Pastor Dave Teixeira
October 4, 2009
Matthew 2:13-23

Please use the space below to take notes on today's message:

Take It Homework

We encourage you to not only do these exercises on your own, but also with a group of friends, co-workers, neighbors, small group or family members.

Read Matthew 2:13-23.

(Thanks, George, for the head start!) This guy, **Herod,** is crazy! He is truly threatened by Jesus to the point of killing babies! The back story is that Herod is a "poser." He's an Edomite. He "poses" as one worthy to rule Israel, but both he and the Jews know he isn't. Everyone knows Herod is not who he claims to be.

- Do you know any posers? Do you know anyone who, when it comes to being a godly man or woman, puts on a good show?
- In what ways are you a poser? How do you try to look more godly than you are? Are there images you work (overtly or subtly) to maintain, although you know they aren't fully true?

Now, what's the deal with **Egypt?** Wasn't Egypt the enemy? Didn't Pharaoh rule there—a man who hated and had enslaved the Jews? Yes, but that was 1,500 years earlier. Since then, Egypt had become sort of a safe haven for the Jewish people during times of crisis.

- Where is your safe haven? Think of a person or place you go to when life gets scary, hard, crazy or overwhelming? Do you ever just sense God is saying to you, "It's time. Life is crazy and you are overwhelmed. Go to Egypt?"

Who is this guy, **Archelaus?** He's Herod's son, is now in charge of Judah, and he's just as bad as Herod. Mary and Joseph go to Egypt to wait for Herod's death, and his replacement turns out to be no better. WHAT?! Wasn't the slaughter of innocent babies enough? More God? Really?

- Have you ever endured something only to have your difficulty extended? How does that feel? What questions do you ask God when that happens?

Now, let's talk about **Joseph.** This guy goes to a lot of trouble for a baby that's not even his.

- Do you ever feel like God is asking too much of you? Share a time when you or someone you know felt that way.
- Knowing the whole story, do you think God was asking too much of Joseph? How will this knowledge impact the way you respond the next time you feel like God is asking too much of you?

Then, there's **Nazareth**...dinky little town in an unimportant region of Galilee. Why there? Wouldn't the Messiah want to be in Jerusalem where all the action is? Bethlehem is one thing (another hick town to the south), but Nazareth? No one was expecting that. But that's just like God to use unexpected people, places and things to advance His kingdom and do His will here on earth.

- Share an unlikely tool of God you've experienced.

Finally, let's talk about **Scripture!** Throughout this passage you'll notice the word, "fulfilled." It's Matthew's way of saying, "God's in control. He's got a plan. He knew it would happen, and He's gonna use it." He'll use Egypt. He'll use Nazareth. He'll use Joseph. He'll use Archelaus. He'll even use Herod.

- In really hard moments, how important is this reality? Is there a time in your life when you've had to lean on God's sovereignty even when you couldn't see what He was up to?