

# FIELD GUIDE

## THE SEARCH FOR THE KING

5 Days from Apathy to Awe



# Day 1: Comfort vs. The King

**Scripture:** "Behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is he who has been born King of the Jews?... we have come to worship him.'" — **Matthew 2:1-2**

**The Thought:** There is a jarring contrast in the Christmas story that we often overlook. On one hand, you have the Magi—pagan astronomers from a faraway land (likely Persia)—who pack up their lives, face the dangers of "the wild west," and travel for months just to catch a glimpse of the King.

On the other hand, you have the religious leaders in Jerusalem. They had the scrolls, they knew the prophecies, and they were only six miles away from Bethlehem. Yet, when the Messiah arrived, they didn't budge. They were comfortable. They were busy.

It's a picture that challenges us today. We have statistics showing that out of 16 million members in the SBC, only 6 million show up on a Sunday. Why? Because often, our worship is dictated by convenience. If it rains, we stay home. If the bed feels too good, we sleep in. If the NFL game is on, Jesus has to compete for our attention.

The Magi didn't let distance, danger, or inconvenience stop them. The question is: why do we let a little rain or a busy schedule stop us?

**The Challenge:** Identify one "convenience" that typically stops you from seeking Jesus (e.g., hitting snooze, checking social media first, skipping church because you're tired). Commit to breaking that habit this week to prioritize worship.

**Prayer:** Father, forgive me for the times I have chosen comfort over Christ. Thank You that You are worth the journey. Give me the resolve of the Magi to seek You regardless of the obstacles or the weather. Amen.



## Day 2: The "Add-On" Jesus

**Scripture:** "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." — **Matthew 6:33**

**The Thought:** We live in a culture of "add-ons." We add guacamole to our burrito; we add a sports package to our cable; we add appointments to our calendar. Too often, we treat Jesus the same way. We view Him as a nice addition to our already full lives—something we fit in if we have the time.

But the sermon reminded us of a hard truth: Jesus doesn't want to compete with your hobbies, your job, or even your kids. He isn't a slice of the pie; He is the pie.

When we treat Jesus as an add-on, we start negotiating our worship. "I'll go to church... if I get enough sleep." "I'll read my Bible... after I check the news." But the Wise Men didn't negotiate. They prioritized. If you are only seeking God when it fits into your schedule, you aren't seeking Him; you're just tipping your hat to Him.

**The Challenge:** Look at your calendar or your bank statement. What do these two things say is the "first" priority in your life? Does your time and money reflect that Jesus is King, or that He is just a consultant?

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to stop treating You like a hobby or a weekend activity. You are the King of Kings. Help me to center my life around You, rather than trying to squeeze You into the margins of my life. Amen.



## Day 3: Happiness vs. Joy

**Scripture:** "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds..." — James 1:2

**The Thought:** We are obsessed with happiness, but happiness is a "fool's game" because it is entirely situational.

Think about fishing. You can be out on the water for hours, hot and miserable, convinced it's the worst trip ever. Then, bam—you hook a 40-inch Redfish. Suddenly, it's the best day of your life. One fish changed your entire mood. That is happiness: fragile and fleeting.

The Magi didn't travel for happiness; they traveled for worship. Happiness depends on what happens to you; Joy depends on who lives in you. The world offers temporary highs that fade as fast as a "Mission Sent" fishing trip without a bite. But Jesus offers Joy—a deep, settled hope that knows, "Even if the fish aren't biting, and even if life is hard, my future is secure with the King."

**The Challenge:** Are you relying on your circumstances (your job, your spouse, your kids' behavior) to make you happy today? Catch yourself when your mood shifts based on external things, and remind yourself: "My joy is built on something better than this."

**Prayer:** God, save me from the roller coaster of worldly happiness. Thank You that true Joy doesn't depend on a good fishing trip or a perfect day. Anchor my heart in the hope of eternity with You. Amen.



## Day 4: Hide and Seek

**Scripture:** "You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart." — **Jeremiah 29:13**

**The Thought:** Remember playing hide-and-seek with your kids? Sometimes, as a parent, you count to ten, the kids run off, and you... just sit on the couch. You enjoy the quiet. You aren't actually looking for them.

The problem is, that's how many of us "seek" God. We say we want to find Him, but we're looking in all the wrong places. We look for Him in Netflix, in podcasts, in politics, or in our careers. It's like playing hide-and-seek in your house but walking next door to the neighbor's house to look for your kids. You'll never find them there because they aren't there!

God promises that He will be found, but the condition is that we must seek Him with all our heart. You have to get off the spiritual couch. You have to open the Word. You have to pursue Him in prayer.

**The Challenge:** Do a "media audit" today. How much content did you consume that had nothing to do with Jesus? Replace 15 minutes of scrolling or TV time with active seeking—prayer or reading Scripture.

**Prayer:** Father, I confess that sometimes I am lazy in my relationship with You. I want You to show up, but I'm not willing to look. Ignite a fire in me to seek You with all my heart, knowing that You are not hiding from me, but waiting for me. Amen.



## Day 5: Don't Hoard the Cure

**Scripture:** "How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in whom they have never heard?" — Romans 10:14

**The Thought:** Imagine if you had the cure for cancer in your pocket, but you decided to keep it to yourself because you were too shy or "didn't want to intrude." We would call that criminal.

Yet, we look around at a world that is scared. People are terrified of the future, worried about AI taking jobs, stressed about the economy, and feeling hopeless. We have the cure. We have the solution to the human condition—the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And often, we just smile and wave at our neighbors as we pull into the driveway.

The Magi asked, "Where is He?" The world is asking the same thing. They are looking for hope. If we are seeking Jesus, we naturally become a threat to the enemy because we start showing others where the King is. Don't hoard the hope.

**The Challenge:** Who is one person in your life—a coworker, a neighbor, a family member—who needs the "cure"? You don't have to preach a sermon. Just invite them to dinner. Open a conversation. Be willing to share where your Hope comes from.

**Prayer:** Lord, give me boldness. Help me to see the people around me not just as faces, but as souls searching for a King. Use me to point them to You. Don't let me keep the Good News to myself. Amen.