

**THEME: DISCIPLESHIP**

**As we Gather**

This week we read two accounts of how people relate to Jesus.

Before discussion, reread both readings and identify / list the actors / elements in each story.

**Reading Scripture      MATTHEW 2 : 1 - 22 and 21 : 33 - 44**

**Thinking together**

In chapter 2:1-12, Matthew writes of the visit of the wise men (Magi) to Israel, as the culmination of his record of Jesus' background and credentials as the anointed one – Messiah.

The Magi were a group of wealthy Gentile scholars / philosophers/ priests/ scientists/ astrologers , thought to perform for the Persians very similar functions to those performed by the tribe of Levi (prophets / priests/teachers of the Law) for the Jews.

These men undertook an arduous and long journey in order to worship the one coming from Judea whom they believed would rule the world.

**What in your opinion, made the wise men behave the way they did? Discuss**

**How did Herod hear about Jesus, and what do you think he felt about this event? Discuss**

**How did the religious leaders react? Discuss**

**How did you first hear (learn about) the story of Jesus, and what was your response?  
Discuss**

**What do you think the Magi's emotions were when they found Jesus? Discuss**

**How did you feel when you first 'found' Jesus? Discuss**

Finding Jesus may mean that your life must take a different direction in obedience to God's word (Matthew 1:12).

**Are you willing to risk being different? Discuss**

In chapter 21:33-44 Matthew records how Jesus revealed the sins (v38ff) of Israel (v33), explained why the religious leaders (v34) rejected God's (v33) prophets (vv35-36), and also rejected Him (vv37-39) and His message (vv40-44) [see also Hebrews 1:2 and 13:12-13].

It is clear from this story that if we reject God's gracious gift of His Son, we reject God.

**What does this parable tell us**

- **about God? Discuss**
- **about human beings / human nature? Discuss**
- **about Jesus? Discuss**
- **about the church? Discuss**

- about the end of the age? Discuss  
[ see also Isaiah 5:1-7 Deuteronomy 32:3-4 & 18 Psalm 18:1-3 & 31  
Romans 9:30-33 1 Corinthians 1:22-24 Ephesians 2:20-22  
1Peter 2:4-8 Daniel 1:31-35 & 44-45a ]

## **In Closing**

Jesus is the foundation on which all of life is built and the corner stone which holds together everything meaningful in life.

To refuse His way is to reject the laws of God, and to defy Him leads to a purposeless and meaningless life and ultimate spiritual destruction.

**How do you relate to Jesus?**

**Why do you worship God?**