

Sunday Morning Message

November 27, 2016 (Edited from a message originally preached on December 11, 2011)

What Do You Give The Guy Who Has Everything?

Text – Matthew 2:1 - 12

Congregational Reading – Matthew 2:8 - 11

Introduction

This is a crazy time of the year. Everybody is scrambling trying to find the best deals on the presents that they want to give this Christmas. Black Friday is now Black Thursday through Sunday, and then there is Cyber Monday.

Giving is easy when you know what to get the person, but what do you get for the guy who has everything?

Illustration – My dad was a tough guy to buy gifts for.

Jesus must have been a tough guy to get a present for. He already owns the whole world.

Additional Text

"Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God. ... I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." - (Psalm 50:7, 9-12)

These wise men had to think carefully in selecting a gift for the guy who has everything?

The gifts that the wise men brought to the Lord Jesus were symbolic as well as substantive.

The gold was symbolic of His **perfection** – His deity, and the fact that He is a king.

The frankincense was symbolic of His **purity** and His sinlessness.

The myrrh was symbolic of **purpose**. Myrrh was used for embalming, and those it foreshadowed Christ's death.

What did they do with the gifts anyway?

What can you give to Jesus, who already owns everything?

I Your Substance

Meaning your money or your possessions, etc.

You must understand, however, that you are really only giving back what He has already given to you.

"And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. ... The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." - (Revelation 4:4, 10-11)

A You can give to advance His Cause.

By the way – we are not talking here about the tithe. The tithe already belongs to the Lord – in fact God said in Malachi 3 that we rob him if we don't give back the tithe.

We are not talking about that which is commanded here. We are talking about voluntary free-will offerings over and above the tithe.

Illustration – Special Building Fund Offering.

Missions, Building, Bus, Academy

B You can give to aid His children.

Illustrate – Others Fund

"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." - (Matthew 10:42)

We want to give the Lord because we love Him:

"I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love." - (2 Corinthians 8:8)

...but we also realize that when we give back to the Lord, He blesses us tremendously:

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." - (Luke 6:38)

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." - (Matthew 6:33)

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me

now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts." - (Malachi 3:10-12)

II Your Service

“Some gifts you can give this Christmas are beyond monetary value: Mend a quarrel, dismiss suspicion, tell someone, "I love you." Give something away--anonymously. Forgive someone who has treated you wrong. Turn away wrath with a soft answer. Visit someone in a nursing home. Apologize if you were wrong. Be especially kind to someone with whom you work. Give as God gave to you in Christ, without obligation, or announcement, or reservation, or hypocrisy.” (Charles Swindoll, Growing Strong, pp. 400-1.)

Why not give Christ the gift of your service this year. Why not volunteer some of your time serving Him. How?

Serving in a ministry – bus route, nursing homes, Sunday School

"Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." – (Luke 14:12-14)

Winning souls

Serving your community

Illustrate – Bryan Berthold – Fire Department

Helping people

Illustration –

Twenty years ago, I drove a cab for a living. When I arrived at 2:30 a.m., the building was dark except for a single light in a ground floor window. Under these circumstances, many drivers would just honk once or twice, wait a minute, and then drive away. But I had seen too many impoverished people who depended on taxis as their only means of transportation. Unless a situation smelled of danger, I always went to the door. This passenger might be someone who needs my assistance, I reasoned to myself. So, I walked to the door and knocked. "Just a minute", answered a frail, elderly voice. I could

hear something being dragged across the floor. After a long pause, the door opened. A small woman in her 80's stood before me. She was wearing a print dress and a pillbox hat with a veil pinned on it, like somebody out of a 1940s movie. By her side was a small nylon suitcase. The apartment looked as if no one had lived in it for years. All the furniture was covered with sheets. There were no clocks on the walls, no knickknacks or utensils on the counters. In the corner was a cardboard box filled with photos and glassware. "Would you carry my bag out to the car?" she said. I took the suitcase to the cab, then returned to assist the woman. She took my arm and we walked slowly toward the curb. She kept thanking me for my kindness. "It's nothing", I told her. "I just try to treat my passengers the way I would want my mother treated". Oh, you're such a good boy", she said. When we got in the cab, she gave me an address, and then asked, "Could you drive through downtown?" "It's not the shortest way," I answered quickly. "Oh, I don't mind," she said. "I'm in no hurry. I'm on my way to a hospice". I looked in the rear-view mirror. Her eyes were glistening. "I don't have any family left," she continued. "The doctor says I don't have very long." I quietly reached over and shut off the meter. "What route would you like me to take?" I asked. For the next two hours, we drove through the city. She showed me the building where she had once worked as an elevator operator. We drove through the neighborhood where she and her husband had lived when they were newlyweds. She had me pull up in front of a furniture warehouse that had once been a ballroom where she had gone dancing as a girl. Sometimes she'd ask me to slow in front of a particular building or corner and would sit staring into the darkness, saying nothing. As the first hint of sun was creasing the horizon, she suddenly said, "I'm tired. Let's go now." We drove in silence to the address she had given me. It was a low building, like a small convalescent home, with a driveway that passed under a portico. Two orderlies came out to the cab as soon as we pulled up. They were solicitous and intent, watching her every move. They must have been expecting her. I opened the trunk and took the small suitcase to the door. The woman was already seated in a wheelchair. "How much do I owe you?" she asked, reaching into her purse. "Nothing," I said. "You have to make a living," she answered. "There are other passengers," I responded. Almost without thinking, I bent and gave her a hug. She held onto me tightly. "You gave an old woman a little moment of joy," she said. "Thank you." I squeezed her hand, and then walked into the dim morning light. Behind me, a door shut. It was the sound of the closing of a life. I didn't pick up any more passengers that shift. I drove aimlessly lost in thought. For the rest of that day, I could hardly talk. What if that woman had gotten an angry driver, or one who was impatient to end his shift? What if I had refused to take the run, or had honked once, then driven away? On a quick review, I

don't think that I have done anything more important in my life. We're conditioned to think that our lives revolve around great moments. But great moments often catch us unaware--beautifully wrapped in what others may consider a small one. PEOPLE MAY NOT REMEMBER EXACTLY WHAT 'YOU DID, OR WHAT YOU SAID, BUT THEY WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." - (Matthew 25:34-40)

III Yourself

"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." - (2 Corinthians 8:1-5)

This is really the best gift that you can give to the Lord, because when you give yourself to the Lord, He gets everything else – He gets your substance – He gets your service.

Isn't this really what God intended when He created everything in the first place? He wanted people who would voluntarily give themselves to Him. Isn't that what worship really is?

The only gift is a portion of thyself. (R.W. Emerson.)

What do you give the Guy who has everything?

Substance

Service

Self