

Devotions with Matt

April 17, 2020

WISDOM

I saw a comic strip some time ago that had two older ladies speaking to one another about the Christmas story found in the Bible. One lady said to the other, "I can believe the virgin birth, but finding 3 wise men is a hard one to grasp." I'm sure that joke gets different reactions from different people depending on your perspective.

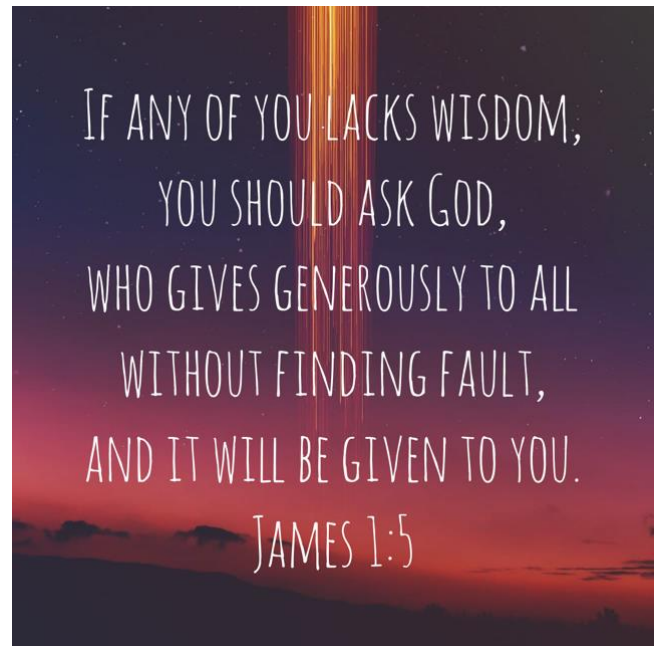
But that's where we are in the book of Matthew as I go through it and use chunks of Scripture for a devotion. The wise men, or Magi as they're called, came from the East to find the One who "has been born the King of the Jews." We always assume there were 3 of them, but that is just based on the number of gifts (gold, incense and myrrh) they brought to give to this new born King. They saw a star that proclaimed his birth and followed it on their journey to get there. However they knew what the star meant and why this was important to them we may never know. Never-the-less, they followed it and arrived at the manger where Jesus lay in Bethlehem.

The Magi were probably astrologers, probably practiced magic and most likely were followers of the Zoroastrian religion. We call these men wise, not because of their background or because they figured out what the star meant, but rather because they followed it and paid homage to The One True King. The Bible talks a lot about what wisdom is, but is really boiled down to its foundation in Proverbs 9:10 where Solomon says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." Wisdom is knowing there is a God and He is to be followed and obeyed.

King Solomon is said to have been the wisest person to have ever lived. His wisdom in his day was legendary and kings, queens, philosophers and God-seekers from all over the world came to listen to him speak. His wisdom earned him a great deal of wealth and was probably one of the richest people ever to live on this planet. He used his wealth to build The Temple that his father David had planned for and it was one of the great splendors of the world. He used his wisdom for good.

But he also used it for the wrong reasons. He had prayed to God for wisdom and God had granted it, but he began to take God's wisdom for granted. He began to use it for his own good, his own pleasures and his own will. His sins against God included idolatry, marrying foreign women (who led him astray) and, ultimately, he turned away from God. All that led to the kingdom being torn in two during the reign of his son Rehoboam. Solomon began to seek wisdom for wisdom's sake and not use his gift of wisdom for God's sake. Solomon used wisdom to advance his own cause and standing, which is no wisdom at all. True wisdom is knowing there is a God and we are not Him. Wisdom leads to a closer relationship with Him- not father away.

The lesson we can learn from the good example of the Magi, and the bad example from Solomon, is that true wisdom is humility towards God. We may not have gold, frankincense or myrrh, but the greatest gifts we can bring Him are our egos, statures and desires and lay them at His feet. We humbly say in our minds that His ways and His thoughts are so far greater than my ways and my thoughts. We humbly believe in our souls that He is our Creator and knows us, and the life we are to live, better than we do- and then living it out. True



wisdom is humbly submitting our hearts to Him knowing that He is God and we are not. All other wisdom apart from that is foolishness in God's sight and leads to destruction.

True wisdom, letting God be God in our lives, leads to true life. Let us be wise and recognize today that He is God and we are not. Any other kind of wisdom is no wisdom at all.

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.” James 1:5

In Christ,

Matt