

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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December 19, 2021

“The Wise Men’s Gifts”

By Jarrod Jacobs

This time of year, people propagate several errors concerning the birth of Christ, and one of these errors surrounds the wise men who visited Jesus (Matt. 2:1-21). People have conjectured as to their names, how many, what happened, etc.

In this article, let us learn the truth about these amazing people and appreciate their connection to Christ.

A Description Of The Wise Men

In Matthew 2:1, we are introduced to the wise men. They came to see the newly-born Jesus. From the Matthew text and Luke 2:21-39, it is estimated that these men came to see Jesus perhaps 40 or more days since He was born. Notice, they found Joseph, Mary, and Jesus in a house in Bethlehem rather than in a stable, where the shepherds found them (Matt. 2:11).



The wise men were just that, “wise” men! They were men who came from lands near the Euphrates River (Persia, etc.) and were commonly referred to as “magi” or the title “rabmag” (Jer. 29:13). Interestingly, Daniel would have been considered a “rabmag” in Babylon (Dan. 5:11).

A few things worthy of note include the fact that the wise men who visited Jesus would have been *Gentiles*! At the time of Jesus’ birth, it seems few Jews were interested, but the Gentiles were very interested!

They had traveled many miles and then inquired diligently to find out where the “King of the Jews” was (Matt. 2:2)!

A second thing to remember is that these men traveled and found Jesus intending to *worship Him* (Matt. 2:2)! It is one thing for a contingency from one country to visit the sovereign in another country and present gifts, but here we have wise men visiting not merely to show respect, but to *worship* this One who had been born in such humble circumstances!

These wise men were just that – *wise* men! They had evidently done some study, or it had been revealed to them, and they knew that Christ had been born. They knew that the “star” they had seen was “His” and that it would lead them to the Lord!

Notice friends that these Gentiles had the same information that the Jews had, yet who was visiting Jesus then? The Jews had years and years of prophecies to study and apply. Yet, where were they? To me, this fact is telling! That is not my opinion. Read Matthew 2:5-6 and see that the Jews quoted Micah’s prophecy. Yet, not one of those people left with the wise men to go worship Christ!

The wise men were wise because they *acted* upon the information that would lead them to the Lord! (That kind of sounds like Matthew 7:24-27, huh?)

These wise men were wise because they were *observant*. They saw the star “*in the east*” (KJV) or literally, “*when it rose*” (Matt. 2:2). This means they had been watching for it, and when it appeared, they were ready to go and find the King!

The Wise Men Completed Their Work.

When we read Matthew 2:3-10, we see that these men completed the work they started. Sometimes, people give up after meeting certain obstacles. In this case, the wise men went to the wrong place! However, they did not give up but asked questions of others. They completed their work and were rewarded for it (Like Lk. 19:4).

The Wise Men's Gifts

We read about the gifts the magi or wise men offered Jesus in Matthew 2:11. From this verse, some have suggested that only three men visited Jesus. However, this is not something that can be proven. All we know from this text is that a plurality of men traveled to worship Christ. Personally, I believe the significance is in the gifts themselves rather than how many. This night, the wise men brought to Jesus gold, frankincense, and myrrh. What meaning do these gifts have?

Gold is precious to us as it was to the people in the first century. It is a precious metal that holds value. It is often a gift one would give a king.

Frankincense held a connection to the priestly work. It is said that ancient people (not just Jews) burned frankincense, believing it to carry their prayers to Heaven.

Myrrh was perhaps the most mysterious of the gifts. Myrrh has been used by the Arabs, Chinese, Africans, and others as a wound healer and for its anti-inflammatory properties. Myrrh was used as a painkiller as well (Mk. 15:32). However, it was most widely known for its use as an embalming agent among the Egyptians. Even Nicodemus used it on the dead body of Jesus (Jn. 19:39). So, think, here are wise men who gave Jesus the gift most widely associated with death! I wonder what they knew?

These might seem strange gifts to give a baby, and yet, perhaps they are not strange gifts to give *this* baby! Gold for a king, frankincense for a priest, and myrrh for a Savior!

Let Us Be Wise Men!

How can we do this? Read Proverbs 13:20 and take Solomon's advice! Specifically, we can be wise by listening to God's word and persevering daily.

The wise men had a journey of many miles as they walked by faith toward their goal of seeing Jesus. In like manner, our life is a journey as we keep our eyes, not on any star, but the "*Star of Jacob*" (Num. 24:17), the "*bright and morning star*" (Rev. 22:16)!

Even though most people don't know who Christ is, nor where He is, we have directions (Bible) that will lead us to Heaven where Christ is (Jn. 14:1-6)!

How are you doing on the journey? Have you started yet? Be wise! What is your attitude toward Christ? Many are glad to think of a baby in the manger, but will we remember He is God who deserves worship?

"Let God Be True"

by Terry W. Benton

Roman 3:4 gives us this principle, "Let God be true but every man a liar." What does this mean? It means that God is always far more dependable than man. God cannot lie (Hebrews 6:12). Man often lies, misunderstands, gets things mixed up, is easily deceived, etc. Therefore, when it comes down to a conflict between what God's word says and what a man claims is true, the default mode should always be that God's word is the winner—the final authority.

The conflict between the general theory of Evolution and the Creation account from God in Genesis 1-2, is that God is true in what He testified that He did; and that means the conflicting voice of men in their theory of evolution is the lie. Let God be true when He testifies. He testified that He made man from the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7). Men say that what really happened is that men evolved over millions of years from lower life forms. Let God be true and every man a liar!

God's word is always right. Men get things wrong so often. Therefore, when there is a conflict between the Bible and modern teachers and preachers, you can already know what side of the issue you will come down on. Let God be true and every man a liar.

God is never wrong! And that's a good thing to remember!

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Peggy Harville (cancer), Estell Wright, Linda Hunt, David Taylor, Randy Beaty, Sam Johnson, Sherry Doles, Randy Ferrell, J F Dancer, Earl Mitchell, & Lowell Gann.

LuAnne Parish is recovering at Corner Stone in room 13B.

Sandi Poole has had some back issues.

Robbie, Sheila, and Sherry Doles.

Preacher Jerry Henderson from Red Bay, Al.

Lynlie and Nellie Cottrell both have the Covid.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer:	Nathan Meade
Preaching:	Brian Meade
Sermon #1:	<i>"Overcoming Selfishness"</i>

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Jerry Kennemur
2 Corinthians (Mike Willis)
Page #23 , Question #1

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements:	Paul Busby
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:	Doug George <i>Proverbs 26:13-16</i>
Song Leader:	Jerry Kennemur
Lord's Supper:	Russell Briggs
Assisting:	— —
Preaching:	Brian Meade
Sermon #2:	<i>"The People Who Fail At Life"</i>
Closing Prayer:	Lee Busby

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

December 22nd:

Auditorium Bible Class:	Russell Briggs Book of Isaiah <i>Page #27, Question #1</i>
Invitation:	Jerry Kennemur
Song Leader:	Dan Cottrell
Closing Prayer:	Doug George

“Overcoming Selfishness”

Lesson Text: **John 12:25-26.**

I. What Is Selfishness?

- **Selfishness defined:** “Concerned only to satisfy one’s own desires and prepared to sacrifice the feelings, needs....etc of others in order to do so.”
- It can lead to other sins: Pride, Arrogance, Self-Centeredness, Uncaring... etc.

II. How To Recognize Selfishness.

– When One Is More Interested In:

- Our Money Gain Than Gaining Christ.
 - Our Place In Society Than A Place In Christ.
 - Our Knowledge Of Worldly Affairs Than In Christ.
 - Our Pleasure Than In Pleasing Christ.
 - Our Opinion Than What God’s Word Says.
 - Our Way Than God’s Way.
 - Our Will Than God’s Will.
 - Our Receiving From Others Rather Than Giving.
 - Our Own Needs Than The Needs Of Others.
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IV. The Delusions Of Selfishness.

1. Our Ways Are Always Right- **Proverbs 12:15; 14:12.**
 2. We Are Better Than Others- **Luke 18:11.**
 3. We Become Self-Important- **Luke 18:12-14.**
 4. Our Righteousness Is Superior To Others- **Luke 18:9.**
 5. We Should Be Honored Above Others- **Luke 14:7-11.**
 6. We Trust In Our Accomplishments- **Revelation 3:17-18.**
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V. How To Overcome The Problem

- By Doing Some Honest, Self-Examination- **2 Corinthians 13:5.**
 - In Quiet Times- **Psalm 4:3-4.**
 - In Our Prayers- **Psalm 139:23-24.**
 - God Asked Israel To Consider Their Ways- **Haggai 1:2-11.**
 - Strong Determination To Completely Surrender In Obedience. (**1:12-15**).
 - We intentionally Follow Christ’s Example of Selfless Obedience- **Phil 2:5-8.**
 - We Overcome Selfishness By Serving Others- **Mark 10:45.**
 - Instead Of Desiring Selfishly, We Learn To Give- **Ephesians 4:28; Acts 20:35.**
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“The People Who Fail At Life”

I. People Who Reject Wisdom And Instruction.

- A. Proverbs 1:27**
- B. Proverbs 10:8.**
- C. Proverbs 12:15**
- D. Proverbs 17:10.**
- E. How does this cause failure in all we do? _____.**

II. People Who Never Plan For Success.

- A. “If We Fail To Plan, We _____.”**
- B. How Does Being Aimless in Life Cause Failure? _____.**
- C. God Gives Us Purpose and Meaning in Life- **Ecclesiastes 12:13; Eph. 2:10.****
- D. Even People in the World Realize This Principle.... Tony Robbins Quote.**

III. People Who Plan— But Never Follow Through.

- A. These Are The Ones Who Have carefully Planned Out, But Never Act.**
- B. Intention: “Something that you want and plan to do; an aim.” (Cambridge Dictionary)**
- C. How Does This Bring Failure To Our Life? _____.**
- D. Jesus in **Luke 14:28-30.****

IV. People Who Do Not Want To Work For Anything.

- A. This says a lot about one’s attitude and Work Ethic.**
- B. Many today are handicapped from working hard by laziness.**
- C. They expect everything to be handed to them.**
- D. **Proverbs 13:4; 24:30-34; 26:13-16.****
- E. Can Laziness Ever Lead To Success In Life? _____.**

V. People Who Love Sin’s Pleasures.

- A. This indulgence leads them to ruin- **Proverbs 21:15.****
- B. Why? It’s The Nature of Sin- **1 John 2:15-17; Romans 6:23.****
- C. True Success Requires Good Character- **Galatians 5:22-26.****

VI. People Who Never Come To God.

- A. This Is The Most Tragic Failures Of Life! Why?**
 - Because we may accomplish many great things, but without Christ....**
 - Ephesians 2:1-3; 11-13.** Can That Be Said Of Us? _____.**
- B. Why? Worldliness, Pleasure, Pride, Love of Self, Disobedience....**

Conclusion: Don’t Be In This Class Of People!