

The Role of Invitation in our Approach to Jesus **Luke 2:8-20; Matthew 2:1-12**

This Advent Sermon Series, “O Come Let Us Adore Him” has been all about how we ought to approach Jesus in light of who He is & all He has done!

The acronym P.R.A.I.S.E. has been used to reveal this proper response.

- P – Presence Jesus wants our presence more than our presents!
- R – Reverence A posture of reverence is our proper approach!
- A – Abundant Abundant praise/singing is our proper response!
- **I – Invitation** When we approach Jesus, we should bring others with us!

Again, in light who Jesus is, and what He has done for you, if you had the opportunity to enter into His presence, wouldn't you want to bring as many other people along with you as possible?

I understand that inviting people to things can be tricky. Who should you invite, how should you invite them, when should you invite them, to where should you invite them? A few examples...

Now consider the invitation that God gave for people to come to the manger.

- He gave 300 + prophecies pointing people to the coming of the Savior
- He put a star in the eastern sky that led the wisemen to Jesus
- He sent an angel to proclaim the good news to the shepherds
- He made visible the presence of the heavenly hosts at Jesus' advent

What was the response to these invitations from God to come to the manger?

Many missed it, others ignored it, some came, and some tried to stop it!

Much can be said about those who did not accept the invitations, but I want to focus on the ones who did! I wonder about the process that led them there.

- Of the wisemen who came, did they all realize the significance of the star together, **or did it start with one person, who told another...?**
- On their journey to the manger did they invite others to join them?
- And the shepherds, did they all respond the same way?
- And who did they tell, and what was their response?

Did doubts, fears, embarrassment ever cause them to withhold inviting others to join them as they went to worship Jesus?

Consider what their invitation would have looked like/sounded like!

- We invite you to come with us to worship a child king born in a manger!
- Come and bow down with us before this new king, even though another king is on the throne! **This would have been very risky!**
- Come, follow a star with us, to a foreign place and bring gifts!
- Come, we saw an angel, then a lot of angels, there's a new king and no one knows about it but us!

Or consider that **the invitation would have come after 400 years of silence from God!** This is how much time had passed since God's last spoken word!

An invitation to see Immanuel, God with us, would have been a tough sell!

Put yourself in their shoes, if you were the one invited by the shepherds or the wisemen to go with them, how would you have responded?

I think that we sometimes forget that this same reality applies today when we invite others to go to church with us to worship God.

- **We're asking people to come & worship a king that doesn't fit the mold!**
- **We're asking people to come and worship a king that is not their own!**
- **We're asking people to come, sometimes at great risk to themselves!**
- **We're asking people to come, because God has supposedly saved us!**
- **We're asking people to come when so many feel abandoned by God!**

This can be a hard invite, but it's not our job to make them accept it, **our job is simply to invite them and trust God with the outcome.**

I wish I knew all the details behind how it all played out back then, & how invitation played a part in those who came to encounter Jesus in His advent!

But all I really need to know is that part of praising God/worshipping Him is inviting others to join me in this pursuit!

Westminster Confession Larger Catechism Q & A # 1 – “What is the chief & highest end of man? To glorify God and to fully enjoy Him forever!”

John Piper – “We glorify God by enjoying Him forever”.

“God is most glorified when we are most satisfied in Him.”

That which we enjoy most, what we are most satisfied in, we will proclaim to others, and long to have them come to enjoy and be satisfied in it as well!

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