

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

The DEVO

JANUARY 8 - 12, 2024

JESUS

REVELATION

Epiphany Series
Jan 7 - Feb 11





MONDAY

Read **Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 3:4-15; Isaiah 6:1-8**

Epiphanies and Us

The season between Advent and Lent is called the season of Epiphany. What is an epiphany? It is an “Aha!” moment, a “come-to-Jesus” moment, a new realization, an understanding of something formerly hidden, finding a missing piece to a puzzle.

How do epiphanies come? By angelic visitations, dreams, visions. By prayer. By God’s grace and mercy. Through a comment or a “word.” Through music, a song, the words of a song. Through art, an encouragement, or a rebuke.

What do epiphanies do? They can unlock doors. They shed light in the darkness. They reveal hidden secrets. Epiphanies can also come through Scripture reading (Psalm 119:105). In both Advent and Epiphany, Jesus—“*the Light of the world*” (John 18:12)—shines light in our darkness.

In the Bible epiphanies start in Genesis, continue in Exodus, and finish in Revelation. God’s covenant with Abraham was that “*all the families of the earth would be blessed through his seed*” (Genesis 12:3). After Hagar’s epiphany, she exclaimed, “*You are the God who sees me*” (Genesis 16:13). God commissioned Moses at the burning bush

to go back to Egypt to free His people from slavery, revealing His name to be “*I AM WHO I AM*” (YHWH or Yahweh; Exodus 3:14). Isaiah is full of epiphanies, including when he saw “*the Lord high and exalted*” (Isaiah 6:1) and when a seraph (angel) touched Isaiah’s mouth with a hot coal (6:7).

God knows what epiphanies we need, and how many. Paul didn’t want to appear boastful of his epiphany experiences, thus he spoke of “*a man*” he knew who had them (2 Corinthians 12:1-5). John wrote down the epiphanies he had at the Roman penal colony on the Isle of Patmos. It is only because of the Lamb who was slain (Revelation 5:6-14) that we have life in God’s kingdom, forgiveness of sins, and a relationship with God. John’s epiphany of this underscores the amazing truth of God’s amazing grace.

QUESTIONS

What epiphanies (“Aha!” moments) have you had? How did they come? What did they do for you? Did they change the way you think about things? Did they change the way you live?

PRAYER

For Churches in the Glendora Ministerial Association

Please pray for Cornerstone Bible Church and First Christian Church. Pray for God to bolster each individual’s walk with the Lord, to encourage and grow them in the ways God desires, and to provide in all aspects needed for the congregation, staff, and volunteers.



TUESDAY

Read [Luke 4:16-22](#); [Luke 24:25-27](#); [John 12:30](#)

Jesus and Epiphanies

Did Jesus even have epiphanies? In the fullness of His preincarnate deity, no. Within His human limitations, perhaps. The Bible does not indicate when the Jesus became aware of His deity. Was it at birth? We know that the Savior had become aware by age 12, as panicky Joseph and Mary realized that they had forgotten Him in Jerusalem. Upon their finding Him at the temple among the rabbis, Jesus asked His mother and stepfather knowingly, *“Did you not know that I must be in My Father’s house?”* (Luke 2:49).

The Gospels record a voice from heaven three times: at His baptism by John (Mark 1:11); at the Mount of the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:15); and during the events of His final week, Holy Week (John 12:28). At the third instance, Jesus said the voice from heaven was not for His benefit, but for the benefit of others who heard it (John 12:30).

Jesus marveled at the unbelief He experienced in His hometown of Nazareth (Mark 6:6). When the woman with the 12-year discharge of blood touched His robe in a crowd, Jesus inquired, *“Who was it that touched Me? Someone touched Me, for I perceive that power has gone out from Me”* (Luke 8:45-46). Jesus was amazed at the faith of the Roman centurion, who sent his assistants to have Jesus

heal his sick servant. The centurion said, “*You don’t have to come to my house; just say the word and he will be healed*” (Matthew 8:8).

Luke wrote that Jesus grew in stature and matured in wisdom. In the human limitations Jesus took on in coming to earth, He learned. He read the scrolls. After ministering in and around Capernaum, Jesus returned to Nazareth, and was asked to read from the scrolls on the Sabbath. He read from Isaiah and thereby revealed Himself—an epiphany for listeners willing to receive it—via the scroll.

On the road to Emmaus, Jesus explained to Cleopas and his friend the Scriptures that referred to Himself. Once again, He revealed Himself in Scripture to others on hand, an epiphany for them.

QUESTIONS

Have you found yourself in Scripture? Where? As God’s Word, Scripture is life-giving. And when that life comes to us, we find ourselves in the story that Scripture is talking about.

PRAYER

For Churches in the Glendora Ministerial Association

Please pray for Glendora United Methodist Church and Vineyard Church Glendora. Pray for God to bolster each individual’s walk with the Lord, to encourage and grow them in the ways God desires, and to provide in all aspects needed for the congregation, staff, and volunteers.



WEDNESDAY

Read [Luke 19:1-10](#); [John 4:4-42](#)

Zacchaeus' Epiphany

Zacchaeus was a tax collector in Jericho. He was short. He was rich. He was despised. AND he was unhappy.

In His lifetime on earth, Jesus would have traveled through Jericho on His way to and from Jerusalem on occasion. I suspect that each had heard about the other—the rabbi and the tax collector—but perhaps they had never met until that fateful day.

Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was passing through Jericho. He wanted to see for himself this Man about whom he had heard so much. He had heard rumors about healings and stories of deliverance from demons. Maybe Jesus had the answer to his unhappiness—to whatever was missing in his life.

Zacchaeus went to the parade route, but the crowd was too big and the people too tall. He couldn't see, because he was too short, so he climbed up a large sycamore tree and was on a branch looking down. And here came Jesus. But Jesus did not pass by—He stopped. With that, Zacchaeus' world stopped. And Jesus looked up and addressed Zacchaeus by name. Jesus knew who he was. He was telling him to come down. He was inviting Himself over to Zacchaeus' house. Zacchaeus may have thought momentarily, “Oh no—now I'm

in for it! Jesus must know how tax collectors like me take advantage of their own countrymen, profiting at fellow Jews' expense." But the epiphany here: Jesus had the opposite in mind.

Everything in Zacchaeus' world was changing on a dime. Everything was going to be different. Zacchaeus found himself befriended by Jesus that day. And we find Zacchaeus in Scripture because of Jesus.

One other life-changing moment came when the woman at the well near Sychar, Samaria, encountered Jesus per chapter 4 of John's Gospel. She told Him in so many words, "I know when the Messiah comes, He will clear up everything." *"Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am He'"* (John 4:26). This encounter didn't just change her; it changed the whole town. As with Zacchaeus, Jesus could have summarized, *"Today salvation has come to this house"* (Luke 19:9).

QUESTIONS

How are you like Zacchaeus? Are you finding yourself in Jesus? Zacchaeus took a little step toward Jesus, and Jesus took a giant step toward him. Would you like an experience like that? What would it require of you to have Jesus come over to your house for a visit?

PRAYER

For Churches in the Glendora Ministerial Association

Please pray for Glendora Community Church and First Baptist Church. Pray for God to bolster each individual's walk with the Lord, to encourage and grow them in the ways God desires, and to provide in all aspects needed for the congregation, staff, and volunteers.



THURSDAY

Read **Acts 17:16-34; 2 Corinthians 5:16**

Paul's Epiphany

“We don't look at people's appearance or judge them by their dialect anymore. We did that with Jesus, and got it all wrong” (Paul to the Corinthian church, 2 Corinthians 5:16 *The Message*).

Paul was a devout Jew. It isn't that Paul didn't know and believe the Scriptures; as a Pharisee, he was an expert in these matters. He was personally mentored by Israel's most accomplished and prestigious teacher, Gamaliel. Paul knew that God was sending a Messiah to rescue Israel from oppression. Imagine his shock to find out firsthand that Jesus—this homeless, rogue Teacher whose agenda addressed reconciliation with God versus Israel's political or military interests—was their Messiah, his Messiah!

The ramifications of this shook him to the core and reverberated throughout his world, and ours. The Messiah wasn't just for the Jews; He was for the Gentiles too—all of them. Jesus was the “*Son of David*” (Matthew 12:23); however, He was also the “*Son of Man*” (Matthew 25:51) with a redemptive agenda spanning all of humankind and fallen creation.

N.T. Wright brought this idea of Paul's paradigm shift to my attention for the first time in his biography *Paul*. I'm sure it was there before; I just didn't see it.

Paul gave his life planting churches (communities of faith in Jesus) throughout the Roman empire. In Athens, Greece, he didn't plant a church, but he communicated the fact that Jesus was ***for them*** and the whole world. He found cultural equivalents to build bridges that they could relate to and make his point: Jesus was their Messiah, too.

If He is your Messiah, your personal Lord and Savior, would it be an epiphany for others to learn this about you? Are you content to be a "stealth Christian," avoiding "difficult conversations" due to concerns about offending others? God used Paul mightily following his conversion on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). Thereafter, Paul founded numerous churches throughout the Mediterranean and penned about half of the New Testament. How might God be calling you to be more "Paul-like" in 2024?

QUESTIONS

When did you realize Jesus was your Messiah? Who in your world needs to know that Jesus is for them?

PRAYER

For Churches in the Glendora Ministerial Association

Please pray for Grace Church Glendora and Saint Dorothy Catholic Church. Pray for God to bolster each individual's walk with the Lord, to encourage and grow them in the ways God desires to, and to provide in all aspects needed for the congregation, staff, and volunteers.



FRIDAY

Read **Revelation 5:6-14**

John's Epiphany

“You are worthy to take the scroll and open its seals, because You were slain, and with Your blood You purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.” (Revelation 5:9)

Paul's epiphany on the road to Damascus may have had some similarities to John's epiphany on the Isle of Patmos, wherein the Revelator saw people from every tribe and tongue worshiping Jesus all around God's heavenly throne. It was a picture of the implications of Jesus being the Messiah realized. This is what we have to look forward to. We might as well get used to the idea by recognizing and embracing our brothers and sisters in the family of God here and now. We can celebrate Jesus as the One who brings us together and makes us God's family.

You don't have to go on a missionary trip to meet and enjoy the fellowship of people very different from you in language or culture or outlook. Sometimes the people we meet are hurting. We can empathize with their pain and pray for them. We can walk alongside them. And we do.

Jesus is the Lamb that was slain, so that we could be part of His family, adoptees into God's eternal family. And He has interceded for us on our present journey (Hebrews 7:25). He sends people to help us and partner with us on the journey.

My favorite book on Revelation is more of a handbook on discipleship than a book on prophecy. Darrell W. Johnson wrote *Discipleship on the Edge: An Expository Journey through the Book of Revelation*. John shares his epiphanies with the disciples in the churches of Asia Minor, today's Western Turkey, who were facing difficult situations, too. He encouraged them by giving them "a new set of glasses" to see "a vision of heaven that gives us an even clearer vision of earth." (Johnson) "*Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses (our sisters and brothers in the faith), let us ... [look] to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith*" (Hebrews 12:1-2).

QUESTIONS

Who has God sent your way to join you on the journey? Some of the people He sends us are difficult, and sometimes we are the difficult ones, but God can and does help us see everything through His perspective, like He did for John on the Isle of Patmos.

PRAYER

For Churches in the Glendora Ministerial Association

Please pray for Grace Episcopal Church, Glendora Friends Church, and La Casa Church. Pray for God to bolster each individual's walk with the Lord, to encourage and grow them in the ways God desires, and to provide in all aspects needed for the congregation, staff, and volunteers.

Sources

- N.T. Wright, *Paul: A Biography* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2020).
- Darrell W. Johnson, *Discipleship on the Edge: An Expository Journey through the Book of Revelation* (Vancouver, BC: Canadian Church Leaders Network, 2021), 144.

These devotionals are written by a team of Glenkirk volunteers who represent a range of beliefs within the evangelical spectrum. As such, some of the expressed views may not necessarily represent those of pastoral leadership. If you find yourself challenged by a devo, explore why that might be and, should you have questions or concerns, please reach out to Pastor Kate Wallace Nunneley at KNunneley@GlenkirkChurch.org. If you are interested in joining those who pen Glenkirk devotionals, please contact Pastor Kate.



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