

Celebrate the Wonder  
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Often what we see and we hear in life depends not so much upon the events as much as who we are as people. It's not just what is out there but what's inside of us. Thus, two people can see and experience the same thing and one person says, "It's a miracle", while another says, "It's coincidence."

I firmly believe that two people there that first Christmas in Bethlehem could have heard and seen two entirely different scenes. Many missed what was happening in their midst. I wonder what I would have seen and experienced had I been there that night. Would I have heard the choirs of angels singing or simply the sounds of barnyard animals shifting around. Would I have seen the star in the sky that night or simply a man traveling with a pregnant teenager? Would I have been so occupied with what was going on around me that I would have missed the divine occurrence that was going on around me?

If you had been in Bethlehem that night would you have seen and experienced? Would you have been able to celebrate the wonder? You can answer that by asking yourself what you saw this Christmas season. Have you been so preoccupied with getting ready for Christmas that the reason for the season has been secondary? When you watched the 6:00 news did you see just the chaos and strife or a prayer opportunity? When you went out to do your shopping did you see only crowds of people in the stores or did you notice the worried and stressed on some of their faces?

And in the midst of the sounds of honking horns and people arguing over places in line, did you offer a smile or a word of peace or just hurry on your way? In the hustle and bustle of the season, could you hear the sound of laughter that will be coming because you furnished toys for children in need, or gifts and food for individuals and families?

You see, so often what we see and what we hear is not just dependent upon the event but upon ourselves. If you did in fact hear the cry from the lonely, the laughter of poor children, if you saw the sheep without a shepherd and took opportunities to pray for them, then you might just have seen the events that took place in Bethlehem that night.

If you lacked that spiritual seeing and hearing then you probably would have been with the many who were present but who saw or heard nothing out of the ordinary.

In the end perhaps one of our carols words it best: "No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin. Where meek souls shall receive him still, the dear Christ child enters in."