



Sunday Teaching Discussion Guide: Epiphany: January 10, 2020

Recap:

- Herod sent the Magi to find Jesus for ulterior motives. He was obsessed with power and the throne. He was so bent on power and was afraid of what the birth of Jesus could mean for him. The Magi should have returned to Herod's throne, but the Magi didn't fall for this charade dressed up as faith. They followed the light of the star to Jesus and they were forever changed.
- There will always be people who mix Jesus with power, who see faith as a means to an end as they seek to create wealth, power, and control. But this temptation is also in all of us. Rather than sacrifice our lives to God, we pray that God will bless our decisions and our will regardless of how selfish or profane those desires may be.
- Jesus says that we are the light of the world. We shine like the light guiding the wisemen. As followers of Jesus, we join God in the work of reconciling and creating. We pray and work for love, justice, and grace and mercy. We live those out in our lives because God has a calling for us.
- We invite the next generation to follow us as we follow Jesus. We don't shelter our kids from the ugliness we see in the world, we show them how Jesus taught us to live and we invite them into that new reality. We all represent Jesus to this world. The call on our lives is to live differently, to create a reality where others see our lives and find a contagious curiosity about our faith and the way of Jesus.

Discuss:

1. Read the quote Pastor Ryan quoted in his sermon from Pastor Tish Harrison Warren: "In the story of the Magi, King Herod tries to use the wisemen as pawns in his own quest to protect his power. He promises that he too is devout, that they can trust him...Epiphany reminds us the very language of worship can be wielded as a weapon of earthly political power."
2. Do you ever catch yourself trying to use God for your own earthly ends? Are there certain times this happens? Do you find it hard to differentiate between trying to use God and allowing God to use you?
3. How do you respond to those who profess to be Christians who you think are not living as Christians?
4. Read Matthew 2:1-2
5. What do you think is the internal reaction of King Herod, who was a Jew, the Magi asking where they could find the newborn king of Jews so they can worship him?
6. Why do you think it's tempting to let ourselves overvalue building our kingdom versus God's?
7. Read Matthew 5:14-15
8. Do you see yourself as someone who shares the light or someone who tends to hold onto the light?
9. How do you view your good deeds? How much of them do you attribute to God?
10. In what ways do you see yourself as a good representative of the light of Christ? In what ways bad?

Read at Home: Verses about True Worship

- Isaiah 29:13-14
- John 4:21-24
- James 1:27