

Epiphany of Our Lord

Matthew 2:1-12 1-6-19

THE PRICELESS GIFT

“In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, ‘where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’” Luke 3:7-9, 18

Today is January 6th – the day the Church throughout the world has designated as “The Epiphany of Our Lord.”

The assigned text for Epiphany Sunday is the visit of the wise men. It is a marvelous account of a “helper”, guiding “someone”, to “a priceless gift.”

- Who is the “helper?”
- Who is the “someone?”
- Who is the “priceless gift” and how do the gifts the wise men bring represent the gifts God gives us in Jesus Christ?

How is the end of Jesus’ life foreshadowed in the story of the wise men?

“Because Christ has become a King and Priest for you and has bestowed this great blessing on you, you dare not imagine that it was done for nothing or cost little or comes to you because of your merit. Sin and death were overcome for you in Him and through Him. Grace and life were given you; but it meant bitter work for Him. It cost Him much. He earned it at the greatest expense with His own blood, body, and life.”

Edwin Plass, *What Luther Says*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, 1959, #1884, p. 604.

Baptism of Our Lord

Luke 3:15-22 1-13-19

“Jesus Also Was Baptized”

- A. Jesus’ Baptism connects Jesus and John
- B. Jesus’ Baptism established the importance of Baptism
- C. Jesus’ Baptism establishes the importance of our own

A Luther Sermon Quote: (From the Large Catechism) *(The world is now full of sects which exclaim that Baptism is merely an external matter and that external matters are of no use. However, let it be ever so much an external matter; here stand God’s Word and command which institute, establish, and confirm Baptism. ...whatever God institutes and commands cannot be useless but must be an altogether precious matter, even if it were worth less than a straw in appearance. (Plass, What Luther Says, 119, p. 43)*

Second Sunday after Epiphany

John 2:1-11 1-20-19

SAVING THE BEST UNTIL THE LAST

“...the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, ‘Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.’” John 2:9b-10 (NRSV)

Introduction – I once attended a wedding reception I will never forget. The host ran out of food. Jesus also attended a wedding reception with a similar characteristic that, thanks to the Gospel writer John, will likewise never be forgotten.

Why did the Gospel writer John, choose to include this story in his gospel?

- The spiritual significance of this miracle?
- The impression the miracle made on his disciples?
- What it says about life in the Kingdom of God?

“But you have kept the good wine until now.” What does this observation at the end of this story tell us about life in the Kingdom of God?

C. S. Lewis’ search for joy led him to Jesus Christ who he discovered is the source of joy.

+ *“Joy is the serious business of heaven.”*

+ *“I sometimes wonder whether all pleasures are not substitutes for joy.” “We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us.”*

+ *“No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it. Those who seek, find. To those who knock, it is opened.”*

C. S. Lewis quotes about Joy. azquotes.com

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Three Readings for the Day 1-27-19

“You Are the Body of Christ”

A. The First Reading – assembling the congregation

B. The Second Reading – varieties of gifts

C. The Gospel – such good news!!

A Luther Sermon Quote: (From an exposition of 1 Peter 4:8 from 1539 in which he quotes 1 Corinthians 12:23) *It never fails at times you do and say something that disgusts me, and I do and say something that does not please you at all, just as*

one member of the body injures another, the teeth biting the tongue, the fingers poking into the eyes, etc. Yet this is not done intentionally. Whenever it happens, we should follow St. Peter's teaching and not only bear one another's burden, not only cover up failings and shortcomings, but also excuse and extenuate them, as St. Paul teaches. He says (1 Corinthians 12:23) "Those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. (Plass, What Luther Says, 1581, p. 525)