

## Wise Men Still Seek Him

A familiar image on Christmas cards depicts the wise men following the star, searching for a promised newborn king. When they finally arrived in Bethlehem, the wise men found Mary, Joseph, and the child—the Lord Jesus Christ.

This search had been intense; the travelers bearing gifts had journeyed from afar, covering countless miles, holding a steadfastness of purpose that refused to be sidetracked or discouraged.

They set out to seek . . . and they found. The Bible account adds simply: “They were filled with joy!” (Matthew 2:10)

The Word of God promises that anyone who seeks God will definitely find him: “Whenever you seek him, you will find him” (2 Chronicles 15:2); “Seek the LORD while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near” (Isaiah 55:6).

This refrain echoes throughout the Bible. If you sincerely seek God you will surely find him, simply because of the lengths to which God went in order to bring you to himself. “This

is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). This is the story of love that spread to all the world—the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, “though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being” (Philippians 2:6-7).

And that’s not the end. The search reaches its climax at Calvary, where Christ sacrificed his life for your sins so you can be reconciled, made right with God.

If you sincerely seek God you will discover, as the wise men did, that you will find him. And, like them, you will be filled with joy.

May yours be a truly joyful Christmas.

[Jim Kraus]

**“If you sincerely seek God you will discover, as the wise men did, that you will find him. And like them, you will be filled with joy.”**

*So the Word  
became human  
and made his  
home among us.*

JOHN 1:14



## Great Catch

Widower Ray Johnstone of Australia was a lifelong fisherman whose fishing buddy had been killed in a car accident. He didn't want to fish alone, so the 75-year-old advertised for a fishing companion on



Gumtree, Australia's version of Craigslist. Johnstone didn't care if he caught fish from a boat or from the shore, just as long as he and his new friend got along. The post quickly went viral, and soon he was flooded with more than 55,000 responses from all over the world.

"I didn't expect this response . . . it's amazing," Johnstone said. He finally chose 22-year-old Mati Batsinilas, a local fishing enthusiast, who surprised the veteran angler and his grandson with a sport fishing trip—all expenses paid. Batsinilas's reward was the smile on his new fishing buddy's face.

## Yippee Cow-Yay

When Hannah Simpson from New Zealand was 11 years old, she really wanted a pony. But her parents said a pony was too expensive. Half in jest, Hannah's brother dared her to ride the family's calf, Lilac, instead. Cows were certainly familiar to the young girl, so she accepted the challenge and began riding her bovine friend bareback everywhere.

Seven years have passed, and on rare occasions Lilac will pick up speed, but mostly she prefers to gently stroll through the pasture. She saves her energy for something else. When Lilac was young, Hannah noticed the calf was always jumping out of the cow shed. So Hannah began training the cow to jump over obstacles. There are no show jumping plans in their future—just companionship and fun with each ride.



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## A Gift of Compassion

Angie Tyma of Hudson, Florida, was homeless. She'd lived in her house 35 years and sold it to someone who let her continue to live in it. However, unbeknownst to Tyma, her new landlord stopped paying the mortgage. The property went into foreclosure, was sold at auction, and Tyma was evicted. Neighbors helped store Tyma's belongings and provided temporary housing for her and her dogs at a Days Inn.

But that wasn't enough of a solution for neighbor Danielle Calder, who purchased Tyma's house back for \$167,500 and gave Tyma the keys for her 89th birthday.

"Usually one of my neighbors bakes me a cake every year, but this time . . . I was in a state of shock," she says.

"It was the right thing to do," Calder, Tyma's new landlord, says. "We're family—the whole neighborhood."



## Stress-Free Shopping

Many of us have experienced it—feeling rushed and pressured in a grocery store checkout line as you try to get your items out of your basket quickly. For a person with special needs, such as dementia, social anxiety, or autism, the experience can be especially unnerving. With that in mind, a grocery store in

Forres, Scotland, introduced a "relaxed checkout" lane. Customers can remain in line as long as they need; taking it slow is okay—even encouraged. The store managers created the lane after attending a dementia awareness seminar. Management provided extra training for cashiers tending these special checkout lines, helping them make shoppers less anxious.

Just for laughs



"Being a mom is great if you like to travel . . . ballet practices, music recitals, and soccer games."



"We still all have movie night together, but everyone is watching a different film."

To handle yourself, use your head. To handle others, use your heart.

Happiness is not a station to arrive at, but a manner of traveling.

There are three answers to prayer: yes, no, and wait.