

# Apply The Word

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## Message Info

### Title:

The Scandal of  
Christmas

### Speaker:

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### Date:

December 25, 2022

### Scriptures:

Matthew 2:19-23

**Theme:** Consider the scandal of Christmas and grow more established in the Son of God.

**Introduction:** Some people are scandalized by Christianity, demanding proof of our beliefs. However, we all accept any number of things on faith. But for Christians, faith is not blind. We are clear about what we believe and why we believe it: we take God at his word. When Jesus came as the Messiah, some were also scandalized by him; and Matthew helps us to understand the 'scandal of Christmas.'

Matthew gives us 3 points to understand Jesus better:

### 1. The scandal

After Herod died, an angel directed Joseph to return to Israel, so he took his family to Nazareth.

If you had met Jesus there you would never have suspected his true identity. He did not seem to be a prime candidate for fulfilling OT prophecy.

Jesus' parentage was also scandalous: skeptics questioned his legitimacy and accused him of being an unworthy pretender (John 8).

### 2. The light

Matthew points to Jesus' coming from Nazareth as a fulfillment: "so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled..."

However, there is no specific prophecy to that effect. Instead, Matthew is referring to the overall writings of the prophets. The Messiah was prophesied to come from obscurity, and Nazareth certainly qualified.

Isaiah 9:1-2 also prophesied about people in darkness seeing a great light, and Nazareth was in Galilee, a heavily Gentile area.

### 3. The love

In Matthew 1:20-25 we see the Father interacting with Joseph quite a lot. He is being very kind and directing Joseph as he is contemplating what to do.

The effect of all of these things is meant to be a grounding in Jesus, not just in facts about Jesus. We are meant to love him more, to appreciate him more, and to respect and reverence him more.

### Questions:

1. What is your hope this Christmas?
2. What has Jesus done for you?
3. How does God's sovereignty in Jesus' life encourage your faith?