

What do we bring Him?

When it comes to buying gifts for people, one of the things that determines the value, type of gift you give and the time and thought you put into it has a lot to do with the nature of the relationship you have with them and how much those people mean to you personally. Now, we might not like to say it out loud and we probably like to try and convince ourselves that it is the **“thought that counts”** when it comes to gift giving, but if we are really honest, the relationship you and I have with someone does determine the value of the gift we give them. We look at people and know the limit we’re willing to invest on them, they are worth “this much” to us and we give accordingly. And when it comes to Jesus I think we do the same.

Welcome to week 2 of our Christmas series called **“Seeking”**. Over the last couple of weeks we have been taking a look at the story of the Magi with that goal of trying to learn what it was that gave them the motivation to seek after Jesus the way that they did. Our prayer is that we all would have hearts that are still seeking Him today. Last week we started to unpack what it looks like to **seek after Jesus**. We discussed how the Magi in their process of seeking to find Jesus went on a 800+ mile journey, wandering through the streets of Jerusalem, only to come before a king, just not the one they were seeking after. All of this before they ever even got near Jesus. Which brings us to where we ended our message last week.

Matthew 2:9-10 (NIV) 9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.
10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

We need to understand that despite how most of the world markets the nativity scene, and how those three gentlemen really help balance out the symmetry of our Christmas displays, this wasn’t a one night magical experience. God was at work in powerful and supernatural ways through the conception and birth of Jesus Christ in human form, but he wasn’t tossing out time travel. So we need to take a deep breath and suspend for a moment our cultural understanding that leads us to believe the Magi showed up on the same night Jesus was born. While their journey to see Jesus may have been initiated by His birth their arrival did not take place until some time after. While scripture doesn’t give us exact times, it does show us a window of what it actually looked like.

So as we continue with our story in vs.11 today we want to deal with the personal question of **what do we bring JESUS? (PRAY)**

This next verse sums up the story of the Magi and their motivation for seeking Jesus in one big swoop.

11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

They came for one purpose and one purpose only! **They came to worship HIM!** Which means they highly valued Jesus and to express that value they came bearing very valuable gifts for the newborn KING. Now, before we look at what they brought Him, I want us to pause for a second and not miss what might be something easy to overlook. The verse said on coming to the HOUSE. When the Magi arrived, they didn't come to a still warm and moist freshly baked baby Jesus straight out of the oven. They didn't arrive at the manger or a barn. They showed up at their house.

Let's compare this with the night of Jesus birth in scripture in Luke 2

1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. **2** (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) **3** And everyone went to their own town to register.

4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. **5** He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. **6** While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, **7** and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. **9** An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10** But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. **11** Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. **12** This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

14

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, **18** and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. **19** But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. **20** The shepherds returned,

glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

Jesus Presented in the Temple

22 When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord **23** (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), **24** and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

The periods of purification mentioned here are found in Leviticus 12:1-5 and state that it's 33 days after birth before purification is complete. We see from Luke though, which is the other main source of the Christmas story, Jesus' first night, and even the first month had no contact with our friendly gift bearers in his account. Next week, we will be discussing Matthew 2:16 that tells us Jesus was somewhere around 2 years old or younger in age, during the Magi visit, but now that we have that context established, let's look at what was actually brought as a gift.

Matthew 2:11 (NIV) On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

As you hear the gifts that were presented, I can guarantee these items weren't something on Mary's baby registry. Not something she, Joseph, or Jesus were actively seeking. Not gifts that would be approved as child safe either. They didn't bring something that was asked for, they brought to Jesus what they thought demonstrated the worth and value of who they understood Him to be - **gifts fit for a Heavenly KING.**

What we bring to God shows how much we think He's worth

SO what do you bring to HIM? And what does it say about how much we think He is worth if we are hesitant to give him anything of ourselves? Our time? Our prayer? Our worship? Our obedience? What about our trust? If we are hesitant to give Him these things, can we really say that Jesus is worth anything to us at all? Let's examine each of the gifts they brought.

First of all, I want you to notice that all three gifts were ordinary offerings and gifts given to a king. MYRRH being commonly used as an anointing oil, FRANKINCENSE as a perfume, and GOLD as a valuable.

The three gifts also had a spiritual meaning as well:

GOLD is a symbol of KINGSHIP on earth,

FRANKINCENSE (which was used as an incense) is a symbol of DEITY,

and MYRRH (which was used as an embalming oil) is a symbol of DEATH.

Their gifts showed that Jesus was **king on earth, king in heaven**, and that His **eventual death** would be something essential and powerful. They weren't concerned that these gifts weren't fit for a child, they weren't worried about them not being gifts that Mary & Joseph loved, **they were seeking a King, and they were bringing gifts to a king**. I wonder if the reason we don't give Jesus better gifts of ourselves is because we don't actually see Him as King, we see Him as a resource. Are we guilty of seeing Him as just a way out of Hell, and once we've got that assurance, we treat Him as inconsequential? Do we see Him as comfort when we are hurting, and once the pain stops, we stop needing Him? For us to truly have the relationship with Jesus we need, we need to see Him as King in every moment, and just like the Magi, give Him the gifts He deserves.

So what gifts do we bring HIM?

What do we bring to show He's King On Earth?

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

A king has authority. If we value the king then we would welcome his instruction and leadership on how we live here and now. If we welcome his instruction and leadership then this would manifest itself in our willingness to give ourselves to Him in obedience. Therefore, **our OBEDIENCE to Him shows our value for His authority** and ultimately our value of Him as our king. That is why Jesus says to us in **John 14:15** "If you love me, keep my commands."

What do we bring to show He's King in Heaven?

Ephesians 1:18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, **19** and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength **20** he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, **21** far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. **22** And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, **23** which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Revelation 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords.

Not only should we see the value He brings to this life but we also should see how He impacts eternity as well. What is this value? The RICHES of His GLORIOUS INHERITANCE. Righteousness, joy and peace without the difficulties caused by sin and the fear of death that

hangs over all of our lives. The RESURRECTION POWER that makes it so that we will live forever in the glorious future that we all really long for but we cannot possess without Jesus. This is our hope and when we give Jesus our hope and trust we are expressing the value we have in Him and the inheritance offered to us through faith.

Our HOPE and FAITH regarding eternity shows that we see His value extending beyond the here and now.

What do we bring to show His death is important to us?

Romans 5

12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—

13 To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. **14** Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! **16** Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. **17** For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

Our TURNING from our SIN and LIVING as REDEEMED sinners shows that we honor and value His death, and we don't take it for granted.

It is easy to take something that is freely given to us for granted. But when that something free is transforming our life and we are letting it change us from who we used to be then that shows how much we value what has been given to us. One of the greatest ways that we can show that we value Jesus and one of the greatest things we can bring Him that shows how we value Him is to turn from our sin and live out a changed life.

Worship Team Comes Back Up

Invitation:

What are you bringing to Jesus today?

Notice as we were talking about how we express the value of Jesus that we said nothing about attending church. Our showing up here this morning is not a gift to Jesus and really doesn't show how we value Him.

Unfortunately far too many of us re-gift when it comes to Jesus. This tends to be the leftovers of the gifts we give others, because we usually give to others more than we do Jesus

How does your obedience express how you value Jesus?

How does your hope and faith express how you value Jesus?

And ultimately how is your life being lived to express how you value Jesus?