

Wise Men Still Seek Him

- The Visit of the Magi

1. After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi (or wise men) from the east came to Jerusalem

2. and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

3. When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

4. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.

5. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

6. " 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.' "

7. Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.

8. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

9. After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

10. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

11. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they

opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

12. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

I received a Christmas card a year or so ago that said:

Wise men still seek Him.

This had some real staying power. I think of it often.

Who do we think of as an icon of wisdom?

Solomon's wisdom

1. Solomon arranged a marriage contract with Pharaoh, king of Egypt. He married Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the City of David until he had completed building his royal palace and God's Temple and the wall around Jerusalem.

2. Meanwhile, the people were worshiping at local shrines because at that time no temple had yet been built to the Name of God.

3. Solomon loved God and continued to live in the God-honoring ways of David his father, except that he also worshiped at the local shrines, offering sacrifices and burning incense.

4. The king went to Gibeon, the most prestigious of the local shrines, to worship. He sacrificed a thousand Whole-Burnt-Offerings on that altar.

5. That night, there in Gibeon, God appeared to Solomon in a dream: God said, "What can I give you? Ask."

6. Solomon said, "You were extravagantly generous in love with David my father, and he lived faithfully in your presence, his relationships were just and his heart right. And you have persisted in this great and generous love by giving him - and this very day! - a son to sit on his throne.

7."And now here I am: God, my God, you have made me, your servant, ruler of the kingdom in place of David my father. I'm too young for this, a mere child! I don't know the ropes, hardly know the 'ins' and 'outs' of this job.

8.And here I am, set down in the middle of the people you've chosen, a great people - far too many to ever count.

9."Here's what I want: Give me a God-listening heart so I can lead your people well, discerning the difference between good and evil. For who on their own is capable of leading your glorious people?"

10.God, the Master, was delighted with Solomon's response.

11.And God said to him, "Because you have asked for this and haven't grasped after a long life, or riches, or the doom of your enemies, but you have asked for the ability to lead and govern well,

12.I'll give you what you've asked for - I'm giving you a wise and mature heart. There's never been one like you before; and there'll be no one after.

13.As a bonus, I'm giving you both the wealth and glory you didn't ask for - there's not a king anywhere who will come up to your mark.

14.And if you stay on course, keeping your eye on the life-map and the God-signs as your father David did, I'll also give you a long life."

15.Solomon woke up - what a dream! He returned to Jerusalem, took his place before the Chest of the Covenant of God, and worshiped by sacrificing Whole-Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings. Then he laid out a banquet for everyone in his service.

The wise man sought God...

What is it to be wise?

What is this incredible gift wisdom...

I spent some time thinking about it
And I came up with a couple of things
Knowledge- fun facts and un-fun facts the stuff I didn't forget
from college
Intelligence- how things interact and interconnect
Discernment- Knowing what you are looking at
Effects- What you do with it all

Wisdom is Knowledge or intelligence leading to beneficial action
or
Wisdom is knowledge in motion changing and helping us and
other people

Knowledge in action directed toward a valuable goal

I liked the Solomon story so I prayed for wisdom...

I told Johnny Butler this.
Johnny Butler asked me... why?
Why do you want wisdom?
I hate it when people I respect do that...and I can't just blow it off.

Wisdom...motivation...why do you want wisdom?

I had to think about that for a while...

I mean 'wisdom' duh... good thing right?

Like helping others right...why?
Like rescuing stranded people?
Like complimenting people right?
Like feeding the hungry? Right

All of these things really are good things so what could be wrong?
So what can go wrong with all this do goodin'

Why?.....Why are you doing these things?

What is your motivation

I used to define motivation jokingly as:

Motivation- something you make up to tell someone who asks you why you did something that you just did without really thinking about it.

But in this case I seriously had to try and discern what was driving my actions and intentions...

Motivation is an interesting entity...a maybe a bit scary

When you feed hungry people they often don't really care why you feed them as much as they care that you feed them and if you may be interested in feeding them again preferably soon.

So why does it matter.

So if you acquire and use knowledge well to benefit those around you leading to peace and increase isn't that good enough.

Ain't you a wise man.

1Cor 13 says NO!

1.If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

2.If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3.If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

You see the right action for the wrong reason is really the same as no action maybe not for the hungry man for the Main Man it is.

The main thing God wants from us ...the prime directive is that we have pure intentions from a pure heart in love with the will of our maker

I have messed this one up so often and so badly and I'm pretty sure I'm not alone...we go forth marching "onward grumpy soldiers, marching such a bore, with my pride and ego, marching on before" Anybody ever do that...you get called on by a brother or sister in need to do something and you are not in the mood to be a servant just now...not while American Idol is on...but you do it anyway but "your heart just isn't in it"... actually *your heart* is in it... that is your heart in the middle...and that is the problem

Oswald Chambers

Matt 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

What does "pure in heart" mean? Nothing less than what the Son of God is. God imparts to us the identical purity that characterized Jesus Christ. The sanctified life is the undisturbed range of His peace, the unshakable power of His strength, and the unfathomable depth of His purity. Jesus never had secular moods. The heart of the Lord Jesus Christ wanted God's glory most. Entire sanctification means the impartation of this to you and me.

The wonder of a pure heart is this: Its motives are as pure as Jesus Christ's. Our Lord had a wonderful sensitiveness to the things of God.

Prayer Thought: Purity of heart and life is my need. Cleanse me, O God, and make me pure in your sight.

So why was I seeking wisdom or some around me so busy doing other 'right things':

-to be thought well of by others

-to gain prestige and importance in a group

-heaven credits, brownie points, or even trophies to attest to our goodness and kindness

-to make a profit?

These all sound ok but in the end they all put us at the center and push God away from center... the opposite of sanctification

Seeking wisdom is seeking God's wisdom for His kingdom...not mans wisdom for ours.

Which is actually quite good because left to our own wisdom we can be pretty stupid...I know I can...and I've seen a few of you out there from time to time...shall we say fail to shine brightly.

God's wisdom speaks directly from the heart... if there is room for Him to dwell there...

"let every heart, prepare him room"

At that point all we need to do is listen and allow Him to act through us and give Him the glory.

Lord I pray for your wisdom

And know that it comes with responsibility

Ministering to people ain't always pretty:

Sometimes its flat out ugly

Domestic violence, suicide, fear, addiction

Loneliness, Death

But your heart beating in us is beautiful...so beautiful

Let it shine into the dark places of our souls and this world

That Your Kingdom would come to this desolate land. Amen.

Wise Men Still Seek Him...and I will.