃   Why?  Perhaps too careless to truly consider what this all meant,

**Application**

⁃  Many people like the traditions of Christmas - carols, attending services, the nativity, Christmas cards, but has the message ever penetrated their heart?

⁃  There may be a sense of wonder, fascination, but nothing more

⁃  We need to take hold of the gospel, recognise we’re helpless sinners, understand Christ died for you personally, and rest wholly in his precious work on Calvary

**Mary pondered**

Luke 2:19 “Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart”

⁃  Mary was a woman of deep thought.

⁃  Mary was also a godly woman, a chaste virgin and woman of prayer

⁃  We don’t know the precise time of Mary’s conversion, but her deep thinking has caused her to consider her ways and trust in the Saviour for eternal salvation

**Application**

⁃  Are we deep thinkers?

⁃  We have many distractions these days – phones, social media, music, sport

⁃  We would encourage you to think deeply on spiritual things

⁃  For any who are seriously thinking – ask, seek, knock – you will find the Lord

**The Shepherds made haste and glorified God**

Luke 2:20 “And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them”

-  The shepherds came with haste – no time to waste!

⁃   Made sayings known – as when we have good news, they wanted all to hear the good news the Saviour of mankind being born

⁃   Their praising God was an evidence of their salvation

**Application**

-  If we know truth, why are we sat on the sidelines?

-  Be as shepherds, come with haste.  Today is the day of salvation

-  And if you do, you will see the evidence of conversion – will want to make Christ’s sayings known and tell all, and hymns will no longer be dreary to you, you will have a great desire to praise and thank the eternal God for all he has done for you.