

Wise men – Sermon January 3, 2021

Remember Y2K? It was the fear that something catastrophic was going to happen when the year turned from 1999 to 2000. It was thought that there might be a fatal error in all our computer programming. That when the clocks struck midnight the computers might not understand what year it actually had become. They would not be able to distinguish between the year 2000 and the year 1900.

We worried that communications might break down, planes might lose their equipment midflight, and hospitals put in plans for their equipment to go down.

So what happened at midnight as 1999 turned into a new millennium? Virtually nothing. Personal computers didn't crash, the stock market didn't crash, and the evangelicals were not caught up in the clouds with the rapture.

The anticipation did not live up to the expectations.

There was a much more personal reason that I was feeling disappointed that New Year as well. As with most of my stories that have to do with disappointment and loss it revolved around my drinking.

There were a group of our friends that had decided that we would look at the turn of the millennium as an opportunity to share our creativity with each other. Painting, design, and poetry. We would spend the better part of the year talking to each other about our creative projects.

I had spent time studying poetry and poetry writing so I was determined that this gave me the opportunity to shine. I would write an amazing group of poems that would prove my prowess as a major poet.

I spent part of the year composing 100 poems. Yet, the majority of the year was spent on me editing. I became obsessed with editing, and editing, and then editing again. I printed out rough drafts and then marked the documents up with my corrections. I would put in my corrections to the original poems and then I would repeat the process.

Carol and I visited New York City right after that Christmas to meet with friends and reveal the products of our year. I panicked, I still had edits to do to perfect these poems. I found a pub in Greenwich Village that made me think of Bob Dylan and sat down to edit.

I don't remember getting much editing done. I do remember drinking a lot and staggering the half block back to the apartment my friend lived in at that time. The next day I awoke with a hangover that had a personality all its own.

While drinking my morning coffee I gradually understood the startling reality.

I had left my poetry in that bar, in that booth near the window, a stack of paper that meant nothing to anyone but me.

When I returned to the bar the truth was unavoidable. A year's worth of poetry was gone. I was crushed.

I saw a wonderful painting and some great graphics, but just like the apocalypse that Y2K was supposed to unleash my promised act of creativity never happened.

It has not been lost on commentators over the centuries that it is the Wise and the shepherds where the ones who are attendants at the Epiphany of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

That those of lowly estate and those who exhibit wisdom will seek the son of God.

It is also not lost on many that those who seek power, those who want to keep power, those who want to own Jesus as a product, and those who think that Jesus poses a threat to their power seek him as well.

Different reasons for seeking the savior. There is only one path this New Year which will lead to life. It is the path of wisdom. All the others, in the reflection of history, will be shown to be fallow.

They will be the unfulfilled dreams of an alcoholic begging Jesus, the power used by politicians who use Jesus as a firewall for their policies, the wealthy who think that their gains originate from a humble carpenter, they will be empty self-help with little substance.

Wisdom is our hope in seeking the savior. Let's begin seeking him today.