



GROUP ICE BREAKER

What is the most memorable gift you've received and what made it so memorable?

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will fight for personal righteousness.
- I will make something right with God this week.
- I will make something right with someone I've wronged.
- I will battle for graciousness and take the high road.
- I will fight the battle for trust.
- I will read Scripture and stay connected to church.

THIS WEEK'S SERMON RECAP

It's important to spend some time thinking through the practice of giving gifts to one another, because like it or not, it's a part of getting Christmas right. In order to do this, we must look at each of the gifts brought to Jesus—the gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Gold is the currency of kings, signifying Jesus as king. Frankincense was burned in order to reach up to God, so He would be pleased. And finally, they brought myrrh. This is an expensive form of perfume used to cover the stench of death. They brought the myrrh because they believed every prophecy about Jesus. There are a few things about the Magi's giving of these gifts that we can apply to our gift giving this Christmas season. The first thing we notice is they planned for giving gifts. The wise men left their home country, thinking ahead before their journey. Secondly, they personalized their gift. They thought it through and had some very specific gifts in mind. Thirdly, they wrestled with the appropriate price they should pay for their gifts. They spent quite a bit of money to get their gifts, gifts fit for a king. Finally, they got their presentation right. They humbled themselves on one knee, they intensified the effect of their gifts by how they presented them. The gift of Jesus was the ultimate gift to meet the ultimate need. Establish a tradition of gratefulness, and put this Christmas season in perspective.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Matthew 2:1-12 together as a group.
2. Have you ever considered gift giving as spiritual practice?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CONT)

3. What did worshipping Jesus involve for the Magi? Discuss what each gift represented (gold, the currency of kings; frankincense, incense used in the temple; myrrh, perfume used on the bodies of those who had died).
4. Read verse 11 again. In what ways do you worship Jesus? What gifts do you give him?
5. Read Galatians 4:4-5 and Ephesians 1:3-6. What do these passages tell us about God's planning concerning us?
6. Read Jeremiah 29:11 and 1 Corinthians 2:9. What do these passages tell us about God's personalized plans for those that follow him?
7. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and Romans 5:8. What do these passages tell us about the price that was paid for us?
8. Read 1 Peter 1:18-21. What does this passage tell us about the presentation God made for us?

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

Use these as a guide to take your next step and commit to what you learned this week:

- I will make a list of those I want to bless with gifts this Christmas.
- I will spend time thinking about how to make the gift personal.
- I will not violate biblical standards of stewardship when giving gifts.
- I will establish traditions that will help my family get Christmas right.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Matthew 2:1-12
- 1 Peter 1:18-19