

Dear Members of St Paul's

In Him will the Gentiles hope.

-Romans 15:12

"What nation did the Wise Men belong? We don't know. That there were three of them and that they were kings is all legendary embellishment. But, as is so often the case, there is some truth to the legend. The Wise Men represent a longing for God that exists in all people. All over the world, people offer sacrifices and pray to God, they have worship services, they know that God is our Lord and has dominion over us. Throughout time, there have been those who, with great earnestness, have sought God and asked themselves how they can achieve the right kind of relationship with Him.

"This was one of the reasons people in ancient times studied the sky. They hoped to be able to interpret God's will by studying the paths of the planets. We have been able to preserve amazingly exact calculations of the movements of these heavenly bodies that were made for exactly this purpose. We know that at just about the time of Jesus' birth, something very uncommon and remarkable occurred among the stars, something that could have been interpreted as a sign that a leader was born, a leader that would usher in a new era for the world. We see here a glimpse of the truth even in astronomy, that otherwise would've been a search for God in an entirely erroneous way.

"It isn't only we who seek God, but God who seeks us. The Wise Men embody not only the hearts of men longing for God. They were able to recognize a sign in the heavens and they followed it. It turned out

that God led them the right way. He guided them to Bethlehem. They were able to meet the God who stepped out of the unknown and descended to earth and became man in order to make Himself known to us. Consequently, this story tells us that God, who created all people and awakened their longing for Him, also has intervened in this world with a salvation that is for all people, that answers all questions and guides all our longing to the final goal.

"To be a Christian means to be a servant of God and a steward when it comes to bringing the message from God to all people. At the time in question, the Wise Men journeyed very far and spared no pains to find Jesus. Now it's the Christian Church's calling to make the long journey and spare no effort to reach out to all people with the message of what happened in Bethlehem. The Gospel is for the whole world. We can't receive it without wanting to pass it on. The Light should shine and not be hidden!"

-Taken from Bishop Bo Giertz's,
To Live with Christ. pp. 804-5

Joy, Pastor Smith

