

The logo consists of two overlapping speech bubbles. The left bubble is blue and contains the word "Small" in white. The right bubble is red and contains the word "Groups" in white. Below the bubbles, the words "DISCUSSION GUIDE" are written in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Small Groups

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Where is my King?

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Main Idea – Earthly institutions and individuals have always positioned themselves as “kings”. However, like the wisemen in the Christmas story, you should have only one King who guides and inspires your life. *Prepare* ahead of time so you will be able to recognize the true King, and then look heavenward to continually *perceive* His direction for you.

Keep your eyes heavenward

- God’s guidance comes from Heaven. His word – while founded on universal truths - is often anointed with unique applications to each of us. One Scriptural word spoken by a human can be used by God for many purposes. **Revelation 14: 2 – And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. (NKJV)**
- The wisemen in the Christmas story traveled from a distant country because they were uniquely drawn by the Star of Bethlehem. **Matthew 2: 1-12 – 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, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’” Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.” When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Then, being divinely warned in a dream that**

they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way. (NKJV)

Earthly “kings” versus the real King

- King Herod – as an earthly king - was self-serving and paranoid. He was threatened by the news from the wisemen. His intention was to destroy Jesus and anyone who would follow Him.
- The true King, Jesus, desires to empower you. Jesus’ desire is to use you in His places of influence on earth.
- Every good thing in life comes to you from Heaven above.
- God put a star in the sky to guide the wisemen. Likewise, your guidance in life will come from above. Jesus often looked heavenward before performing miracles. One example: **Matthew 14:19 – Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. (NKJV)**
- You have the freedom in life to choose your king; be it either earthly or heavenly.
- If you choose to be guided by the heavenly King you must first develop the ability to receive. Jesus, among his many personal attributes, had the ability to willingly receive things from others. **Mark 14: 6 – But Jesus said, “Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me.” (NKJV)**
- God will faithfully guide you through the days of your life. But, you must have the ability to recognize and receive His guidance.
- The Star of Bethlehem was visible to everyone. However, only the wisemen recognized it as a divine revelation.

How to act with wisdom and locate your King

1. Preparation

- a. The wisemen had studied Biblical prophecy and knew what to recognize as a heavenly sign of the Messiah.
- b. In the same way, in your life, God will provide heavenly guidance for you if you have prepared to recognize it. **James 1: 17 – Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. (NKJV)**
- c. Prepare and develop your gifts. Give them back to God for His use. Just as God was faithful to continue to guide the wisemen to keep them from danger, He will faithfully guide you each step of your life.

2. Perception

- a. Your perception will determine your direction. If you are developing your perceptions from the influence of the secular world, you will most likely surely miss what God would have you perceive.
- b. Direct your eyes to the eternal. Do not be distracted by other people or things that are grounded in the visible world.
- c. People whose perceptions are from the world eventually become troubled by the natural world's institutions and processes. Worldly systems and leaders can divert your path because God is often not their concern.

Dedicate your gifts and abilities to God and He will return gifts in abundance

- **Luke 6: 38 – Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you. (NKJV)**
- Give God your gifts and abilities and He will give back in abundance.
- God will provide for your material needs. However, more importantly, He will give you the guidance and direction necessary for a meaningful life as someone who serves Him as the true King.

Reflective Questions for Where Is My King?

1. The story of the wisemen and the Star of Bethlehem in Matthew 2: 1-12 (above) is one you have likely heard many times. Is there anything new you perceived from reading it as part of this sermon message?
2. Why is it important to have the ability to receive things from other humans in order to be prepared to receive things from God?
3. What did Pastor Stephen mean when he said, "Your perception determines your direction"? Give an example of where your perceptions have been influenced by secular institutions or individuals. Do you have an example of where a heavenly perception enabled you to "see" something others did not "see"?
4. Are you able to put into words where you perceive God is guiding you right now in life?