

Main talk

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago, God wanted people to find His Son, so He put a special bright star in the sky as the clue to where Jesus was.

Some wise men, seeing the special star in the sky and knowing from an ancient prophecy what it meant, decided to follow the star until they found Jesus, the new-born King.

These wise men had to make a very long journey of maybe around 500 hundreds miles. In those days there were no aeroplanes, trains or buses. The best transport would probably have been a camel – did you know camels can go many weeks without water– which is quite useful when you're travelling in the desert...though I'm not sure how comfortable they are to ride!

Their journey would have taken a long time. They probably had to go through places they had never been through before. It would have cost them not only money but lots of effort as well as time. Time away from their families and friends. They risked their very lives – they were carrying a precious cargo, and so they were at risk of attack from robbers along their way.

But the star eventually led them to Jesus. The wise men bowed down before Jesus and they worshipped Him. They recognised him as a really important King and they gave him their special presents, fit for a king – they gave him treasures of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Their long, hard journey was worth all the time, money and effort that it had cost them, for they had seen God's son, King Jesus.

Today God the Father still wants people to find His Son Jesus. We may not have a star to follow, like the wise men did, but God has left us plenty of clues. Plenty of ways to meet King Jesus.

But First of all, we need a map. Somewhere we can show the places we can stop and look on our way...why not draw your own map?

1. Now the best place to find out about Jesus is in the **Bible**

The Bible that tells us all about Jesus; the things that He said and did while he lived on earth, we can read about how he died on a cross but then came back to life and the wonderful truth that He is alive today.

But did you know? we don't only read about Jesus in the bible – we can actually meet him... Let me read you a story from the Bible....

This bible story is called the Two sisters. Now one sister is always very busy, rushing around and the other sister was sitting listening to Jesus. As I read it, I wonder which sister do you relate to and maybe Jesus is speaking to you through this story... you'll find it in Luke 10:38-42

Of course work has to be done, homework in whatever form needs doing, we need to eat...but Jesus longs to meet with us and we can be like Mary and listen to what Jesus has to say.

I read the story from the Story Teller Bible. It is important you find a bible that you can understand and is easy to read. And if you haven't read the bible before, you could start with this story

So Bible goes on my MAP

2. Another way you can find Jesus is by talking to our **Christian friends** and family about Him

- Other Christians who can tell us their stories of meeting Jesus.

We call people who are part of All Saints church our family – each one will have a story about meeting with Jesus – stories of how Jesus makes a difference in their lives, how he brings peace. Many stories of how Jesus has helped them when they are struggling.

Do you know one of the ways I often meet Jesus is singing worship songs, and it has been really hard not singing songs together in church but we call all listen to them at home and sing along ... there's a great song called Dollop which talks about being filled with God's love – when you are filled with God's love, it just makes things easier to handle and brings a great big smile to my face.

We have groups in the church called housegroups – and again it's really hard at the moment because we can't meet together very much at the moment but some of us have been meeting on line via Zoom and talking about our faith and it really helps knowing how others walk with Jesus. Perhaps you can chat on the phone with friends about Jesus.

So talking to friends goes on my MAP

3. We can also find Jesus when we **pray**.

The gift of prayer where we can talk to Jesus and hear Him speaking to us.

Now prayer is not always easy, so sometimes it can be helpful to have a special place to be with Jesus, some people pray when they walk, some people pray in their bedrooms – sometimes lighting a candle can help us concentrate – and the light represents the light of Christ shining into our hearts. Always ask an adult first though if you want to light a candle. And if they ask you why – tell them because you want to speak to Jesus.

And then tell Jesus how you're doing and give space for him to speak to you.

Make sure you make time for this....

Start with just a few minutes a day – it is a great way to find Jesus.

So on my MAP I'll put pray – along with my clock and candle

We can find Jesus by

4. **Looking in a mirror:**

We can find Jesus by looking at ourselves.... Yes, when you look in the mirror...what do you see?

Do you see a beautiful creation?

You are an extraordinary creation you know.....made up of 30, trillion cells, thats 30, with 12 noughts after it 30, 000,000,000,000 cells – that’s a lot of intricate and different cells....you have over 200 bones, more than 600 muscles, over 7 metres of intestine.....you’ve got 2 kidneys, a liver, a spleen, a heart , 2 lungs, a brain – well most of you..... you are extraordinary...

Sometimes when we look in the mirror, we may think we look ugly or, not up to much.... But God created you and he loves you from the top of your head right down to the tip of your toes. He loves you.

Sometimes when we look in the mirror, when we look deep into our own eyes, we recognise things about us we know are wrong, things we do wrong, things we say wrong and hey, we really need to find Jesus to get those things sorted out....

And do you know, when you find Jesus and say, Jesus I want you to be in my life – your image in that mirror will change...maybe not the physical appearance but knowing you have someone always with you, someone who is always on your side, helping and encouraging you. Somehow that makes you stand taller and you may need to reposition your mirror.

So, we can find Jesus by looking at ourselves, by seeing how much we are loved and allowing Jesus in to change the bits that need sorting.

So, on my map goes a **mirror**...

There will be other ways too to meet with Jesus – there’s space in the last box to add more. What other ways do you find Jesus?

When we are really serious, about looking for Jesus, like the wise men were, then we will find Him. Yes it may take a long time, it maybe a bit of an uncomfortable ride, it may cost us time and money but listen to this promise that God makes us, which is found in the Bible in the book of Jeremiah: “When you come looking for me, you'll find me. Yes, when you get serious about finding me and want it more than anything else, I'll make sure you won't be disappointed.”

If you have never met Him before, why not go on the journey of looking for Him? Open the Bible, talk to people, pray and don’t forget to look in the mirror and remember how amazing God thinks you are...

And if you have met Him, keep looking to deepen your relationship with Him, for if you do, you will never be disappointed.

I’m going to put my Map on my wall to remind me how to find Jesus. How about you? what will you do with your map this year – it could be the most exciting journey you’ve ever made... Amen.