

**The Village Church – Rancho Santa Fe**  
**Week # 16– Adult Bible Study – 2025 & 2026**

**Discovering the Bible**      **Notes – The Savior**

**Jan 27 & 28**

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*Matthew 1:18-25, The Birth of Jesus*

*Matthew 2:1-12, Eastern Visitors*

*Matthew 2:13-23, Egypt: Escape and Return*

*Luke 1:26-56, Jesus' Birth Is Announced*

*Luke 2:1-7, The Birth of Jesus*

*Luke 2:8-20, The Shepherds Visit Jesus*

*Luke 2:31-38, Jesus, Simeon, and Anna*

*Luke 2:39-40, Return to Nazareth*

*Luke 2:41-52, Jesus in the Temple*

*John 1:1-18, The Word*

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1. The claims of the first Christians were based on their experience. But we can describe some aspects of that experience by observing a number of its effects.
2. The experience of the first Christians led to a fundamental release from the cosmic forces that, in the perceptions of the age, dominated human existence.
3. The freedom from the early Christians' perceptions signifies a transfer of authority, where Christians are no longer under the sway of demonic forces or repressive legalistic systems.
4. The freedom from the pre-Christian perceptions of power and control involved an escape from the fear of death, which, it was argued, led to the bondage of sin
5. It is in the experience of the first believers that the origin of Christianity and of the NT must be sought. Something happened in the lives of real women and men; something that caused them to perceive their lives in a new, radically altered way.
6. A primary focus of the session is on the ways that the birth of Jesus was understood as the fulfillment of the promises, prophecies, and hopes in the Scriptures.
7. Matthew 1:18-25 explores the birth of Jesus from the perspective of prophecy fulfillment, Jesus' identity, divine conception, and the incarnational nature of God.
8. Matthew 2:1-12 is significant as it reveals Jesus as the universal King, drawing Gentiles (Magi) from afar to worship Him,
9. Matthew 2:13-23 emphasizes that Jesus's life, even in flight and obscurity, fulfills Old Testament scripture, solidifying his Messiahship.

10. Luke 1:26-56 introduces Mary's song (Magnificat), which is rich with Old Testament allusions, showing God remembering His covenant with Abraham and bringing the promised Messiah.
11. Luke 2:1-7 provides the most descriptive of the birth narratives of Jesus. It highlights the Divine timing and orchestration of Jesus' birth, His messianic lineage, and his humble humanity. This reveals God's plan for world redemption through an unexpected, lowly arrival in Bethlehem,
12. In Luke 2:8-20, the angel announces the birth of Jesus to humble shepherds. This highlights themes of divine glory in humility, good news for the lowly, and the call to witness.
13. Luke 2:31-38 documents the encounter between the infant Jesus and two devout elders, Simeon and Anna, in the Jerusalem Temple. This passage serves as a pivotal bridge between the Old Testament promises and the New Testament fulfillment
14. Luke 2:41-52 is the only biblical record of Jesus' childhood. It serves as a transitional bridge between His infancy and His public ministry, revealing critical details about His nature and mission.
15. John 1:1-18, known as the *Prologue* to the book of John and identified by most modern scholars as an ancient Christian hymn, serves as a grand theological overture, introducing the core identity of Jesus Christ and the central themes developed throughout the rest of the book.

## Discussion Questions

1. Why is it significant for Matthew to emphasize that the conception was "through the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 1 v. 18, 20)?
2. In Matthew 2, we see three responses to the news of the Messiah: the Magi (worship), Herod (fear/opposition), and the religious leaders (indifference). Which response do you see most often in our culture today?
3. How do we see Herod's spirit (fear, control, violence) in the world today, and how should Christians respond?
4. What does knowing the political situation (Roman rule, census) reveal about the world Jesus was born into, and how does it show God working within history?

5. Why would it be surprising or significant that angels appeared to shepherds, rather than kings or priests?
6. What keeps us from sharing good news with the same urgency as the shepherds?
7. When has God interrupted your ordinary life in an unexpected way, and how did you respond?
8. Luke 2:35 says that Jesus will cause the "thoughts of many hearts to be revealed." In what ways does an encounter with Jesus force people to reveal their true intentions or priorities today?
9. How does Jesus, the "only Son," make God known to us (John 1 v. 18), when no one has seen God?

*Notes by The Rev. Janice Y. Cook, Executive Associate Pastor, The Village Church, Rancho Santa Fe, California*

*Primary Source: Discovering the Bible: A New Generation, published by The Kerygma Program, Pittsburgh, PA. Boyd Lien, author.*