

BEGINNINGS

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Psalm 111:10

At Epiphany we remember the three wise men; the three kings who journeyed far to bring their gifts to the Lord Jesus at His birth. These kings, considered wise and high in stature, came to the Lord in reverence and fear to bow before Him. They knew He was holy. They did not tremble before Him but knelt before Him, knowing that Jesus is the One in possession of all power and wisdom. Their recognition of the Lord Jesus as King over kings illustrated their smallness before Greatness. With quiet fear and holy love the wise men followed the star to Jesus.

Are you following Jesus today? Loss may be part of your life this season, and therefore, conscious following of Jesus may not seem to be part of your daily course. Serious loss may have come unexpectedly or anticipated loss that you could not prevent. Human fear may be stirring in you as try to cope, carry on, and plan for tomorrow without whom and what you had yesterday. To follow Jesus may be difficult because focus on anyone or anything is hard right now. But the mere whisper of Jesus' Name brings comfort and healing. Letting His Name be on your lips brings assurance to the heart. Fearing Him and concurrently trusting Him to be with you and to hold you in a time of loss are signs of wisdom. It means you are following Jesus even if you do not feel you are doing so. He understands. He loves you. Completely. Trust His love for you. It is perfect.

The Lord created us for fellowship with Him. He wants to go through everything with us. The beautiful bridge of prayer at any time or place allows us warm and ready relationship with Jesus. Prayer fosters closeness with God in Christ. As we turn the corner from 2011 and enter into a new year of God's grace, 2012 will hold its share of uncertainties. The unknowns include the people we will meet, relationships that will develop, relationships that will conclude in one form, places we will go, inspiration that comes, and differences we will make in God's world for Christ's sake. The next generous portion of time God gives to us will include matters new, wondrous, and maybe perplexing. But the God of Israel will be in the center of it all. If we recognize the fluidity of His power at all times and all places, we will fear Him yet trust Him, and be endowed with more wisdom.

Fear as a beginning! How can it be that fear leads to something beneficial—the gain of wisdom. But in God's Word it is clear that fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. How much wisdom do we want? It is measured by how much we want God and desire to know Him through His Word. May His coming year find us filled with more wisdom from the Lord and greater love for the Lord.

Lord, to fear You is to know Your power and yet be wrapped in Your love. May every beginning bring us closer to You. In Thee, Lord Jesus, Amen.