Daily Devotion #201

**Jesus Freaks**

**Matthew 2:1-2 (NASB)** *“Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem.”*

I remember many years ago my wife and I met some of her college friends reunion. Everyone came back to the school to tailgate and watch the football game. I also remember the man who was married to my wife’s friend and how he spent a lot of time with a beer can in his hand that day. In fact, I remember him going in to a local 7-11 store and being at the counter for a long time while we waited outside. When he came out, we asked why he was at the counter so long. He responded, “Oh, the lady was a Jesus freak and was telling me why I shouldn’t be buying beer.” Please understand, my wife and I were not drinking at all and haven’t to this day, and that is important because we had both been changed by the power of the Gospel. Our lives were different.

Many people, including many who attend church on a regular basis and many who profess to be followers of Christ, have a tendency to think of people who follow Jesus as “freakish” or a little off. That’s probably how some would describe the Magi. Imagine for a moment the people who the Magi left behind as they began their journey. What do you think that conversation was like as they told what they were doing? Do you think the conversation was something like:

Random person: “So where are you going and how long will you be gone”?

Magi: “Well, we have been studying the stars and we see a bright one in the western sky so we are going to follow it.”

Random person: “OK, so you are going to follow a star? Have fun with that. Oh, and how long did you say following the star would take?”

Magi: “We’re not sure, days, weeks, months or maybe longer. We will be gone as long as it takes.”

Random person: “And why are you following this star?”

Magi: “Oh, well because we believe there is a Baby being born who will be the King of all Kings and we want to go and worship Him.”

Random person: “Ok, so now we know you are weird. Have a nice life”.

I don’t know if that is what happened, but I can see how that would be possible because many, many people think following after Jesus is just plain weird. But not the Magi. They had been so convinced that what the prophet foretold was real that they were willing to spend their lives, or a good portion of their lives, looking for the baby. And not only that, but they were so convinced, they even brought gifts for Him.

They had such a determination to find Jesus and worship Him and bring Him gifts that they were willing to leave everything familiar to find Him. These Magi didn’t faint at the thought that God had been born in human flesh and that He was worth leaving the comforts and familiarity of life to find and worship.

Beloved, that is dedication. That is singular focus. That is having no other gods before Jesus. Not time, not family, not treasures, nothing. They risked their reputations and their very lives to seek Jesus. But isn’t that exactly what the followers of Christ are called to do? Leave everying or at least be willing to leave everything and everyone to follow Him? This I how the Lord put it in **Luke 14:25-27 (NASB)** *“Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them,’"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple*.’” To be clear, Jesus was not saying we should literally hate our family, but that He should be more important to us than than even they are. We are to follow him even if our family will not. Not that we leave them or stop caring for them, but that no one is to be more important that Jesus. That’s a great challenge. But that’s the point. Jesus is looking for people who the world will consider freakish because they love Him so. Is that you? Is there evidence for the world to call you a Jesus freak? It’s worth thinking about.