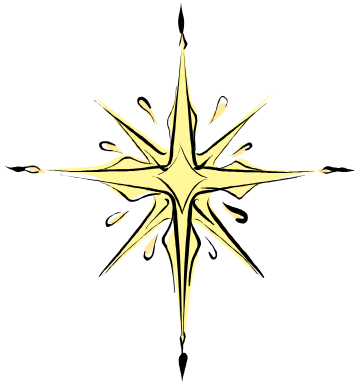


A Star with a Mission

By Christina Dixon



Not too long ago, it was a common occurrence to find Americans sitting around the television every week, patiently waiting to see who would be the next star discovered on Ed McMahon's Star Search. There is something captivating about a person who is catapulted from the depths of obscurity to the heights of fame and fortune. So fascinating was the search that we are no longer seeking stars. Today we are on a quest for American **Idols**.

Don't get me wrong. I've often entertained the thought of what it would be like to suddenly become a household name because the well executed display of my talent(s) could bring others rising to their feet with rapt applause. I have wondered though why all the contestants have to be so young. Surely someone has thought about a search for stars from the baby boomer generation! There is no question that there are those of us over 40 who are just as talented, yet still undiscovered. Frankly, after coming down from my musing I've concluded that it doesn't matter what age "the star" is. What matters is, for what purpose does the star shine? Now that Christmas is over and we are welcoming the New Year, many of us forget, if we ever knew, that the biblical account of the three wise men happened after the initial celebration of Christ's birth. As the gospel of Matthew 2:1-12 records, long after the heavenly host of angels stopped singing their praise as the shepherds watched by night, these men followed a star whose sole mission was to lead them to the King of the Jews. For those of us who have a longing to be seen and heard, the star is an example. Its message shone so brightly, with such clarity, that the three wise men left the familiarity of their home country just so they could offer gifts and worship. Often as I consider the impact of God's truth upon my heart as I read His Word, I am at once awed and challenged.

In this particular case, I was challenged to examine the motivation and purpose behind my desire to shine as a star before others. As the Holy Spirit illuminated my desire to become a well known woman of influence, I found myself asking, "If God has given me His light and flung my life into the darkness of the world, to shine like a star in the night sky who, what, or where will I lead people to? Is the light of God's love and truth in my life bright enough to draw the attention of others causing them to leave all that is familiar to diligently seek Jesus just so they can offer their gifts and worship to Him?" For those of us whose service places us in the public eye, as we profess love for the Lord, we must be willing to ask ourselves these kinds of questions.

Some of us feel that this is not our issue. We believe that we will forever live our lives in anonymity. Certainly, for some of us, it is true that the service we faithfully offer to God will be in behind the scenes obscurity. But obscurity has its own brand of darkness. It is often in seemingly insignificant places that the Lord's light has the ability shine brightest through His beloved. Just because we are considered unknowns does not mean that we are free from our responsibility to shine the light of Christ's love. We may need to ask different questions. For instance, "What is my reason for not wanting to be seen? Why is it that I don't have a desire to influence others?"

We live in a day and time where people are desperately searching for a sense of purpose and significance. An inordinate, self-centered craving for attention often drives some people to do things without concern for the repercussions of their actions. Sadly, too many have come to believe that any publicity, even bad publicity, is better than no publicity at all. "Whatever! Just give me my 15 minutes of fame."

As the coming weeks and months of 2006 loom before us, we are apt to see and hear all kinds of things. The darkness of this world will become more apparent; as will the need for Christ. Whether we find ourselves in the public eye or in obscurity, we need to accept the challenge to live out His word in Philippians 2:15. There He tells us to shine as lights in the darkness.

My prayer as this New Year begins is that God's beloved will be stars with a mission. As the Holy Spirit empowers us to live our lives filled with His love, grace, peace, faith, and truth, may we remember and follow the example of the star followed by the three wise men. May others be compelled to leave the sinful homelands of their past, as they diligently come seeking to find our Lord, bringing their gifts and worship to Him; just because they saw His light shining brilliantly in the dark – through us.