What Do You Give The One Who Owns Everything?

MATTHEW 2: 1, 2; 7-11

Read Scripture Text: Matthew 2:1, 2; 7-11

P R A Y E R

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

What do you give to the one who owns everything?

It seems like in every family there is at least one family member who is “hard to buy for” when it comes to getting birthday or Christmas gifts. Who is that “hard-to-buy-for” loved one in your family?

What is it that makes it so hard about getting gifts for some people? Well there are a number of reasons:

(1) That person may have very picky taste about what they like and don’t like. For example: Let’s say that “hard-to-buy-for” loved one in your family is a guy. You buy him a nice STANLEY hammer for Christmas, thinking he will really like it. But you can tell when he opens the gift he’s obviously disappointed. Why? Because he would rather have a CRAFTSMAN hammer. All his tools are CRAFTSMAN.

(2) Another reason why some people are “hard-to-buy gifts” for is because they never drop any hints or clues about something they might like for their birthday or Christmas.
(3) But there's another reason why some people are really hard to buy gifts for and that is because **they already have everything**.

- No need to buy HIM any more tools. He's got more tools than he'll ever use. And don't buy him a new **pocket knife** he's got a dozen of them lying in his dresser drawer. And forget about **hunting or fishing gear or clothes or something for his pickup truck**....he's got all that too.

**What Do You Give The One Who Already Owns Everything.........I mean, “The One Who REALLY Owns Everything.......THE LORD!”**

Psalm 50: 10  For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.

John 1: 3  Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

**As we consider this account of the Wise Men bringing their gifts to Jesus, perhaps you and I can get a "gift idea" that will help us know **WHAT TO GIVE TO THE ONE WHO OWNS EVERYTHING.**

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TRANSITION
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Let's consider three very simple thoughts.

First of all, let’s consider………………

I. The Wise Men Themselves: Who Were They?

1. Just who were these “Wise men,” these “Magi” from the East?

   (A) First, let’s consider some things we DON’T know about them.

   (1) One thing we DON’T KNOW about them is HOW MANY OF THEM THERE WERE.

       We have always “assumed” that because they presented Christ with three gifts there were just three Wise Men. But more than likely there were many more than three. Perhaps there was a large entourage of Wise Men.

   (2) We also DON’T KNOW THEIR NAMES. Tradition tells us their names were Gaspar, Mechior and Balthazar. But the Bible doesn’t give us their names, so let’s go with God’s word on this, rather than tradition.

   (3) We also DON’T KNOW EXACTLY WHERE THEY WERE FROM. The scripture simply says, “Magi came from the east.”

       Illustration: Let’s say you meet someone tomorrow and you ask him where’s from? And he tells you, “I’m from the east.” Well, “where is EAST?” Does he mean, “East of Plymouth?” Or does he mean “One of the northeast states like Vermont or New Hampshire?” Where is East?

       Chances are the Wise Men were from Persia, Media or Arabia, but the scriptures don’t tell us specifically which one. Verse 1 simply tells us they came “from the east.”
(B) Now, let’s consider some things we DO KNOW about these Wise Men.

(1) We DO KNOW the term “Wise Men” appears 44 times in the Bible. Although the term “MAGI” appears only once and that is in our scripture text here in Matthew 2.

(2) We also KNOW the Wise Men or “Magi” had a fascination with ASTRONOMY or the “study of the heavens.” This would explain why they would follow “the star.” To the average person that “star” might have looked pretty the sky, but to these Wise Men, these experts on astronomy, that STAR had special significance.

(3) We also KNOW the Wise Men were very religious men. They were believed to have been the descendants of an Eastern Priestly tribe associated with the Medes.

(4) Something else we KNOW about the Wise Men is they had considerable “political clout” when it came to selecting Kings.

ILLUSTRATION: Many of you can probably remember the old E. F. Hutton commercials on TV: “When E. F. Hutton talks, people listen!”

Well when the “Wise Men” talked, people listened. Especially when it came to selecting Kings to rule over a nation. Remember the Roman Empire ruled the world at that time. That means “political clout” of the Wise Men reached far beyond the borders of their own country.

This is why Herod felt so threatened when the Wise Men came seeking “The One who had been born the King of the Jews.” Herod feared his political future was in serious jeopardy.
(5) One other thing we KNOW about the Wise Men is they were NOT AT THE STABLE ON THE NIGHT JESUS WAS BORN IN BETHLEHEM.

Notice in verse 11 the Wise Men found Jesus in a HOUSE, not a stable, not a manger, but a HOUSE.

It is commonly believed among Bible scholars that Jesus could have been as old as two at the time the Wise Men came to see Him. This would explain why Herod issued a decree that all Jewish male children two years old and under be put to death.

Well now that we know a little something about the Wise Men, let’s consider……………..

II. The Gifts The Wise Men Brought to Jesus (v. 11)

1. The Wise Men brought three gifts: Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. Each gift was practical and yet very symbolic as well.

GOLD

First, consider the PRACTICAL significance of gold. Gold, just as it is today, was very valuable at the time Christ was born. Gold has always been accepted as a means of exchange throughout the world. Did you ever wonder how Joseph and Mary paid for food, shelter and clothing when they escaped to Egypt? In all likelihood they used the gift of gold that had been given by the Wise Men.

SYMBOLICALLY........ In ancient times when dignitaries visited the King of another country they would always come bearing gifts. Commonly those gifts include a number of products for which their country was famous.

But the one gift always presented to a King was GOLD. How fitting it was for the Wise Men to present the King of all kings with the gift of GOLD!
FRANKINCENSE

First, consider the PRACTICAL significance of frankincense. Frankincense was made from the sap of an Arbor Thrisfrom tree found only in Persia, Arabia and India. The sap would be gathered and dried for three months and become like a hardened resin or gum. Once hardened, frankincense would be used like an "air-freshener."

As Joseph and Mary traveled to Egypt, perhaps they spent a great deal of time inside a tent or a cave. If you have ever shared close-quarters with other people you know sometimes the "air" could use some "freshening up!" Think of frankincense as "the original Yankee Candle."

SYMBOLICALLY: Frankincense represented the holiness and divinity of Christ. In Old Testament worship, frankincense was burned on the alter as a "sweet aroma to God." Christ, Himself, was a "pleasing, sweet aroma" to His heavenly Father.

MYRRH

From a PRACTICAL standpoint, MYRRH was known throughout the ancient world as a "healing salve." It was commonly applied to cuts or burns to protect the wound and speed the healing process.

When Jesus was a little boy, did you ever wonder if He ever fell and scraped a knee or cut a finger on one of his father's carpentry tools or if He ever touched something hot and burned His finger? I believe Jesus was just like all children. He probably had His fair share of bumps and bruises. And when the boy Jesus would get hurt, I can see His loving mother, Mary, lovingly cradling Him on her lap as she wiped away His tears and applied some soothing myrrh to his wounds.

(As a side-note, you may not be aware of this, but MYRRH is still commonly used in some products we use today such as: TOOTHPASTE......MOUTHWASH......and some MAKE-UP. )
SYMBOLICALLY: There are two things of significance about myrrh. One, is that myrrh was very "bitter" to the taste. This gift from the Wise Men pointed to the day when Christ would taste the "bitter cup" of death and suffering that would bring healing to you and me.

The other significant thing about MYRRH is that it was used in ancient times for embalming the dead. Of course this again pointed to the DEATH and BURIAL of Christ thirty three years after He was born.

III. The Greatest Gift the Wise Men Brought to Jesus (v. 11 again)

1. What was the greatest gift the Wise Men brought to Jesus?
   - Was it the GOLD?
   - Was it the FRANKINCENSE?
   - Was it the MYRRH?

   ANSWER: None of the above!

2. The greatest GIFT the Wise Men brought to Jesus is not found at the end of verse 11, but rather at the beginning.

   v. 11a On coming to the house, they saw the child with His mother Mary, (now listen carefully!) AND THEY BOWED DOWN AND WORSHIPPED HIM. (repeat!)

3. The Wise Men did not travel a thousand miles just to give the Christ Child material gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

   They traveled a thousand miles to give Him the gifts of their PRAISE......ADORATION.....and WORSHIP!

4. The greatest gifts the Wise Men gave to Jesus were not those gifts in their hands, but the gifts in their hearts.
These are the GIFTS you and I can GIVE TO THE ONE WHO HAS EVERYTHING! Jesus wants the GIFT OF OUR HEART.

Jesus said in Matthew 22: 37, 38 “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment.

*JESUS wants the GIFT of our PRAISE!

*JESUS wants the GIFT of our ADORATION!

*JESUS wants the GIFT of our WORSHIP!

He wants you and me to LOVE HIM......to LOVE HIM MORE THAN WE LOVE ANYONE OR ANYTHING IN THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD!

He wants THE VERY BEST OF US......not what is left over after we have given ourselves to everybody and everything else!

*He wants THE BEST OF US............not what is left of us after we have given ourselves to everybody and everything else.

What Do You Give To The One Who Owns Everything? You give Him the GIFT of YOURSELF! YOU are the GREATEST GIFT you can give to JESUS!