

# The Tennessee Tribune

Volume 22, No. 5, 3 Sections

THURSDAY, February 3-9, 2011

\$1.00

## The Season of Epiphany and the Presence of an Immanent God *A Commentary by Jason Curry*



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Recently, I preached a sermon at the Fisk Memorial Chapel titled "He Came, He Comes and He is Coming." The "He" to which I was referring was Jesus the Christ, and the significance of the message was centered around Jesus' presence in the past, the present and the future. For example, in reference to Jesus Christ, the Messiah to come, Isaiah wrote: "For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)." In reference to the coming of Christ, Mark writes: "At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the

heavens." In reference to the very presence of Jesus in our daily lives, Matthew writes: "I am with you always: even unto the end of the world (Matthew 28:20)." The term Epiphany literally means "appearance" or "manifestation," and the trust of my sermon message concerned the importance of remembering that God, in the form of Jesus the Christ, has appeared among us and is present with us even unto the end of the world.

Christian scholars have discussed the idea of the presence of Jesus or God for thousands of years. In short, they have discussed God's presence in history by using the terms transcendent and immanent. In other words, there are to distinct sides to the same God. Yes, a transcendent God still governs the universe, but the immanent God through Jesus Christ, still walks with us, talks with us and tells

us that we are his own. A transcendent God still manages the affairs of the angels, for one day Gabriel's trumpet is sure to blow. But the immanent God still loves us, responds to prayer and send the Holy Spirit as a Comforter in times of great distress. It was the presence of an immanent God that encouraged Will Thompson to write: "Jesus is all the world to me, my life, my joy, my all; he is my strength from day to day, without him I would fall. When I am sad, to him I go, no other one can cheer me so; when I am sad, he makes me glad, he's my friend." The season of Epiphany reminds of the continuous presence of the immanent God, Jesus the Christ. As we begin to prepare for the season of Lent and then Easter, let us be comforted by God's presence through the Epiphany.