

Gifts for the King: What Should You Bring?

LAST WEEK'S MESSAGE

In the Christmas story, the magi journeyed 2,175 kilometers from the east (Persia) to worship the baby Jesus in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:11). They brought gifts: gold (representing kingship), frankincense (representing divinity), and myrrh (used for burial), all symbolizing key aspects of Jesus' life and persona.

Our journey as Christ-followers is about being conformed and transformed into Christlikeness (Romans 8:29) — therefore what gifts fit for a King should we bring?

HUMILITY IS GOLDEN

As we read through the birth of Jesus in Luke 2:8-9, we see a connection between humility and obedience. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John narrate this event from different perspectives for different audiences (Luke 1:3), and from them we learn that some shepherds were the first to hear about the birth of Christ through an angel.

The magi and the shepherds are two very different groups of people. Unlike the magi who had expensive gifts for Jesus, these lowly shepherds had nothing to offer except their adoration, praise, and testimony about Jesus (Luke 2:15-18). They were transformed by their experience that they became witnesses for Jesus, glorifying and praising God (Luke 2:20). When we are transformed as believers in Christ, we must respond by sharing Christ to others. When we faithfully serve Jesus and witness for Him, that is worship and it is golden to Him. God says that the least is the greatest among us (1 Corinthians 12:22-23).

Another example of humility was Zechariah (Luke 1:5-21). An angel told Zechariah that his wife Elizabeth would bear him a son, but he doubted it and consequently became mute. When their son was born, he was able to speak again and sang a song of praise (Luke 1:67-79) while Elizabeth broke out in song because of what God has done (Luke 1:5-7). Their son was John the Baptist, who was also a humble man who acknowledged that Jesus was greater than him (Mark 1:6-7).

"The Magnificat" is Mary's humble response to God as His "bondslave" and as someone who needs a Savior. After receiving the message from the angel Gabriel about

the Savior being born through her, Mary visited Elizabeth during her pregnancy (Luke 1:26-38). Even as an unborn baby, John was already exalting Jesus (Luke 1:39-44)! What a profound thing it is to know that even without a voice, a fetus was the first to rejoice at the news of Jesus!

The greatest act of humility is to acknowledge that we need a Savior because we all have sinned (Luke 1:46-48). None of us can earn credits or merits to save ourselves — we need Jesus to save us!

GRATITUDE IS WORSHIP

Righteous and devout, Simeon was the next character to burst out in song after he saw Jesus, the long-awaited "consolation of Israel" (Luke 2:25-33). The prophetess Anna broke out in song upon meeting Him (Luke 2:36-38). Praising and singing is worship, that's why we have the Book of Psalms! For God, our gratitude is worship and thanksgiving.

OBEDIENCE IS SACRIFICE

In his gospel, Matthew recounts Abraham, who obeyed God right away to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice, and Joseph, who obeyed God's command (Matthew 1:19-25, 2:13-14). Joseph even continued to obey God later in his life when he took his family back to Israel from Egypt after Herod had died (Matthew 2:19-21).

What about us? What obedience is required of us? God sent Jesus Christ to save us from our sins. We need to realize that the good gifts and knowledge we have about God are nothing if we do not love the people around us and reconcile them to God through Christ (1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 2 Corinthians 5:17-20). People will perish in the "lake of fire" if they are not in Jesus, our only Savior. There is an urgency to share Jesus with everyone before it is too late.

The Old Testament pointed to Jesus — the clock to the end times began ticking once He was born, thus, we are now living in those days (Hebrews 1:1-2). This Christmas, let us offer the gift of humility, gratitude, and obedience to Jesus. Let's bring others to Jesus, by reminding them to repent and humbly come to Christ (2 Timothy 4:1-2, Luke 15:10).

last week's memory verse

For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

ROMANS 8:29

discuss this message

What do you think others will say about you in the areas of humility, gratitude, and obedience?

Have you been obedient to the commission to share and disciple others?

When you stand before Christ at the end of your life, will He be pleased with the new you that you present Him?

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Looking Back, Moving Forward

Sundays, 9:00 AM, 12:00 NN, 3:00 PM
G/F CCF Center (ages 4-12)

ZOOM: for ages 7-12; 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM
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ONLINE: Bible Lesson Video Premiere
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PRAY TO THE GOD OF LOVE AND TRUTH

JANUARY 6-11, 2025
CCF CENTER & SATELLITES NATIONWIDE

YOU BEING HERE IS NO ACCIDENT!

God brought you here for His purpose.

God loves you.

He desires for you to have a meaningful life with Him in the present and gain eternal life with Him in the future.

*Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who **keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness** to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments – Deuteronomy 7:9*

God is holy.

We are sinful, and our sin separates us from Him.

Everyone has sinned and is far away from God's saving presence. – Romans 3:23

God is merciful.

In His love, He made the only way for us to be reconciled to Him: through His son, Jesus Christ. Jesus had to die on the cross for our sins and be raised to life for eternity.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. – Romans 5:8

I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. – John 14:6

God is gracious.

By placing our faith in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven of our sins and saved from eternal death.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. – John 3:16

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. – Ephesians 2:8-9

Would you like to place your faith in Jesus Christ today?

Lord Jesus, I need You. I confess that I am a sinner. I believe that You died on the cross to pay for all my sins. With Your help, I will turn away from my sins. Please come into my life and be my Savior and my Master. I accept Your gift of eternal life. Make me the kind of new person You want me to be. Thank You for giving me eternal life. Amen.

God keeps His promises.

You can be sure that you have eternal life when you trust in Jesus.

And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life. – 1 John 5:11-13

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