



March 6, 2022

“Nativity Encounter”

Matthew 2:1-11

Introduction

Two kinds of knowing God: Idea and Encounter

Pressing on to know God: Hosea 6:3

Seeking as consistent persistent concentrated focus

What kind of encounter should we be looking for?

The danger of expectation

Six kinds of divine encounter we see in the Scriptures

The Highland Lent Devotional

The Opaque Default

The Garden of Eden and the ministry of Jesus

Seeing through a glass darkly: 1 Cor 13:12 (see also 2 Cor 4:18, 5:6; John 20:29)

Three hypotheses for the Opaque Default

Cardboard and Sun: no one can see my Face and live: Exodus 33:20

The short season for the faith muscle: Hebrews 11:1

The conundrum of the invisibility of the ubiquitous: Colossians 1:17

The “Nativity” Encounter

Where Jesus’ particular presence is muted but the trail of His activity is visible

The dramatic star in the eastern sky at the beginning and end of the Magi’s journey

The mildness of baby/toddler Jesus amplified by the circumstances pointing to Him

The footsteps or the floating scarf of the Invisible Man

To come into the house of someone who has just left it

My story of the dragonfly lights

The touchable tangible trail crystallizes the idea of God into our lived reality

One of the purposes of prayer: to highlight the movement of the invisible God

Our response to seeing God’s “stars”: exceeding joy and the offering of our gifts

Lent and Communion Introduction

Lent is a season in the church calendar covering 40 days (not including Sundays), and leads us into Holy Week and right up to Easter Sunday.

Lent is a season set aside for us to remind ourselves of our frailty, our weakness, our proneness to fall away from God. Its purpose is to arouse our awareness of our desperate need for the life of Jesus that will be poured out on Good Friday and confirmed as delivered on Easter Sunday. It is a season of humility, meant to turn us away from self-sufficiency, from complacency, from life on auto-pilot, into the posture uplifted hands, palms turned upwards, down on our knees—vulnerable, waiting, hoping, longing, seeking, looking, lamenting, praying, listening watching, and waiting some more.

This focus then is not for the purpose of morbidity but of catalyzing hunger. To taste the ash is to long for real bread. Hunger drives seeking. Seeking leads us into the posture to receive God and His life.

Communion during Lent brings this point home. The hunger of our need for life from outside ourselves is met in the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world and gives His body and real food and real drink. We come today to receive the body and the blood of Christ as a hungry people.

Come and taste and see that the Lord is good!