# Gospel of Matthew Weekly Talk Ideas | Sean McGever

## Matthew Chapter 2

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| Scripture suggestion, basic overview, and background:* Matthew 2 is a great chapter to begin a semester of club talks. This chapter continues Matthew’s explanation of the birth of Jesus. The last verse of Mt 1 says: “but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.” (Mt. 1:25) Thus, Matthew is presenting the very first facts about Jesus’ life.
* Matthew 2 can be thought of two main parts: 1) Visit of the Magi (2:1-12) and 2) Egyptian Escape (2:13-23). I think the most natural section for a club talk is the first part, which can be broken down as follows:
1. King Herod hears about the Magi’s desire to worship “the king of the Jews” (2:1-4)
2. Jesus’ location was foretold in the Old Testament (Micah 5:2): Bethlehem in Judea (2:5-6)
3. King Herod sends the Magi to find Jesus so that Herod can “worship” Jesus too (2:7-8)
4. The Magi locate Jesus (2:9-10)
5. The Magi fall down and worship Jesus (2:11a)
6. The Magi give gifts fit for a king to Jesus and avoid Herod in their return (2:11b-12)
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| Possible main point(s):* Why in the world would anyone worship a baby!? Though a baby, Jesus was instantly recognized as much more than human. The Magi were looking for a king, and little did they know, but they found God!
* The Magi didn’t bring baby gifts, they brought kingly gifts to Jesus. What is your approach to Jesus? Do you treat him like a baby or a king?
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| What this shows us about Jesus:* Jesus, even from birth and from non-Jewish foreigners, was identified as “king of the Jews”. (2:2) This is an ominous title since the next time Matthew will use it is when Jesus is in the midst of his death (Mt. 27:11,29,37).
* Jesus, even “baby Jesus”, accepts worship. (2:11)
* Jesus’ birth was predicted in the Old Testament by Micah, roughly 700 years before Jesus’ birth.
* The Magi were more interested in their interactions with “King baby Jesus” than King Herod, this tells us a lot about Jesus’ significance since Herod was already a very powerful and established king. The Magi didn’t worship Herod, they worshiped Jesus.
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| What this has to do with our life:* Not everyone was directed to recognize Jesus. The Magi did, some others did too. In club you could say “that you came here tonight, you may not have had a star in the sky direct you here, but God directed you here for a reason, think for a moment... What is God trying to tell you tonight... God directed you here for a reason.”
* Even the first worshippers of Jesus, the Magi, probably seemed quite odd... who worships a baby?! You are not alone if it feels a bit odd when you take steps closer to God’s plan for your life.
* We all worship lots of things (success, money, relationships, etc.). We should think carefully about what, or whom, we worship. Really think: what is really worth *my* worship.
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| Relevant technical details:* There are a lot of technical details regarding the locations, Herod’s reign, exactly who Magi were, who chief priests and scribes were, how the star in the sky worked, and while these are interesting, I have looked into them and do not think that they are all that relevant for a club talk, the main thrust of the passage is the nature of who Jesus is from this passage. I will only provide a few details...
* “Wise men” (v.1) = In *Greek* “magos”/magi... These people were likely astrologers of some sort from Babylonia
* “Worship” (v.2, 8, 11) = The word has a range of meaning. It can mean a mere formality, such as homage to an official dignitary, does not necessarily imply worship of a God. Yet, in this context and in looking at Matthew’s other uses of the word (14:33, 28:9, 17), “worship” here meant the kind of worship you would give to God.
* The quotation in 2:6 is only a loose quotation from Micah 5:2.
* “Gold, frankincense, and myrrh” (v.12) = Most importantly, these are gifts normally given to a king (not a baby).
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| Possible illustrations:* Worship a baby. Seriously. Get baby doll, go find a real baby (!) and fall on your knees, get down low, and worship the baby. It will appear super odd, and it is! Yet, worshipping Jesus, is was appropriate for the Magi, they didn’t encounter a mere baby, they encountered, a King, The King, the God of the universe.
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*For more details see ylhelp.com*

Matthew 2 (ESV)

**The Visit of the Wise Men**

**2**Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, **2**saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” **3**When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; **4**and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. **5**They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

 **6** “ ‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,

are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

 for from you shall come a ruler

who will shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

**7**Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. **8**And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” **9**After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. **10**When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. **11**And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. **12**And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

**The Flight to Egypt**

**13**Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” **14**And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt **15**and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

**Herod Kills the Children**

**16**Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. **17**Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

 **18** “A voice was heard in Ramah,

weeping and loud lamentation,

 Rachel weeping for her children;

she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”

**The Return to Nazareth**

**19**But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, **20**saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.” **21**And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. **22**But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. **23**And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.