

THE WISEMEN'S BUCKET LIST
Epiphany Sunday –January 7, 2018 --Matthew 2: 1-12 –Communion
The Church of the Covenant

“Gee, I could’ve had a V-8!” Remember that old V-8 juice commercial? Epiphany. That’s an epiphany, albeit a small one. “Eureka, I have found it!” shouted out famed ancient Greek mathematician, architect, and scientist, Archimedes, when he had a huge breakthrough. Epiphany. That’s an epiphany, albeit a larger one. When the Wisemen of old came seeking the King whom they had seen heralded in the heavens, when they FINALLY found HIM, as it says, *“They fell down and worshipped him.” (Matthew 2: 11)* Epiphany. The Wisemen had the greatest epiphany ever told; the greatest breakthrough ever; the wildest most profound Eureka that could ever hope to be. Little did they suspect that when they set out to fulfill their bucket list of discovering the meaning to the star they had seen in the heavens that they would discover their new life, sheltered in a manger and wrapped in swaddling cloths...Epiphany...literally meaning “revelation” *epiphanes* in the Greek (revelation of God).

Most of our bucket lists go something like this...“I’d like to see the Grand Canyon. I’d like to bowl a perfect game. I’d like to skydive or bungee jump or whatever...” I don’t mean this unkindly, but the kind of epiphany that might produce is more on the level of “Gee, I could’ve had a V-8” than “Eureka, I have found the source of all my life!” Our bucket lists are like our “To-do lists” “Go to Giant Eagle”. Pick up dry cleaning. “Take the car to the mechanic.” Check. Check. Double check. Tick off the boxes and done. Wouldn’t expect much of an epiphany there, would we? And when we check off those items on our bucket list it is over. Maybe we were there and accomplished whatever we thought we had set out to accomplish. But did we learn anything? Did we have any profound breakthroughs? Are we different because we did that item on our list? Did it make a difference or not? The difference with a spiritual epiphany is that once you experience that, it isn’t over; its only just begun...

Say, you can go to church and that’s on your “To-do List”. Checked off that box this week. Or you can go to church seeking a vital encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ that will move you in some profound way to see the world differently, to be a different person, to have different priorities and perspectives. “Go to church” is like an item on your bucket list. But whether it leads to anything more, ah, that’s the question. Most of us go through the motions of life according to our checklists, or our “To-do lists” or even our bucket lists. But something more real and profound requires an epiphany, a spiritual breakthrough. Real breakthroughs in life require items on our SPIRITUAL BUCKET LIST in order for them to happen. The Bible puts it this way...“Don’t be conformed to this world (that’s our regular ordinary to do list) but be TRANSFORMED by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 10: 2) Epiphany! Real breakthroughs in our life come from real spiritual breakthroughs in our heart and mind first.

And over the years we’ve all established lists of things to do that have never seen the light of day. 1) Lose weight; 2) read the Bible from cover to cover; 3) make amends with my Mother

in law; 4) Climb Mt. Everest; (sure, Sir Edmund) 5) make the Canadian Olympic Curling Team... Those things which GOD places on your bucket list will be those things you actually accomplish on your bucket list because God will give you the wisdom, strength and courage to actually accomplish those things which HE purposes in your life. When it's a Spiritual item on your bucket list, then there is an epiphany from God (that's how you know it's a spiritual item) and then God gives the gift of the Holy Spirit in order to enable us to actually do and accomplish the very thing which the Lord God has placed on your bucket list to do and to be.

But before it all you have to seek after God's epiphany. The Wisemen began by seeking. They began by inquiring: "Where is he who has been born King of the Jews?" (Matthew 2: 2) Their quest and their question was a spiritual one and so their journey was a spiritual journey as well. But they began with a question hurled at the universe. **Where is HE?** Where is the One who gives meaning and purpose to life? Where is HE who can be born again into my heart who will make all things new? Where is the One who is life itself and who will bring life itself in new and powerful and spiritual ways into my heart and into my life? Where is HE??????

The sequence is FIRST we begin by SEEKING. Second, we begin by asking God what should be on our spiritual bucket list; second step is ASKING. Then there is something that happens that causes SPIRITUAL BREAKTHROUGH and our eyes and hearts and minds are opened; third step is EPIPHANY...inbreaking...revelation from God...Eureka, I have found it...transformation. Last step is worship the One from whom the epiphany comes; like the Wisemen of old we FALL DOWN and WORSHIP HIM and we give HIM every gift, far more than gold and frankincense and myrrh, and we give away all the self-glory and all the wishlists ever created in our own heart and mind.

How about this for a bucket list? 1) Where is Jesus Christ going to be born and newly born for me this year?; Where is HE who is born King of the Jews to be found?; 2) I want to come to worship every communion Sunday because I believe I will find HIM in this sacrament; 3) I want to come to church twice as much as I regularly do because He is found where He has always been found; 4) I would like to read the Bible from cover to cover to find HIM in the pages of scripture; 5) I would like to find HIM in selflessly committing to giving myself, my time, my gifts away in service to others; 6) I would like to find HIM in the stillness of prayer and in a deepening personal relationship with the Lord of the Universe. Where is HE, Lord? Where is HE to be born in me this year????? Now there's a bucket list for ya!

You will find HIM when you seek HIM with all of your heart, mind and strength. It is the epiphany of the wisemen. It is the essence of the Wisemen's Bucket List.

Eureka! I have found it! No, not "it". Eureka, I have found HIM! Amen and Amen!

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, PA
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*