



John's Schedule

Subscribe to Living Hope daily devotionals

Check out our daily Living Hope devotional message in both print and audio link. Start your day or add to your day a moment in God's Word! The archived devotional messages [are here](#).



- [Current Broadcast](#)
- [Previous Broadcasts](#)
- [Podcasts](#)
- [Featured Series](#)
- [All Series](#)
- [This Week's Sermon](#)
- [All Sermons](#)
- [Tell A Friend](#)
- [Ask A Question](#)

Series CD/DVD

GCM-The Glory of Christmas—Jesus Christ our Lord (MP3 CD)



Come to the manger and see God. Visit those first moments again as the cast of Christmas gathered around the new born King. See Joseph and Mary, Simeon and Anna, Zacharias and Elizabeth and so many others you have heard of—as never before. Learn lessons on how to cultivate worship, humility, and finishing fruitfully from the many characters in the Christmas story including Herod, the Magi (Wise Men), the Shepherds, and the Scribes. Watch these precious moments of Christmas touch every area of your life! This MP3 CD will play in MP3 players, computers, or DVD players. This disc contains over 35 individual teaching messages and over 150 pages of study notes as PDF files that correspond to the messages (footnotes and references included).

Product Code: ISBN193356105X

Price: \$15 [ORDER](#)

Sermons in this series
([click to see details](#)):

- Part: 100 [Christmas: God Gave the Only Gift Everyone Really Needs](#)
- Part: 41 [Anna: Living a Life of Praise](#)
- Part: 40 [Simeon: Living A Life of Hope](#)
- Part: 39 [Lessons in Worshipping Christ from the Wisemen](#)
- Part: 34 [Christmas: How Close Can You Get? Knowing Him for Salvation](#)
- Part: 33 [Christmas: The Only Gift Everyone Really Needs](#)
- Part: 32 [Christmas: Call His Name Jesus—At the Name of Jesus](#)
- Part: 31 [The Six Names of Christmas - Seeing](#)

The King's Seekers Magi and Shepherds



Part 19 (041212am)

[Return to previous Page](#) | [Print](#)

Listen:

(To download [Right-click here](#) and choose "Save As")

[Purchase this single sermon on CD](#) 

This fall as we drove back from taking our children to college we went by the Great Smokey Mountain National Park on Interstate-40. As we sped along we saw a sign that said " Scenic Parkway" and looking at Bonnie I said, "Let's try that". Suddenly we were off of the 70 MPH river of cars and trucks jockeying for one car length over each other—and into a quiet winding road through the mist covered Smokey Mountains.

Soon even the children were crowded at the windows pointing out barns, fields, colored leaves, and waterfalls. It is amazing what you can see when you slow down and look!

How about it? Are you looking for Jesus this Christmas? Or is this Christmas flying by the widows of your life so fast you will miss what God is offering you? Everyone who was **looking** for Jesus to come--enjoyed His arrival. As we examine their lives we can **often see ourselves**. **Who are you like this Christmas? My prayer this morning is that you will pull off the highway and take the scenic route and enjoy Jesus Christ the Lord this Christmas!**

Christmas, the greatest event since Creation, took place in a sleepy little village just five miles from Jerusalem. God came from Heaven, was wrapped in baby clothes, and laid in a stone feeding trough called a manger. He was only welcomed and worshipped by two groups of people—outside of His own family. Those two groups, the shepherds and the Wisemen, were poles apart socially, economically, culturally, ethnically, and in ever other way but spiritually. But when the shepherds and Wisemen met at the feet of Jesus, they worshipped on common ground.

The shepherds and the Wisemen stand out in the Christmas story because of all the creatures on earth created in His image--they were the only ones who came seeking the newborn King! I call these the King's Seekers.

What does Matthew 2 record as the reaction of these seekers of the King--to His birth? **Worship. Shortly after the birth of the Messiah, Judean shepherds bowed at His feet, singing His praises.** Then hours or a few days later Babylonian magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem asking King Herod where the **real** king of the Jews was born. As we will examine later, the response of the Bible scholars of Herod's court was "in **Bethlehem**." The startling fact is--that though they could recite the right answer, their hearts were indifferent to the truth of God's Word. They revealed the terrible condition of indifference to God. They knew the Scriptures, they just did not believe them! What a tragic indictment upon these servants of God. They did not want to travel the five or six miles to Bethlehem to see their Messiah.

Undaunted, those magi believed the Scriptures. They had traveled several hundred miles to worship Jesus. They had been guided by God's Shekinah light (the star that moved), and by His Scriptures—to find baby Jesus in Bethlehem. The Wisemen may have been part of the men instructed by Daniel the prophet about the coming Messiah. So when at last they saw the child, they fell down and worshiped Him. He was God in the flesh. Worship was all they could do.

In their worship they gave Him gifts--gold, frankincense, and myrrh. These were unusual present--by any standards. The gold, of course, we all can understand--but the frankincense and myrrh are not normal gifts. We can surmise that these Wisemen had also been exposed to Isaiah's prophecy which foretold that "nations will come to your **light**, and kings to your **rising** . . . They will bring gold and frankincense, and will bear good news. . . ." (Isaiah 60: 3, 6) Knowing of that Scripture could explain the first two gifts and their worship--but not the myrrh.

	Jesus as: Immanuel God with us
Part: 30	The Six Names of Christmas-- Immanuel: God with Us
Part: 29	Joseph & Mary: The King's servants
Part: 28	Lessons from the Wise Men Giving our Worship to Jesus
Part: 27	Simeon & Anna-- Single Hearted Devotion
Part: 26	The Humble Shepherds
Part: 25	Priests--Indifferent People
Part: 25	The Characters of Christmas
Part: 24	Christmas Traditions: Their origins and meanings
Part: 24	Ordinary People: Zechariah & Elisabeth
Part: 23	The King's Glory
Part: 22	Joseph & Mary-- Does God have all of YOU?
Part: 21	So close and yet so far Zacharias, Elisabeth, Chief Priests and Scribes
Part: 20	The King's Seekers the Shepherds
Part: 19	The King's Seekers Magi and Shepherds
Part: 18	The Wonder of Christ's Love
Part: 17	The King of Christmas and Herod
Part: 16	What is Christmas
Part: 15	Simeon & Anna Finishing Fruitfully
Part: 14	The Shepherds
Part: 13	The Magi
Part: 12	Joseph & Mary Walking with the Lord
Part: 11	Zacharias and Elisabeth -- The 1st Spirit Filled Family
Part: 9	The Priests & Scribes: So close and yet so far
Part: 8	The Two Kings: Herod and Jesus
Part: 7	Joseph and the Magi
Part: 6	The Origin of Christmas Traditions
Part: 5	Are you looking for Christ this Christmas?
Part: 4	The Fourth Glory of Christmas: His Name
Part: 3	God With Us
Part: 3	Lessons in Worshipping Christ
Part: 2	Anna: Living a Life of Praise
Part: 2	God In A Manger
Part: 1	The Fullness of Time: The Day Jesus Was Born

In the world of the Bible myrrh was a perfume, like frankincense. But unlike frankincense, myrrh always seemed to smell like *death*. It was the embalmers choice for preparing a corpse for burial. Jesus himself would be embalmed with this very perfume in [John 19:39](#). Could the magi be thinking of Jesus' death when they brought the myrrh? Yes, it is very likely that the great and revered Daniel of Babylon had taught his prophecy of Christ's coming to the forefathers of these magi (Wisemen). Over the centuries the truths of Daniel's prophecy (9:24-27) were read and passed down, that the "Messiah will be cut off" and this "will make atonement for iniquity" and ultimately "bring in everlasting righteousness." So this may be how God led those Wisemen to bring that third gift. Amazingly, even at Christ's birth, the shadow of the cross is already falling over His life.

This reminds me of a famous painting by the artist Holman Hunt—showing how Jesus came into the world to die. In this painting called **Jesus at the door of the carpenter's shop in Nazareth**. Jesus is depicted as a boy. Coming out of his dad's shop he goes to the door to stretch. Because "his limbs which had grown cramped over the bench. He stands there in the doorway with arms outstretched, and behind him, on the wall, the setting sun throws his shadow, and it is the shadow of a cross. In the background stands Mary; as she sees that shadow there is the fear of coming tragedy in her eyes. Jesus came into the world to live for men, and, in the end, to die for men. He came to give for men his life and his death. Gold for a king, frankincense for a priest, myrrh for the One who was to die—these were the gifts of the wise men, and, even at the cradle of Christ, they foretold that he was to be the true King, the perfect High Priest, and in the end the only Savior of mankind."

So what does Matthew record as the first response of those who find Jesus? **Worship. Listen to the Holy Scriptures as they pull back the cloak of time.** With vibrant freshness listen to Matthew describe this hallowed moment with such unforgettable words. God enters time and space as an infant!

Open with me to Matthew 2 again this morning. We are going to read these words again and this time focus upon the other event this passage records. Last time we were looking at Herod the other King. This week note the Wisemen—the King's seekers. As we read these precious words, note how Matthew traces the progression of these seekers.

- In v. 1 Matthew says that they "came from far away".
- In v. 2 he shows that they had a single minded devotion—they kept asking everyone where King Jesus was.
- In v. 3-8 Matthew paints the drama of all the possible detractors and how the Wisemen aren't daunted by any false seekers like Herod or the religious leaders.
- Then in v. 9 Matthew shows how they just keep following God's leading until they find what they were seeking—Jesus the King of their worship.
- In v. 10 Matthew exposes their emotions about finding Jesus at last, they have great anticipation.
- And finally the Wisemen in v. 11 fulfill their purpose in coming so long and so far – they came to see Him, to worship Him, and to give to Him—they "came"; they "saw", they "fell down", they "worshipped", they "opened", and then they "presented" what they had to Him.

Please read [Matthew 2:1-11](#)

Matthew 2:1-11 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2 saying (**present participle, continuously asking over and over**), "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. (**Still these three responses to Christ are still present today: Herod hated Him; the leaders ignored Him; the Magi loved Him**) 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 So they said to him (**they knew it, didn't have to look it up, they quoted it—but just didn't believe it**), "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 6 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.' " 7 Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also." 9 When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them (**so it came and went and wasn't always visible—God gives us only what we need, when we need it**), till it came and stood over where the young Child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. 11 And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him (**if there was ever a time to worship Mary it was now—but then as now they worshipped HIM!**). And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

That worship is a presentation of our gifts to God. We read that these wise men "presented unto Him gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh." The significance of these gifts is beautiful.

- Gold speaks of Christ as the King of Heaven, or His *Deity*, as a study of the Tabernacle makes plain.
- Frankincense speaks of Christ's role as both our Great High Priest and the Perfect Lamb of God, just as it gives forth its *perfume* only as it is brought into contact with fire.
- Myrrh speaks of Christ's sacrificial death as myrrh is only harvested after the tree is bruised with stripes cut into the bark. Resin that flows as a healing balm to the damaged bark of the tree's *suffering*, has always associated myrrh with the death and burial of our Lord.

Thus these wise men, by the gifts they presented to Him, expressed first, their faith in His Deity; second, their adoration of His sinless life; and third, their anticipation of His sacrifice of Himself for the sin of the world by His death.

What simple lessons can we draw from the Wisemen?

- God has servants in the most unexpected places.
- God gets glory from unexpected people.
- God is found only by hearts and not heads.
- Finding God is costly.
- True faith is unstoppable.

These wise men believed in Christ when they had never seen him; but that was not all. They believed in him when the scribes and Pharisees were unbelieving; but that again was not all. They believed in him when they saw him as a little infant on Mary's knees, and worshiped him as a King. This was the crowning point of their faith. They saw no miracles to convince them. They heard no teaching to persuade them. They saw no signs of divinity and greatness to overawe them. They saw nothing but a newborn infant, helpless and weak, and needing a mother's care like any of us. And yet when they saw that infant, they believed that they saw the divine Savior of the world! "They bowed down and worshiped him" (verse 11). We read of no greater faith than this in the whole volume of the Bible. It is a faith that deserves to be placed side by side with that of the penitent thief. The thief saw someone dying the death of a criminal, and yet prayed to him, and "called him Lord." The wise men saw a newborn baby on the lap of a poor woman, and yet worshiped him, and confessed that he was Christ. Blessed indeed are those who can believe in this way!

How about it? Are you looking for Jesus this Christmas? Or is this Christmas flying by so fast you will miss what God is offering you? Everyone who was looking for Jesus to come enjoyed His arrival. As we examine their lives we can often see ourselves. Who are you like?

The Magi were willing to follow God's way anywhere in order to find the Promised King and Savior.

- **Come to Him Yourself:** Do you see the lesson in the way these Wisemen gave? They didn't send their gifts by another's hand, they came and brought them personally to Jesus. God wants you, in person, to come to Him. Undaunted by the long and arduous journey, they must have been amazed to find a mere baby in a stable. After the magnificence of King Herod's palace and his overpowering presence it is amazing that they fell down in worship before baby Jesus as they did. Choosing to disobey Herod's demand that they reveal the location of Jesus indicates their faith. This choice could have cost them their lives. So in every way it was a personal coming to Jesus that marked their lives.
 - **Have you come personally to Jesus in prayer, worship, and adoration today? Have you given yourself to Jesus this Christmas? That is the first gift. Remember how Paul commended the saints that "first gave themselves" (11 Corinthians 8:5)?**
- **Sacrifice your time, freedom, and comfort for Him:** From the two year calculation of Herod's death warrant on the babies of the region we can infer that it took many months for these Wisemen to travel to Jerusalem. Herod added some months on each end to cover any potential birth near that time. All that to say that it was hard to travel 1100 to 1200 miles back then. They walked and rode across hot and arid deserts, through rivers, and across cold and dangerous mountain passes to get to Christ's birthplace from the regions of Babylon, Persia or Media. Even today this journey is very difficult and dangerous.
 - **What are you sacrificing giving to Jesus this Christmas that costs you something?**
- **Present what you have to Him:** The Wisemen brought prophetic gifts that pictured what Christ's earthly work was all about. They brought what they had in their lives as wealthy rulers. And that is what God wanted, that is why He chose them. When God chose you it was not to bring their gifts but yours. Remember how the Lord accents the gifts of each individual. None are the same; all are precious to Him. Think through the people and gifts that God uses in His Word. Remember the little boy's lunch that fed thousands? How about an anonymous person's upper room that witnessed the Last Supper, the appearances of the Risen Christ, and the prayer meeting of Pentecost? Then there was the borrowing of an unbroken colt to carry the King of Kings as He rode to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. And who can ever forget the un-requested flask of perfume broken and spilled out just for love of Jesus.
 - **Present what you have to Him this morning. Give Him your mind—let Him fill it. Give Him your hands—let Him guide and use them. Give Him your future—let Him plan and direct your life. Give Him your treasures—He can store them and invest them in safe places that bring everlasting rewards.**
- **Personally Worship Him:** But more than the coming and giving there is the greatest moment of all--they came, they bowed, they opened their treasures and presented them to Him...but before all of that—they fell down and worshipped Him! Worship is a rare and easily lost atmosphere of devotion, adoration, sacrifice, and communion. Those Wisemen were overwhelmed at the sight of the One they came so far to see: the One they had waited so long to honor; the One they had paid so much to sacrifice their gifts upon—and when at last they saw Him they fell down and worshipped Him.
 - **This Christmas why don't you consider William Temple's definition of worship. And while you are off the busy highway of life--measure your personal worship temperature. Here is what he said:**
 - "[Worship is] to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God."
 - "[Worship is] to feed the mind with the truth of God."
 - "[Worship is] to purge the imagination by the beauty of God."
 - "[Worship is] to open up the heart to the love of God."
 - "[Worship is] to devote the will to the purpose of God."

Paraphrased and quoted from Barclay, William, *Daily Study Bible Series: The Gospel of Matthew - Volume 1 Chapters 1-10 (Revised Edition)*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press) 2000, c1975.

A. P. Gibbs, Worship, p. 45

[Send this page to a friend](#)

Site hosting by FamilyNet | Site development by Brent Riggs

[Home](#) | [About Us](#) | [We Believe](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Tulsa Bible Church](#) | [Grace To You](#)
© 2007 - Discover the Book Ministries. All Rights Reserved.

Comments, suggestions, concerns about this page?
[Contact the Web Manager](#)