

December 18 - Rev. David K. Rawls

Matthew 2:9-12

Looking For God Even When We Do Not Know God

The Magi were looking for a King, so they stopped to ask directions from King Herod. Herod had an alternative motive in helping these foreign astronomers find this so called messiah. Herod wanted no one to challenge his power, so he was willing to do anything to take out his competition even if it meant killing infant boys. After Herod instructed them to check out Bethlehem, he asked them to report back to him if they found the child they were searching for. The Magi went on their way continuing to follow the star that had brought them to this point in their journey. The star settled over a small house and it is in this small house they found the child and his mother Mary, where they bowed down and worship him. The child at this point is several months old and in seeing the child Jesus; they opened their treasures and offered him their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. In a dream, God spoke to the Magi and reminded them that King Herod was a man who could not be trusted, so they returned to their country by another route.

This scripture reminds me of two things. **First:** God works through ordinary people even if they are not followers of God. These three men did not know the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; yet they had studied the stars and they knew there was going to be a new king who would bring a new hope to the world. They followed the star until it led them to the small house where Jesus was living with his parents, Joseph and Mary, and they honored this new born child with gifts. God is the creator of all of us and even if we do not acknowledge him he still speaks to those of us who will listen. The Magi listened, studied and followed a God they did not know, but in the end they came to know God.

Second: God leads us even when we do not know why or where we are going. The magi followed a star they thought was going to guide them to find a king. The first king they encountered was not a very nice guy, and they came to see he was not the king they were looking for. He even pretended to be their friend and suggested they check out the town of Bethlehem as the place they might find this new savior king. All they knew was this new star was pointing to new possibilities in a dark and corrupt world. They were living on a "Hope" of what just might be. A savior for the world. When the star came to rest over the small house in Bethlehem, they found what they were looking for. A new born King who would become the Savior of the world. If you want to find what you do not know why or what you are looking for, you have to trust in the still small voice that says: "Follow Me." God did that through a star and a prophecy and it led the Magi to discover a God they did not know. In the end it was their willingness to trust in the unknown and the unseen that led them to Jesus.

Whether you are or are not a follower of Jesus, know that God can work through you even if you do not know why and where you are going. For God is always God at work in the world.

Father, thank you for leading us even when we do not know or recognize your presence in our lives. Help me in this season of Advent to recognize and to follow your will for my life. Amen