

December 18, 2022 - Matthew 2: 1-12 - “Christmas is a Time of Giving”

Introduction:

Christmas began with giving. God gave of His Son, Jesus Christ. In fact God gave of Him before the foundation of this world. For Revelation 13:8 tells us: And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him... of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Mary gave of herself, she said, "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said". Her decision to be fully submissive to the call of God was her willingness, if need be, to suffer ridicule and contempt and loneliness. In Matthew chapter 2, we read the story of the Wise men who've traveled a great distance to find a little child or a *pī-dē'-on* not a new-born child, an infant, a babe; *bre'-fo* and gave Him special gifts that they'd picked out just for Him fit for a king.

I. The Significant of the first Christmas Gifts.

1. Christmas gift giving goes way back to the First Christmas. Some believe it goes all the way back to the Magi, who visited Jesus and presented Him with gold, frankincense and myrrh sometime after He was born.

2. Folks, the Wise men gave a lot of thought – not only to their gifts - but to the journey they were undertaking in their search for this newborn King. Now, I don't know if the Wise men fully understood the significance of the gifts they brought, but I do know that God was so impressed with their gifts that He recorded what was given in the pages of Scriptures.

3. The Christmas carol “*We 3 Kings Of Orient Are*” goes on to tell of the 3 gifts that the Wise men offered. The song points out that each of the gifts the Wise men brought had a special message: The gold spoke of Jesus being the King of Kings, for gold was the kind of gift you gave to kings. The Frankincense was offered to Him as unto God for this was a perfume that the Israelites offered in their offerings at the Temple to God. Jesus is called “Immanuel” which means “God with us.” The Myrrh was a perfume that was used as part of the embalming process and it seem to predict the reason Jesus came – to die on the cross for our sins.

4. I believe this was not only done because of the symbolic nature of the gifts, but also that we might realize their value to God, and how deeply moved He was that they brought these gifts to His Son. Now, there might be those who

believe that it was the earthly value of these gifts that impressed God. However, that's absurd. God doesn't need our money... God is not impressed by the size of our bank accounts. He's more impressed by the size of our hearts. God is impressed with anyone – no matter what their social status is who gives the best that they have to Christ. That reminds me of another favorite Christmas carol;

The little Drummer Boy. I am a poor boy too ...I have no gift to bring; Pa rum pum pum pum; I played my drum for Him; Pa rum pum pum pum; I played my best for Him... He smile at me...

To our God a gift like that is gold. So, I have just two questions for you this morning as points to this message the first is...

II. The Significant of your Christmas Gifts.

1. One of the biggest challenges of Christmas is finding just the right gift for a person you love. Let me ask you this morning with only 6 shopping days left before Christmas, Have you got something for everyone on your list? You haven't left anyone off have you? Well the majority of us forget the most important person we should be giving to and that is our Lord Jesus Christ. What gift do you bring to the Lord? It's His birthday and what are you giving Jesus this Christmas? I didn't say getting, I said giving. Christmas has to do with giving. We all give and receive gifts and that's a wonderful thing. It is in the same spirit of God's sacrificial love that we should give to family and friends. However, does not Jesus deserve our gifts to.

2. Christmas gifts today are for the most part items we purchased and yet, we work hard for those gifts. We shop around, fight the crowds, put up with long lines and jammed parking lots. Not to mention the times spend in packaging and wrapping every gift. Although the gifts today might not be as personal, I am beginning to think they come with just as much sacrifice with the effort made to purchase them.

3. Christmas time and Christmas gifts can be beneficial can be a positive experience for them. Your life affects those you have contact with, whether you intend it to or not. Lets' use it for the greater good. There's nothing wrong with enjoying and participating in some of the secular activities occurring during the Christmas season. However, if we are truly to enjoy this

season for all of the right reasons give the gift that blesses God. Give a Spiritual Blessing. There's a huge difference between having your day filled Christmas shopping and your heart filled with Christmas joy. It would be a great thing to have this spirit all year round. Peace on earth will come to stay when we have Christmas every day.

3. Reach people for Christ. Give the gospel and do it in love. Give out Christmas tracts or give a donation to a needy cause. So often, people will say, "I don't know what to get my uncle or dad, etc. Give the gift that has the potential to yield an eternal soul. Buy them a magazine rack & follow up the gift with a subscription to IMG, Creation magazine or some other good Christian publication. Give a DVD eg. God's Not Dead or some another Christian film. You can buy tickets to Sight and Sound. Be creative! God gift to us is eternal...why not be part of His plan. Last,

III. The Significant of God's Christmas Gift.

1. God provided by the incarnation the opportunity for eternal life - in heaven. God's gift to us is JESUS! He came to bring us salvation! That is the greatest gift you can receive this year and the greatest you can give! God has giving a gift that will never stop giving. It is the gift of eternal life. It is a gift that you cannot lose it is a gift that keeps on given. Even now we are given unfathomable gifts.

Remember Paul's letter in...

I Corinthian2: [9] But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

2. The whole reason for the Christmas celebration is to celebrate the incarnation and what that means to us....new life in Christ. It is a gift so many need...in Jesus there is good news, salvation, peace and good will. The Christmas season also has a deep, spiritual meaning that can serve as a source of renewal of our own faith and spiritual life. Jesus is the Reason for the season.

Conclusion:

Let's give a little Jesus to others this Christmas... I got a wonderful Christmas card...it had this poem written by Lisa Englehardt. What do you want for Christmas? How about trying Jesus or giving a little Jesus to others.

