

January 6, 2009

Dear Members and Friends of Gethsemane,

Today is Epiphany, or King Day, for those who can't understand plain Greek. This is the day we remember the visit of the Wise Men. By their visit, we see Jesus revealed as King for the first time, as they worship and offer expensive gifts.

One unmistakable emphasis of this season is shown to us by the star that shone in a far-away place. The significance of that fact has led the church to focus during the Epiphany season on reaching out to all the people of the world with the good news of Christ's coming. Christ came for ALL people – not just the Jews, not just the Christians, but for all those who are on the “outside.” He came in order to call all people to come to him, for it is only in him that there is salvation.

This year, during Epiphany, we will focus on our theme for this year – *LIFE OF POWER* – *LIFE OF WITNESS*. Our theme verse for the overall series is in Acts 1:8: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses.”

These words of Jesus are the church's marching orders. Over the next two months, we will see that we HAVE BEEN empowered by the Spirit, because of our relationship with Jesus. That Spirit was symbolized for the disciple by tongues of fire on their heads when he came. That power compelled the disciples to share what they knew.

Our goal in this series is to fan the flame of the Spirit so that we cannot resist his call to be witnesses. Witnessing is the reason God leaves us on this earth after we become his children, and it is the ONLY reason the church exists. We are the body of Christ on earth and the continuation of his own ministry.

I invite you to make every effort to be at worship during this time. Pray that the Spirit will show you how you can be a witness. You already have the power, the flame. Let's all fan the flame together – to the glory of God.

Also, our Adult Bible Class will consider what witnessing is by studying a book called, strangely enough, WITNESS. Please join us each Sunday at 9:15.

God Bless you during this Epiphany season. Pastor Jim