

December 23, 2021

[Matthew 2:9-12](#)

Tomorrow is Christmas Eve! Can you believe it? I am excited for our Christmas Eve service where we will hear many of the Scripture passages we have been reflecting on over the past few weeks. On Christmas Eve, when we re-tell the story of Jesus, sometimes it seems like the story happened all at once. Angels appear, a baby is born, shepherds and wisemen come seek Him. We end the evening lighting candles and singing “Silent Night” and I tear up every time.

Did you know that Bible scholars speculate that Jesus was likely between 1-2 years old when the Magi found him? Sorry to break it to you, the wisemen were likely not there at the same time as the shepherds. Can you imagine following a star to search for a newborn king for a couple of years? Needless to say, they were “overjoyed” when they reached their destination. And their joy in encountering Jesus causes them to bow down in worship.

We see gift giving as part of the Christmas story too. The wisemen brought three gifts with important symbolism. Gold is a gift for a king, frankincense (like incense) is a gift for a deity, and myrrh (a spice used in embalming) is a gift for one who was going to die. In their gift-giving, the Magi acknowledge who Jesus came to be—our King, our God, and ultimately our Savior, the one who would give his very life for us.

As we reflect on the example of the Magi, what can we learn? I am struck by their persistence in seeking Jesus. Their willingness to leave all that they knew to follow a star. Their unwillingness to give up. Their delight in encountering Jesus. Would you like to be more persistent and intentional in the way you seek Jesus?

I am also moved by their posture toward Jesus. On encountering Jesus for the first time, the wisemen are filled with joy and bow down in worship. Their gifts acknowledge a fuller understanding of Jesus’ identity. What is your posture as you encounter Jesus—do you feel a sense of joy in his presence?

How might reflecting on WHO Jesus came to be and what this means to you help you experience more joy this Christmas?

Jesus, we want to be wise people who seek after you persistently and intentionally. We want to experience joy in your presence. Would you help us remember the gift that your presence means in our lives—you are our King who reigns and is in control, our God who is able to do more than we could ask or imagine, and our Savior who died to give us everlasting life. Open our hearts to worship you and truly encounter you this Christmas. AMEN.

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