

Put on the Eyes of Faith On at Epiphany

By: Howard Huntzinger

We look forward to the Christmas season (reaching its climax in Epiphany) and remember Jesus Christ (the Anointed One) coming as a little baby. But Christmas and Epiphany have so much more meaning than looking at a cute baby who would someday become a king. Epiphany is a time when we, like the wise men, are called to travel in faith seeking the king. Each Epiphany is God giving us the grace each year to see Jesus as more than a little child, but the presence of the Warrior King come to earth.

The Eucharist at mass looks and tastes like bread, but it also is so much more. Jesus has changed (transubstantiated) this bread fully into his body, blood, soul and divinity. God calls us to look at him with the eyes of faith. The Gospel of Luke tells us of the prophet Simeon that “it had been

revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord,” [that is the Christ] (Luke 2:25). With faith, Simeon was able to look past his own eyesight and see much more: a king, a warrior, the Messiah of the Lord. Simeon did not see a child that would someday become a king, a warrior, the Messiah of the Lord, but saw all these in action before him. Neither did the three wise men (Magi) travel a long distance to give to a baby gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, but their eyes of faith had them give homage and gifts to the newborn “King of the Jews” (cf. Matthew 2: 1-11).

God entered this world on Christmas day to fight and to win a battle, a victory won on the battlefield of the Cross thirty-one years later. He entered behind enemy lines, behind the battle lines

of sin and death as a Warrior King to defeat them. Remember that Saint Luke tells us that this Warrior King did not enter this world alone, but Luke tells us that “suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host [an army]... praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest” (Luke 2: 13-14). This was an announcement from heaven to the world that this King, this Warrior King had arrived, and this Good News was given to poor shepherds in the field.

At the time of Jesus, the Roman government declared that “Cesar is Lord”, but Saint Paul, the Apostles, the four writers of the Gospels declared in defiance that “No, the Good News is that Jesus is Lord!” Rome used the crucifix to invoke terror, to oppress anyone that would come against them. Rome used this power against Jesus. Catholics use the Cross in defiance of the world, saying that the Roman empire came against Jesus, the Great King, and Jesus rose from the dead, defeating the power of Rome and this world. Today many nations fear the Cross, for it symbolizes something they cannot control.

The coming of an angel announcing to Mary that she would give birth to Christ is God reminding us to start this season of Christmas and Epiphany by putting on the eyes of faith. Epiphany reminds us through the calling of three Gentile men that God did not come into the world to save a few, but all mankind (cf. John 3:16).

Let us allow our eyes to see more than a cute baby in the manger. Let us prepare our eyes to see with the eyes of faith the moment when a warrior king entered the world to bring salvation and victory to all mankind.

Christ is the reason for every season!

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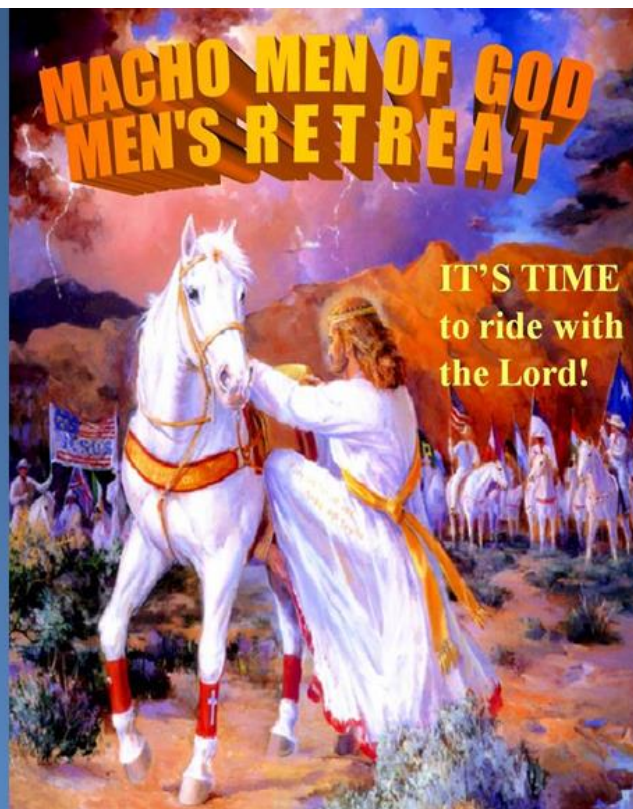


Howard
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