

Matthew 2:1-2 (KJV)

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, ²Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

Today, we are celebrating The Epiphany, the manifestation of Jesus Christ, the manifestation of Jesus Christ to the world. In many parts of the world, today is called Three Kings Day and is known in some places as “Old Christmas.”

Whatever today is called it is celebrated primarily as the time when the Magi came to worship our Lord, bringing Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Today is a good time for all of us to reflect on how our Lord manifested himself to each one of us, to look back and remember when Jesus came into our individual lives.

Think about it. How did you find Jesus? Where did you find Jesus? When did you find Him?

All of us have a story. All of us have a remembrance. If we don’t, we had better start taking a good look at ourselves.

This goes along with the question that Jesus himself asked Simon Peter. ***Matthew 16:15-16 (KJV)*** *But whom say ye that I am? ¹⁶And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

Jesus manifests himself to us exactly that way; as the Christ, the Son of the living God.

This year we are having a very short Epiphany season. This means that we will not hear the familiar readings of our Lord's baptism in the Jordan and the wedding feast at Cana, the manifestations to the Jews.

So today let us concentrate on what is meaningful about Epiphany itself.

And what can that be?

We, in our liturgical year, have come through the Advent anticipation of the coming Messiah. We have experienced the birth of our Savior, the one who is to die for our sins. Now in Epiphany he is introduced to the world, the world that he has come to save. Today's Gospel of the Three Magi is a foreshadow of when the Gentile world would come to know him.

And to know Jesus is what it is all about. To know God is what it is all about.

We all will come to know God sooner or later, sooner is better than later

Most of us have had some incident in our lives where we have God manifested in our lives. This may have been as dramatic as Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus or just a quiet realization of God's presence.

There have certainly been powerful manifestations of God's presence such as the burning bush *Exodus 3:2 (KJV) And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.*

Or Elijah's meeting with God on the mountain *1 Kings 19:11-12 (KJV) And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was*

not in the earthquake: ¹2And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

God still speaks to us. God speaks to us with the still small voice in our hearts. But we have to first let him come into our hearts, to let him manifest himself in our lives.

God is always willing to come to us, each one of us. Just as it was said in the parable of the Lost Sheep **Luke 15:4-7 (KJV)** *What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? ⁵And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. ⁷I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.*

It is not that God is not willing; maybe it is that we are not being receptive.

We all have to be receptive to the presence of God, to Jesus Christ. And it is through prayer that we make ourselves receptive to the manifestation of Christ. It is only in the solitude of our hearts that we will be able to recognize Him.

If we are too “busy.” If we have too much “noise” in our lives we may not be able to distinguish his presence in the clutter that we have in our souls.

God wants us to give Him all our selves, completely, totally, without any thing held back. He wants us to love him unreservedly.

Then He will move in. Then we will be able to recognize his presence.

This Epiphany, won't you let Jesus be totally manifested in your life?

Amen.

