

### Week 3

#### The preference of presents.

Ever had to wonder what to give as gifts at Christmas time. I mean what do you give your wife who you've been married to for nearly 20 years! All the cool ideas you did years ago and that impressed her no end but the ideas run dry, and it's hard to impress these days. ( Any ideas will be greatly appreciated, please send an sms to 0408265463

What about a present for your aging Dad or mum? Dad thinks I am now buying things I want to inherit! ( actually I hadn't thought of that, it is a pretty good idea!)

How about your big brother? Or your big brothers partner? It's not just what to buy but how much do you spend? Then there's the in-laws h what was that thing about inheriting!)

We can joke about it but these things cause stress  
What I do know is I want to spend more on my family, because I want them to know how much I appreciate them. (I am lucky I love to buy stuff particularly for Marianne)

But what about this. What do you give Jesus for Christmas. Most of the time we see Him as the gift. But what do we give Him?

I think we have a template in the Christmas story. We know it well. The wise guys turn up with gifts.  
Gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Let's look at it.

#### Matthew 2:

11. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. 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, frankincense and myrrh. 12. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

A couple of simple things here:

They saw the star and were overjoyed = they loved knowing God was leading them.

They bowed and worshipped= they knew how to respond. But they didn't have a church service they just flat out worshipped.

Opened their treasures= they loved giving. (actually there seems to be an inference that the presents were made of and included Gold, frankincense and Myrrh- probably numerous presents including each)

Note they were treasures, =they loved being generous to Jesus. important, a treasure is something we find important to us. It's something of immense value to us, it's like a Best you can offer idea- worship is what you give as well as what you sing!

God communicates and they listen= they recognise God's communication.

Even when God communicates differently. A dream is different, a star is different but hey a virgin born baby king is different. Sometimes God wants to bring home the communication and does it differently.

How does it play out for us?

Recognise God's leading us ok how is God leading? We are lucky, we have the bible that is where we can access God's thought processors for us. While it would have been great to be at the first Christmas, we have a lot more guidance material. Can God still lead by a star? If he wants to? If God is the same yesterday, today and forever then He still may lead by stars or dreams. Maybe we should evaluate our dreaming and sleeping habits a bit more to see if God is communicating. Sure I think then we have to find a way to confirm the communication ( probably through our bible reading)

**Worship** a couple of things here. They knew how to respond, they bowed down and worshipped. They did the culturally acceptable worship style. Bowing down before someone had the inference of placing them above you, placing yourself under their instructions. ( this is probably a good time to advertise our Christmas service! 9:00 Christmas Day

But worship is more, worship in what you give. Worship was backed up by their giving and the quality of their presents. Our Christmas is not only about receiving the gift of Jesus but giving back to Him. The quality or motivation of your generosity and gift giving is part of the worship.

Not just to Jesus this Christmas but worship through your giving attitude.

Listen to what God has to say to us this Christmas. I think this is the easiest thing to miss at Christmas. We know the story so well we become blasé about

it. But this Christmas thing is a reminder yes but also a communication from God.

What is God communicating to us this Christmas?