

SERMON NOTES

Christmas Worship
Matthew 2:1-11

Worship! When you hear the word, what are the first things that come to your mind? Typically, we think of the style of music, buildings, etc. However, a biblical theology of worship is determined by Scripture and should always be centered on the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus told us the greatest commandment is: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind” (*Matthew 22:37*). In context of worship, “It’s a fact that what we love most will determine what we genuinely worship.”^[1] A simple reading of the Bible clearly reveals the priority of worship in the life of God’s people. Anything that takes priority or precedence in our life over God, is an idol. 1 John 5:21 says, “Little children, guard yourselves from idols.” “Watch out,” said John, in effect. Be on guard against anything that might occupy the place in your heart that should be reserved for God” (*Chuck Swindoll*). The principles of worship and the practice of worship are important in the life of every believer. Prioritizing the worship of God is powerful for overcoming the temptation of creating idols.

“Worship is the central focus of a vital Christian faith, and the most distinctive activity of the church of Jesus Christ... To worship is to offer the oath of covenant loyalty to the Great King, and to affirm our faithfulness as His servants. For this reason, the worship of God through Jesus Christ lies at the heart of all Christian expression.”^[2]

Studying the visit of the magi, we can learn important principles about worship.

Key thought: The treasure of Christmas (Jesus) compels you to worship.

The person of Christ commands and compels worship

“They fell to the ground and worshiped Him”

- Worship = (Greek – proskuneo) to fall, to bow down, or bend the knee, to pay homage.
- Worship is the act of prescribing worth to God, it is offering of our total selves to God.
- Worship is the magnification of God, the minimization of self.

“Definitions and descriptions cannot adequately delineate the experience of worship, for worship is an act of faith. Worship is the lifting up of the heart in willing response.” (*Christian Worship, by Franklin M. Segler, page. 8*)

The posture of Christ honoring worship is humility!

“They fell to the ground”

“They fell down” – to fall, collapse, fall to pieces, be destroyed

For we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.” *Philippians 3:3*

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The person of Christ inspires generosity in worship!

“Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

- Generous with praises
- Generous with passions (priority)
- Generous with possessions

Take Away:

As you worship privately and corporately this Christmas season:

- Be attentive, focused, transparent, engaged
- Expect to meet with God
- Obey God's Spirit

^[1] Kauflin, Bob, *Worship Matters*, Crossway, Wheaton, Illinois, p. 25.

^[2] Leonard, Richard, *Worship In The Early Church*