



"...stop and consider the wondrous works of God." - Job 37:14



There may be some of you who, today, the day after Christmas, have plans to tear down your Christmas decorations.

If not today, over the next few days, I'm sure.

You had so much anticipation for this Christmas season.

Once Thanksgiving lunch or dinner was over, you immediately shifted into Christmas gear! You were THAT person in your neighborhood who by Thanksgiving night you had all your Christmas decorations up and the Christmas lights shining. There may be some of you who had all your Christmas decorations up BEFORE Thanksgiving this year!

But now.... all the lights are out, the decorations are being shoved back into their boxes, and Christmas is officially an afterthought...



Do you realize that we are entering into what psychologists and psychiatrists consider to be the most depressing time of year?

Post-Christmas is the most depressing time of year: December 26 - January 31.

In fact, January 19 is called Blue Monday and is officially the most depressing day of the year.

It's right around the corner, so prepare yourselves.

How is this possible?

How is it that in such a short amount of time, we've already lost sight of the joy of Christmas?

In Matthew 2, we have what is would be considered a "post-Christmas" event—the arrival of the wise men, and I believe their story can help us understand how it's so easy for us to lose sight of the joy of Christmas, but also how to get it back!



You see, their journey was **LONG**.

We don't know for certain where these wise men came from. But what we do know is that the journey took some time. Some scholars believe that it took about 4 months, others believe the wise men didn't show up for almost two years after Jesus' birth.

Not only was it a long, exhausting trip but many believe that the wise men didn't have the star guiding them on their journey.

They saw a star, or some cosmic phenomena, recognized it as significant and then headed in that direction...

Their long journey was most likely in the dark—with no supernatural guiding light.

Maybe your journey this year has been long and dark too. It's hard to maintain the joy when life hits hard (loss of a loved one, sickness, divorce, financial struggles, family issues, etc.).

Their journey was filled with **FAILED EXPECTATIONS**.

Being that they were looking for a king, the natural place to find him would be in the capitol city of Jerusalem...

Yet, when they arrived, they didn't find the newborn king.

They didn't find what they expected to find, where they expected to find it...these are failed expectations...

Failed expectations can be disheartening, discouraging, even depressing...

Maybe that's the type of post-Christmas season that you find yourself in...one of failed expectations...



But how did
the wise men
respond?

They **PERSEVERED**.

It didn't matter that their journey was long. It didn't matter that they were exhausted. It didn't matter that their journey was mainly in the dark with no guiding light. It didn't matter that they didn't find what they were looking for where they expected to find it. It didn't matter that no one seemed to know anything about this new king who was announced in such a dramatic and supernatural way...

It didn't matter... They persevered.

And so should we.

James 1:12

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

Galatians 6:9

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

They **BELIEVED IN THE PROMISE**.

"Where is he..." not "Whether there is..." – their question shows no sign of doubt in their faith. They knew that the prophecy had come true. They knew that the baby that was promised through the prophecy had been born.

They believed in the promise.

So often, we fail to remember the promises that God gives to us.

But the Bible is full of SO MANY promises! In fact, the Bible has over 3500 promises that we can trust in...

Here are just a small few...

HEBREWS 13:5 – "I will never leave you or forsake you"

MATTHEW 11:28 – "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

ISAIAH 40:29 – "He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might He increases strength."

PHILIPPIANS 4:19 – "And my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

1 JOHN 1:9 – "If you confess your sins, he is faithful and just to forgive you..."

They wise men
were rewarded for their
faith and perseverance...



Their **JOY WAS RENEWED.**

Matthew 2:10

When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

When they saw the star again, their joy was renewed. Not only was it renewed, but it was overflowing!

When we persevere through our difficulties, we are promised that our joy will also be renewed.

Jeremiah 31:13

...I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

They **FOUND WHAT THEY WERE LOOKING FOR.**

Through their long and exhausting journey, they finally had found the newborn king. Their journey and every difficulty would have been for nothing if they had never found Jesus.

The Bible teaches us a similar lesson. That if we continue to seek God, even through our difficulties, we will find Him.

Jeremiah 29:13

You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

I know the festivities are Christmas are over and that we are entering what is considered the most depressing time of year but hang in there.

Persevere.

Believe in God's promises.

You will be rewarded.

Derrick Marrs
Ministry Director

CAMP TALES



In between Season 1 & 2 of the STOP & Consider Podcast, we are not leaving you stranded!

Today, the first episode of CAMP TALES is LIVE!

Head over to wherever you listen to your podcasts and take a listen. These are shorter episodes, and our first one goes to before the founding of Bancroft!

If you aren't familiar with podcasts or how to listen to them, feel free to simply visit our website and listen from there. Here is the link for your convenience:

www.bancroftgospelministry.org/stopandconsider

If you are into the podcast world, below are the links to your favorite podcast platforms for easy access. Currently, the only podcast that has video is through Spotify, but videos to YouTube are coming in Season 2! Be sure to subscribe, like, and comment!

Apple Podcasts:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/stop-and-consider/id1843097127>

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<https://www.youtube.com/@STOPandConsider>

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<https://iheart.com/podcast/296982721/>

Season 2 of STOP & Consider is coming up soon, so you won't be without us for too long!

Keep an eye out as Season 2 begins Friday, January 9th!



NEW PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

**Help Bancroft Bible Camp
Raise Funds by Taking Your Vehicle to**



For A Great Shine Every Time!
November 15th, 2025 - February 15th, 2026

Purchase any single car wash to help Bancroft Gospel Ministry raise funds for our Bible Camp to help with operational costs and support our efforts! We will receive 30% of the single wash sales earned using our fundraiser's wash code!

Visit any of the TruShine Car Wash Locations

203 Linden Square Drive Bristol, VA 24202	25017 Western Loop Abingdon, VA 24211
3033 Boones Creek Road Johnson City, TN 37615	2227 Fort Henry Drive Kingsport, TN 37664
116 Allensville Road Sevierville, TN 37876	1912 Highway 394 Blountville, TN 37617
1541 W Jackson Blvd Jonesborough, TN 37659	

Follow the Instructions Below

Pull up to one of the pay stations.
Follow the screen prompts to buy a single wash.
Push the "ENTER WASH CODE" button at the bottom left of the screen.

Enter Wash Code: 14140

14140 is the unique number associated with this fundraiser.
You must enter this code to participate in the fundraiser.
Select the car wash of your choice.
Select your payment method. Insert Payment.
If preferred, print the receipt for your records.

**Thank you for participating in the
Bancroft Bible Camp Fundraiser!**



You can now partner with Bancroft through donating stocks to help financially support the ministry!

By donating stock that has increased in value, you will avoid paying tax on the capital gains. Many donors have found this is an easy way to increase their donation while helping themselves at tax time.

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For the price of a movie ticket or a fast-food meal, you can make a lasting impact for the kingdom of God by supporting a ministry who has served the Lord and our community for over 100 years!

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