

Racial Reconciliation and the Body of Christ
CBFNC General Assembly Workshop
March 25, 2011

Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men* from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising,* and have come to pay him homage.'

3When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; 4and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah* was to be born. 5They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

6 "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd* my people Israel." "

7 Then Herod secretly called for the wise men* and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 8Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' 9When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising,* until it stopped over the place where the child was.

10When they saw that the star had stopped,* they were overwhelmed with joy. 11On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Revelation 7:9-17

9 After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. 10They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'

11And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God,
12 singing,

'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and might
be to our God forever and ever! Amen.'

13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?' 14I said to him, 'Sir, you are the one that knows.' Then he said to me, 'These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

15 For this reason they are before the throne of God,
and worship him day and night within his temple,
and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

16 They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;
the sun will not strike them,
nor any scorching heat;

17 for the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'

Luke 10:25-37

25 Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus.* 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' 26 He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' 27 He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.' 28 And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

29 But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' 30 Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

33 But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii,* gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend."

36 Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' 37 He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

Having read the text, allow the following questions to frame
and guide your conversation with one another

1. How is God inviting us to see community and the practice of reconciliation?

