



Mighty in the Word

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; But unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1.18).

Edifying the Body of Christ (Eph. 4.10-16)

The Wise Still Seek Him

*of the
Lord
Jesus Christ*

Vol. XII.01

Forgetting Those Things

What will you see this new year? What will you surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ? Where will you go? What is the Lord asking of you? There are many questions to be asked – and to be answered with our lives, in serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul desired that his life be found in Christ Jesus; therefore, he wrote of pressing on toward perfection. He went beyond endeavoring to respond to the Lord with his life; he invited and continues inviting the body of Christ to follow in this endeavor (Phi 3.12-21).

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *[this]* one thing *[I do]*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phi 3:13,14).

The Wisemen no doubt had already *made this trip*, if you will. They left all to go on with the Lord God in Christ Jesus. They left family, friends, not knowing where they were going, not knowing how long they would be gone, not knowing what would happen to them. There was a burning in their souls to follow the star that had come before them. They left all that they might know what lay before them – day by day in the desert.

They had eyes to see what others did not see, ears to hear what others did not hear, and a heart to receive what others rejected. They counted the cost and went forward responding to the call upon their lives. Paul counted the cost; and he also went forward in his life responding to the call upon his life. The day came when Paul knew that death was imminent; however, he went forth rejoicing in the Lord, letting go of all that was and, in his heart, his very being, moved to that place of being ready to respond to the call from the Lord, "Come home."

Oh, the trials were hard, the persecution unrelenting from the first day of his turning his life, his heart, over to Jesus for His will to be accomplished in him. Did not the Wisemen also have to make this decision, not knowing what lay before them as they sought the Christ child?

Remember that the Wisemen did not return to King Herod to tell where Jesus was. They were willing to disobey King Herod as they were directed in a dream to return to their country "another" way.

One has to ask these questions when considering walking with the Lord Jesus Christ with their lives as did the Wisemen.

Do you want to receive – count the cost?

Once you have seen

Once you have heard

Once you have received – there is a cost, and you cannot turn back.

The calling is too great when you have gone though this experience to look back, to turn back. Have you considered the cost? Every thing is to be given up for Christ (Lk 9.57-62).

Count the Cost and, as the Wisemen, go to Jesus that you might be changed into His likeness and leave a different way - because you have been changed – endeavoring to live a life of holiness unto the Lord Jesus Christ for His glory.

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Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31).

Oh, I fear we make light of Epiphany and romanticize this "little story," when in fact it was a time of realizing the cost of such a journey. Remember King Herod commanded the death of those that would be about the age of the Christ child?

When we read about that great cloud of witnesses that have gone before us, we realize that they experienced both joy and sorrow flowing in their lives. Sorrow was revealed in their suffering for the Lord, but, oh the Joy for the love of the Master, Jesus Christ, who was in their lives.

When the Wisemen saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. They had eyes to see what others did not see. Seeing what others could not see, hearing what others could not hear, and receiving the call upon their lives, brought obedience at whatever cost would come to them.

The questions are

What did they see?

What did they hear?

What did they receive?

They saw a star, but not just a star; they experienced the glory of the Lord. When one is walking with the Lord and His glory comes down, there is no choice. There are times in our lives when living for the Lord that we do not have choices. We know there is but one way, and it is to follow the Lord – come what may. There is no choice but to walk in obedience with the Lord Jesus Christ.

People of God in Christ Jesus do not have choices. There is but one way: His way. The Wisemen did not have a choice. There was but one response to the Lord God Almighty. Those who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior with their lives, endeavoring to live a life of holiness unto the Lord, do not have choices. It is **not** Jesus first, as has been said over the years with pins and buttons sold that had on them: Jesus first. Hear this well: **It is Jesus Christ only.** It is Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of the Lord God Almighty, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel).

Questions to consider are: 1) How does one see? 2) How does one hear? 3) How does one receive? There is more to these questions. Does one want to see? Does one want to hear? And Does one want to receive.

When the Wisemen chose to see, chose to hear, and chose to receive, they were **forever** changed. We need to understand what it is to *hear*. In the Hebrew text, the Old Testament, **שָׁמַע** shâma' is to obey. Obedience is with the life one lives; it is a way of life, a life of holiness desiring to live for the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no getting off the highway of holiness. You do not take exit ramps to detour, then later get back on – then off again. It is one way, it is a straight road following Jesus Christ.

This road is one way. There are no exit ramps, but – know also there is no looking back as Paul writes,

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *[this]* one thing *[I do]*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,
I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phi 3:13, 14).

We cannot go on with the Lord when we are distracted and listening to the voices of the world, of Satan, that calls us to reflect on the past. That is a ploy of Satan to keep us from going on in the joy of the Lord.

I am reminded of the rebuilding of the wall in Jerusalem when the children of Israel returned home and how hard they worked, knowing the Lord had called them to rebuild. What if they had lamented and carried on about, Oh, if only we had not done this or done that, this wall would not have been breached. No, they repented of their sin and looked unto the Lord for the grace and strength to rebuild. We need to go on with the Lord Jesus Christ, forgetting that which lies behind us. So many are stumbling over that which is in their past. We need to repent of our sins, and go forward with the Lord. It is Satan that distracts us and causes us to miss the joy of the Lord that is our strength. Move on!

Oh! The Wisemen were wise indeed; they heard the voice of the One Whom they sought to see, trusted in Him, and obeyed; they left another way; they were changed. They did not look back over their journey to the Christ child, trying to retrace their steps. They were changed when they saw Jesus, and chose to follow Him, to trust Him to go another way, the *way* they were led – not looking back, but going forth in the Lord Jesus in newness of life.

I can almost hear the silence, the deep and abiding experience on their journey after leaving the Christ Child. What is there to say when you have been in the presence of the Holy One of Israel! Their lives were changed and being changed to go that straight and narrow way that leads to life (Mt 7.13, 14; Lk 13.24), to seek Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords.

The Wisemen, the magi, like Paul understood this journey (Phi 3.13, 14).

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *[this]* one thing *[I do]*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,
I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Oh, how glorious it must have been as they sought to see the Christ Child.

Are we "Marching to Zion, that beautiful city of God"? or are we looking back?

Is your eye upon the Lord and what He can do in you and through you – or is it on yourself, and who you see yourself as.

When we are changed into the likeness of the Lord when we have been in His presence, have experienced His glory, we will be like the magi, the Wisemen who chose to look to the coming of the Lord not caring what people thought of them for leaving all to follow the Lord, for leaving family, friends, work. Their hearts were set on seeing the King of kings to go forth, to go forward in Him Who changes lives that are committed to Him, to serve Him according to the Word of the Lord.