

THE FOURTH WISE MAN

Konrad Fernandez



Most of us know of the three wise men who follow the guiding star, and visit the child Jesus with gifts.

In 1895 **Henry Van Dyke** wrote this beautiful short novel called “**The Story of the Other Wise Man.**”

What’s the story about? This fourth wise man also sees the same signs in the heavens and sets out to find the Child Jesus; carrying his gifts of a Sapphire, a Ruby, and a very precious Pearl. But nothing goes as planned. He misses his rendezvous with the other three wise men because he is delayed helping a dying man. Now, to cross the desert alone he needs camels and supplies and sells one of his treasures to buy them. He arrives late in Bethlehem after saving the life of a child using another of his treasures. In the meantime, the child Jesus has left Bethlehem.

And after many years looking for Jesus and many acts of charity, he spends his last treasure to save a girl from being sold into slavery. He dies without ever finding Jesus, but as he is dying, he hears the Divine voice saying, “...as you have done for them...you did for me”. His gifts were indeed accepted [by Jesus], and, in a sense, he found God in a deeper way than even the other wise men.

It’s a powerful story! And for me it offers some insights for the Christmas season:

1) When things don’t go our way, when we struggle, feel lost, when we endure hardships and delays, when the goal seems out of reach... This story is a reminder that, in fact, we may be closer to our goals than we think. That we may have traveled further than we realize, and that every delay and set back may be working in our favor in profound and wonderful ways. At the end of our journey, we may see all the hidden miracles which were disguised as hardships. But to see them now is a miracle of faith. And the Christmas story invites us to such a kind of **faith**.

2) The highest rewards call for sacrifice, patience, endurance and goodwill. We all know that nothing worthwhile comes easy. And as this wise man found his great reward after what seemed like an endless struggle, he stayed true to his cause, persisted, and nurtured within him the desire to do good in spite of every struggle. This is **a story of hope.** And Christmas urges us to look at any aspect of life where we have lost hope or are losing hope. Can we choose to hope even when everything seems lost, and seek the courage to endure?

3) The greatest gifts the wise man gave God were his acts of Charity. Giving without measuring. Giving repeatedly. Giving even though it cost him dearly. If Christmas is about anything of significance...it's about giving. It's about God giving us everything. And about how we continue that cycle of giving by sharing what we have. Perhaps we ask ourselves this Christmas how we can give others our time, our resources, our talent, our listening ear...or maybe just a small gesture to tell people we care about that they are not alone in their struggles. **A message of love.**

To me, it's really about these three things. **Faith. Hope. And Love.** And I believe this Christmas, like every Christmas, can become significant when we become bearers of the Divine light...by choosing faith, daring to hope, and committing to love others...even if in the smallest ways.

Mat 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/fourth-wise-man-what-christmas-can-mean-us-konrad-fernandez-lion->