

Wisdom is Not Enough: Study Questions

Matthew 2:1-18; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Little Trinity Church

9 January 2022

1. What do you typically think of when you think of the Wise Men?

Read Matthew 2:1-18

2. In the sermon, James suggested that the Wise Men were astrologers. What was one way he suggested we could make sense of them being guided by what we believe to be a pseudo scientific discipline? Can you think of ways to apply that to your own relationships with people whose beliefs differ from yours?

“God meets us where we are. God doesn’t wait for us to have a “correct” scientific world view and a perfected theology before engaging us. God simply responds with unseemly indiscretion and haste to any evidence of an honest longing for truth, for wisdom, wherever and whenever those are found - and wherever they may take us.”

3. Though it is only implicit in the text, James suggested that the Wise Men stopped following the guiding star once they were in Judea. First, do you think that is a legitimate reading of the text? If so, is there a meaningful take-away for us from that in our own lives of faith? Does the 1st Corinthians reading help us with some clarity on this?

“Throughout our lives we will be tempted to rely upon our own knowledge, experience, wisdom and ability when faced with something that looks and feels familiar.... human and Divine wisdom are very different creatures. So different, in fact, that Divine wisdom looks like foolishness to the wisdom of this world. Now this is not an invitation to anti intellectualism but rather an invitation to a humble acknowledgement of our limitations as humans.... being able to acknowledge the limitations of our capacity to know and to understand will make it easier for us to offer our natural gifts, abilities, experiences and insights to the ongoing guidance of the Spirit rather than to set them up in conflict against the Spirit.”

4. James’ final take-away from our text was that the kingdoms of this world are very different from the Kingdom of God. What key difference did he focus on?

“In the Kingdom of God you lead by serving and you live by dying. Kings are born in stables and victory is won by defeat and death on a cross.”

The kingdoms and institutions of this world are about regulation.... The Kingdom of God, however, is not about regulation, it is about transformation.

5. Question for further reflection: How cooperative are we with the Spirit's work of transformation in our lives?

Because more than one person has mentioned the words of the song I quoted at the end of the sermon, I will repeat them here: “If you come to Him, you’ll hear Him say: ‘I love you too much to leave you this way.’”