

PRAYER

- Pray for each other to always celebrate this season with the right reason in mind.

- Ask God for a joyful and grateful heart this Christmas time and the rest of the New Year.

- As you give your gifts to your family and friends, include a prayer of blessing for each person.



NOTES

CONNECT

- Share your most unforgettable birthday celebration. What made it memorable?
- Tell about a time when you surprised a friend for his or her birthday. What did you do to make that person feel special?
- What gift would you want to have on your next birthday? Why?



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WORD

¹After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”

Matthew 2:1,2

WHAT What does the Bible say?

Imagine a birthday party with all the best food, activities, and decor but the focus of the guests have shifted away from the birthday celebrant! This is usually what happens during Christmas when people are busy with many other things and forget the true Reason for the season. Let us look back at the original Christmas story and learn from what the “wise guests” did at that time.

• **The wise men recognized God in Christ.**

“... We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”
Matthew 2:2

The wise men had the right focus as they awaited the coming of the promised Messiah. They spent two years following the star of the King—left their homes, faced perils and obstacles along the way, and even faced Herod. And when they finally arrived at their destination, they didn’t expect it to be a humble place but still, they recognized Jesus and worshiped the King! How have you recognized Jesus in unlikely situations?

• **The wise men celebrated the coming of Christ.**

When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.
Matthew 2:10

The Magi rejoiced at the sight of the star of Jesus. They have anticipated and prepared for this moment. They knew exactly whom they were waiting for and that was the Messiah. They didn’t

miss Jesus when they finally met Him in person and their joy was made complete. In what way are you preparing to not miss Jesus this yuletide season?

• **The wise men offered gifts to Christ.**

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

Matthew 2:11

Of course, no celebration would probably be complete without the giving of gifts. The wise men simply gave to Jesus what was rightfully His: gold as a token of His royalty, frankincense for His divinity, and myrrh for His sufferings, gifts that honored the infant King and declared His full divinity and humanity. What gifts can you offer Jesus that can honor Him?

SO WHAT What is the relevance of the Word to my life?

- Looking at your current lifestyle, are you missing out on the presence of God in the situations you face? How will you keep your focus on Him?
- Can you say that your joy is complete every Christmas time? Why or why not?
- What do the gifts of the Magi tell you of who Jesus is? What is the significance of these to you?

NOW WHAT How do I apply the Word to my life?

- How differently would you celebrate Christmas this time around knowing the truth of the main Reason for the season?
- What could you practically do for you to be able to celebrate Christmas with the right focus in mind?
- Who can you bless this Christmas season?