

Devotional

IKEA Epiphanies

January 3, 2021

Monday

Read Matthew 2:1-12

Epiphanies, big and small, change our lives and change the world.

This happened to Gillis Lundgren in 1956. Lundgren was working as a draftsman in a small Swedish village for a fledgling entrepreneur and furniture maker named Ingvar Kamprad. Kamprad had started a mail order furniture business to cater to the remote farmers of Sweden. Lundgren was the fourth employee of the company.

One day, Lundgren designed a coffee table and built it in his home. But after he built it he found that he could not fit it in his car to take back to the office. So, he cut off the legs, packed them on top of the tabletop, and drove to the office so the table could be photographed for the catalog. In doing so, Lundgren unintentionally birthed the flatpack furniture industry and helped turn the small firm he worked for, IKEA, into a home furnishings retailer with over 400 stores around the world, 208,000 employees, one billion store visits a year, with over \$50 billion in sales per year. IKEA sells a bookcase line called the Billy that sells one unit every three seconds.

What are some big realizations – some epiphanies – you had in 2020?

Tuesday

Read Matthew 2:1-12 (again, yes)

The wise men, a group from a different ethnic, cultural, and religious background go and honor Jesus as a new and glorious king. Herod, the ruler of the Jewish people, and his chief religious leaders and scholars want to murder Jesus, the new king.

The insiders don't understand, but the outsiders get it. The leaders are blind to the witness of scripture, but the wise men are given grace to see.

God's revelation unfolds to the wise men in three parts:

1. The star – revelation by creation
2. Scripture – revelation by scripture
3. Child in Bethlehem – revelation by Christ

God's revelation is ignored by the leaders: they ignore the significance of the star and the visit of the foreigners, they ignore the holy significance of the scripture they quote, they ignore the King who has come.

What do you need to pay better attention to today?

Wednesday

Read Isaiah 60:1-6

The light of Israel has come and it is to be the light of the world. God set Israel apart to be the light for the nations and the prophet Isaiah (in 49:6) says that the role of light to the nations has been reassigned to the coming Servant-Messiah. And all the nations will come around the light that is the Messiah. The wise men are the first who come from the world to see the Light of the World – Jesus Christ. All these years later, the Light still burns bright and invites you to come worship and be transformed into a child of light.

How do you want to worship Jesus this week?

Thursday

Read Psalm 72

May the Epiphany – that Jesus is for you and for the whole world – be more real in your life today than ever before. If you have not experienced that epiphany, pray, wait, and hope. If you have, how will you continue to respond in 2021? The wise men respond by travelling afar, studying, giving gifts, and worshipping. How will you respond?

Friday

On this coming Sunday, we will start our new sermon series, *I Believe: Faith for Today*, which will use the Apostles Creed and the scripture the creed is based on to tackle important questions about our faith and how it intersects with our daily lives.

Do you remember the Apostles Creed? Can you recite it? If not, you'll learn it by the time we are done with our series – look it up in the meantime.

Please read and reflect upon Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 as we prepare for Sunday worship.