

**Sermon Notes of  
Senior Pastor Glen Weber's Sermon on January 10, 2016  
"We Have Seen the Lord –  
Epiphany"**

**[In today's sermon, Senior Pastor Glen Weber, discusses the Epiphany of Jesus and what it means to us as Christians.]**

Notes:

Introduction:

12 Days of Christmas Song:

*On the first day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
A Partridge in a Pear Tree  
On the second day of Christmas  
my true love sent to me:  
Two Turtle Doves  
and a Partridge in a Pear Tree*

- When is the first day of Christmas?
- When is the 12th day of Christmas?
- Why is there a song about it?
  
- The twelve days of Christmas run from Christmas Eve to Jan. 6th – which is the day of Epiphany.
- Epiphany – a Christian holiday celebrating the revelation of God the Son as a human being in Jesus Christ
- Theophany – the appearance of God, usually to a human being
  
- Since the early days of the Christian church, believers have celebrated Epiphany.

Eastern Church and Western Church Split:

- In 1054, the church split into two branches – the Western Church and the Eastern Church.
- The reason for the split concerns the Holy Spirit.
- The Eastern Church said the Holy Spirit flowed only from the Father.
- The Western Church said the Holy Spirit flowed from both the Son and the Father.
  
- Filioque is a Latin term meaning “and [from] the Son”
  - This was added to the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed (NCC) which is not in the original version.

- “And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father (and the Son). who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified.”
- This has been the subject of great controversy between Eastern and Western Christianity.
- Leaven/unleavened communion bread controversy.
  - The Eastern Church offers leavened bread at communion.
  - The Western Church offers unleavened bread at communion

### Epiphany:

- Both churches continued to celebrate the 12 days of Christmas and Epiphany, but their focus was different.
- The Eastern Church focused on the baptism of Jesus – the manifestation of the Son of God
- The Western Church focused on the Wise Men coming to visit Jesus – the Gentiles coming to the King!
- Because the days begin with Christmas Eve, most also celebrate the birth of Jesus, and then for the next several Sundays until Ash Wednesday, they celebrate different appearances or Epiphanies of Jesus.
- Most churches begin with baptism and conclude with Transfiguration – “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

### Jesus’ first “appearances”:

**John 1:14, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

- The Word became flesh and lived with us.

**15) John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' "**

- John the Baptist declares that Jesus was before him, even though John was 6 months older.

**16) From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.**

- We receive blessings from Jesus’ grace.

**17) For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**

- Grace and truth only comes through Jesus not Moses.

**18) No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.**

- Only Jesus has seen God, but He came to make the Father known to humanity.

### Baptism:

**Luke 3:1, In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar--when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene – 2) during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert.**

- Luke tells us that at a specific moment in time in history, the word of God came to John.

**3) He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.**

- He goes out preaching teaching about repentance, because the people of God had strayed away from God.

**4) As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. 5) Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. 6) And all mankind will see God's salvation.' "**

- Luke states that John the Baptist is the “messenger” of Isaiah. (Isa. 40:3).

**21) When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened**

- Jesus comes to be baptized.

**22) and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."**

- The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in bodily form like a dove.
- The Holy Spirit actually manifested Himself bodily – one of the only times this has happened.
- The Father speaks His blessing over His Son for all to hear.

**23) Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph,**

- Jesus begins His ministry at thirty years of age.

### Temptation:

- In all three Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke), as soon as the baptism of Jesus narrative concludes, He is whisked off by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan.

### Violence of Jesus Life:

- This week pastor Glen read an article from Christianity Today Online (Jan. 8, 2016) about the moment of Jesus baptism that he thought was very meaningful.
- It comes from Mark's telling of Jesus' baptism.

### Comments from):

- This moment comes after 400 years of Israel not hearing from God. God had not really shown Himself and this was going to be an epiphany – a God-sighting!

### **Mark 1:9, At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.**

- Jesus journeys from Nazareth to where John was baptizing (near Jericho).

### **10) As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.**

- Mark records that as Jesus comes up out of the water, the heaven was “torn open.”

*“The Greek word used here (for torn) is schizomenous, the present participle of schizo, which means “to tear or cleave open.” It is from this Greek root schizo that we get schizophrenia (i.e., “a torn mind”). It’s a violent word that completely altered my image of this pivotal moment in Jesus’ life.” (Christianity Today Online article, Jan. 8, 2016)*

- The Father literally ripped open the heavens to speak a blessing upon His Son, who was going to begin ministering to the world.
- This wasn't just a quiet little moment like we have performed baptisms.
- Do any of you know when the only other time when the word schizo used again in the New Testament?

### **Mark 15:37, With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.**

- Jesus breathes His last on the cross.

### **38) The curtain of the temple was torn (schizo) in two from top to bottom.**

- The curtain of the temple is ripped in two from top to bottom.
- First, the Father ripped the heaven open when Jesus was officially introduced to the world and humanity.
- The Father then ripped the veil of the temple open when Jesus died and the door was now open for humanity to be reconciled to Him.

### Conclusion:

- As mentioned at the beginning of the sermon, there are many events in the life of Jesus that are celebrated for Epiphany.

- Jesus presented at the Temple for His circumcision
  - Visit of Magi
  - Turning water to wine at Cana wedding
  - Reading the Torah in the synagogue to announce His mission and ministry.
  - Transfiguration on the mountain
- 
- Where are we seeing epiphanies in our lives?
  - When we contact others and share God's love, it is an epiphany.
  - Where has the Father, Son or Holy Spirit touched in your life?
- 
- Look for God's fingerprints in your daily life!

### **Closing Prayer**