

Faith, Hope, and Peace Ministries Devotion

And going into the house [the magi] saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. Matthew 2:11

At Christmas we celebrate the fact that in Jesus, God has become man. The eternal Son of God now shares our human flesh and is one of us. He's taken our side, declaring Himself to be with us forever. And it's not too difficult to believe that God could do that. Since He really is all-powerful, He can do anything at all, including becoming man.

But with the celebration of Epiphany, we're faced with something that's a little harder for many people to believe. At Epiphany, we celebrate that this particular man, Jesus, even as a little child, is the God who is to be worshiped. That takes a lot of faith.

The wise men, as they came from the east, probably had no idea what to expect when they would see the one who was born King of the Jews. So they did what anyone would do: they went to the palace of King Herod in Jerusalem. After all, where else would a king live? But there was no Messiah to be found there. The magi then had to follow the star again until they came to the house where the Savior of the world was born.

What was it that they saw there? A small child with His mother. Anyone who was looking at this would find it hard to believe that this child could be the Savior of the world. He looked like a kid. And yet, the wise men bowed down and worshiped him as God. This is what the celebration of Epiphany is all about. It's about God becoming one of us so thoroughly that human eyes can't tell you that this child is truly the Son of God. Epiphany is about coming to know Jesus not through what our eyes tell us, but coming to know Him through faith.

Jesus wants to be known through faith. He wants us to look at Him and not judge based on what we see, but on what He's said. So when we see Him as an infant, we should still know that He is fully God wrapped up in swaddling clothes. When we see Him as a man who is despised by the powers-that-be, we should still know that He is the One who is praised and adored by the angels. When we see Him dying on the cross, we should know that He is the salvation of the world. Epiphany teaches us not to know Jesus through sight, but through faith. For it is only through faith that we come to know Him as He truly is, as He wants to be known: as the One who redeems us from all sin, evil and death.