



The Worship of Gentiles

Matthew 2

One of the games I loved to play as a child was “Telephone.” It was always fun to make up a phrase, have that phrase whispered in other people’s ears, on down the line, and then find out what the phrase becomes by the time it reaches the final person. An original phrase could have been, “I love to eat moose tracks ice cream,” but by the time it reaches the final person, it could have become, “I have to eat a moose with cream.”

A game like this is fun when relating to things that aren’t very important, but it’s not so good when you’re dealing with Truth. Can you imagine what it would be like if we always only communicated via whispering into people’s ears? What if you were going into surgery and instead of the doctor saying (in a normal voice), “Scalpel,” he would whisper into the people’s ears. A lot of things could go wrong. And, if I was a patient in that hospital. . . . Well, I wouldn’t be a patient in a hospital like that. I’d want people to clearly communicate and enunciate.

The reason I give you this analogy is because of the story I’m going to be talking about today. This story relates to the “Three Kings” or as other people say, “The Three Wise Men.” Like playing telephone, there’s a lot of additional information that we have that really don’t exist in the Scriptures (or anywhere else for that matter). For example, some people say, “Well, they probably came from Babylon.” That gets interpreted into, “They were from Babylon.” Other people read the story and say, “Since there are three gifts, that probably means there were three people.” Others have studied prophecies of the Scriptures and have seen Scriptures that talk about kings and they say, “Oh, these magi were kings.” In addition to all of this, in our Christmas crèche, we have the wise men at the stable with the shepherds when it’s clear in the Scriptures that the magi did not show up until later in Jesus’ life. But even in this, we don’t know how much later. After all, just because Herod killed male babies two years and under does not mean that it took the magi showed up when Jesus was two.

Maybe when you hear all of these statements, you start thinking, “Why are we talking about this? This doesn’t matter.” But I do believe it matters. As I said last week, we can tend to over sentimentalize the story of Christmas, and in doing so, we miss the point. In the same way, we can add things to the story of Christmas, too. In doing so, we focus on things that God never intended. We make points out of things that aren’t points at all. As a result, we miss out on the point that God is making! Therefore, I believe it’s important to peel away the errors or mistakes in understanding in order to help us to rejoice all the more in Jesus. And, as the subtitle of this series is, I pray that we would celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

There could now be some of you who say, “Wait, there weren’t three wise men? They weren’t kings and they weren’t with the shepherds?!” You continue thinking, “Oh no, the Bible isn’t true!” But

that's not what you should do. Instead of thinking like the game of telephone, people started listening to people instead of the source (i.e. – the Bible), some people reject the source outright. But if we'd just go back to the source in Matthew 2, we'd discover that many of these statements about these wise men don't even exist in the source, the Bible. And, I believe that if we can peel away some of the misunderstandings of this story, we will get more at the main point of this story.

Let's read Matthew 2:1-12 together to gain a better understanding:

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ⁶ 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.' ⁷ Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also." ⁹ When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. ¹¹ And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way."¹

In the previous verses, Matthew emphasizes Herod. In looking at Herod, we see a man who refused to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah. Instead of surrendering his idol of power and kingship, he fought against Jesus' rule. The entrance of Jesus revealed a heart of stone in Herod. Jesus' entrance confronted Herod and revealed that Herod had no love for Jesus. He felt no need to worship Him. However, today's sermon contrasts the magi with Herod. Herod doesn't want to worship Jesus. Herod doesn't want to give up. Herod goes to great lengths to kill the Messiah. Yet here we read about men who want to worship Jesus. They give up their time and resources. And they go to great lengths to see the Messiah – while also protecting Him, too.

I want you to understand the interesting writing style of Matthew here. Matthew isn't merely telling a story. He's calling us to think carefully even about ourselves. Are you like Herod or are you going to agree with the magi? But there's more Matthew is doing. He's confronting his readers at the outset of this book. You see, if Matthew wanted to start a huge following, he wouldn't do it the way he's doing it. According to a 1st century Jewish mindset, Matthew's completely wrong. I mean, Matthew starts off right with the lineage, tracing it back to David. But how could the Messiah be

¹ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Mt 2:1–12.

born to a young, unknown virgin? Wouldn't the Messiah be born with greater pomp and circumstance? Matthew's writing reveals that the Messiah's birth is in accordance with prophecies, and yet the people of Israel, in general, rejected Him while the weak and unsuspecting people are set free by Him.

We see the weakness in Mary and Joseph. Their best attributes were that they were poor and unknown. This reiterates that God chooses the weak of the world to despise the strong! But what about the magi? What's so weak or unsuspecting about them? There are at least two things:

- 1) **The magi were Gentiles coming to worship the Messiah.** Deuteronomy 7:6 says, "the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth."² How could the magi come to worship the Messiah when the Jewish leaders weren't worshipping Him? If the Messiah really had come, then the Jews would know. Or would they? Matthew reveals the hardness of the religious leader's hearts. The religious leaders didn't know. They were rejecting God. With the magi's entrance, Matthew reveals the Old Testament prophecies that speak to people from all over the earth coming to worship God. As one commentator notes: So we learn already at this early stage of the life of Jesus that the allegiances he will create will extend far beyond the boundaries of Judaism, while at the same time he will threaten and alienate many within those boundaries.³
- 2) **The Magi were Magi and astrologers.** What is a "magi?" It's actually difficult to pinpoint. The term "magi" referred to many different types of things. But I like what one commentator wrote, "the term loosely covered a wide variety of men interested in dreams, astrology, magic, books thought to contain mysterious references to the future, and the like. Some Magi honestly inquired after truth; many were rogues and charlatans. . ." (Gaebelein, p. 85). So, why does being a magi add to the fact that these Gentiles are "unsuspecting characters" in the Christmas story? Let me read to you from Isaiah 47: You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, *And* the monthly prognosticators Stand up and save you From what shall come upon you. ¹⁴Behold, they shall be as stubble, The fire shall burn them . . ."⁴ What does this have to do with the magi? Well, based on the context, and based on the nature of the magi, they studied the stars. The star caught their attention and then it caused them to search for the Truth. But note this, they were those types of people that God says He is going to punish. These magi are an unlikely bunch to be worshipping the Messiah. They're Gentiles, and they're astrologers.

In thinking through this story, I think to the story of Jonah. There we have Jonah not wanting the Ninevites to receive forgiveness. They're not Israelites. They're wicked. They've done wrong. And Jonah hates it that God shows grace to them. In a similar way, I can't help but think that some of the readers of Matthew would have thought these things about the magi. But just like Jonah reveals the magnitude of God's mercy and grace, so the story of the magi reveal the magnitude of God's mercy and grace towards undeserving people. And, **I pray the remainder of this message reminds you of God's kindness towards the unlikely – causing you to greatly rejoice in Jesus!**

So, what about you? Will you follow Herod in blindness or will you praise Jesus with eyes wide open? As we dive further in this text, let's pretend that we're reading this for the first time from a Jewish perspective. But we're not trying to be resistant. We really want to know the Truth. If that's

² *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Dt 7:6.

³ Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 61.

⁴ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Is 47:13–14.

the case, our question is this, **“How can it be that the Magi worship Jesus?”** Gratefully, Matthew answers this question by referring our minds to the Old Testament Scriptures. The Scriptures alone provide the basis of our hope, and in Matthew writing Scripture affirms his writing with the Old Testament Scripture. Let’s see how he does this.

1. The Old Testament prophecies affirm that Gentile magi can worship the Messiah (vv. 1-2, 7-8).

A Star in the East. In verse 1, we are told that wise men (literally, magi) from the east came to Jerusalem. Numbers 24:17 says, *“I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel. . . .”*⁵ Here, all the way back in the days of Moses, we have a prophecy of a star. And, in Numbers 23, we hear about the eastern mountains (see v. 7), which was understood as messianic, too. So, in verse 1 of Matthew 2, we immediately get the idea that while at first glance we wouldn’t think the magi likely candidates for worshipping the Messiah, they certainly fit the prophecies.

Now we’re told that the Magi came to Jerusalem. Why Jerusalem? Jerusalem is the capital for the Jewish people. But why go to the capital? Well, we see that in their next statement: *“Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?”*⁶ Where do kings live? They live in the capital city.

A King to Come. Now, let’s pause for a second here. Magi are people who tried to discern Truth from various studies. These magi clearly studied the stars. In seeing one star that was noticeably different, they begin to ask more questions. We can confidently assume they search the Old Testament Scriptures. How else would they even know the phrase *“King of the Jews,”* if they hadn’t known the Old Testament? The phrase *“King of the Jews”* refers to Old Testament prophecy. It was a messianic title. Jeremiah 23:5 says this: *“Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord, ‘That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.”*⁷ The magi would have known verses like this one or Truths based on verses like this or else they wouldn’t have said *“King of the Jews.”* Now, let’s just stop and be amazed at this because this is simply phenomenal. Here are Gentile magi whom God revealed His prophetic star to. He confronted them in their life. And, then it got their attention and they sought the Scriptures.

A few years ago, Tracy and I were at a conference and one of the pastors who spoke told some of his testimony of coming to Christ. He was telling a story of how he was running from God. One night he was driving and trying to find a radio station to listen to. As he was searching the radio, he said there was only one radio station that worked. Moody Radio. This is not what he was wanting, but he was intrigued because he heard a Scottish voice on the radio. It was a man by the name of Alistair Begg. Through listening to Alistair talk, this man was confronted of the truth of God’s immense all-encompassing love for him and in that car, Pastor Leonce Crump began weeping. God enflamed Leonce’s love for Christ, and Leonce grew immensely after that point in time.

Now, I tell this story because just like the magi, Leonce wasn’t looking for God. He was doing his own thing. He just wanted to listen to a radio station. But what did God do? God limited radio reception to Moody Radio! What did God do for the magi? He utilized their love for astrology and confronted them in their quest. God revealed to them that the answer to life is not in the stars.

⁵ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Nu 24:17.

⁶ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Mt 2:2.

⁷ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Je 23:5.

Instead, the stars are meant to point us to the answer. The answer is found in the one born King of the Jews!

This is how God works with all of us! He reaches us where we're at and then draws us to Himself! Praise God that He's worked that way in our lives. We weren't looking for Him. But seeks and saves those who are lost. He gets into our lives, confronts us and sets us free. Then and only then do we start searching for Him!

So, getting back to the magi, they head to the capital where kings usually reside. Their words reach Herod's ears: "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?"⁸ The wording here emphasizes the word "born." It's not that the magi were saying, "Where is He who has been born to become King of the Jews," but instead the magi are stating, "Where is the one who by right of birth is King of the Jews?" Automatically, we can understand why Herod would be angered. The magi are stating that Herod must give up his throne because the real King of the Jews has been born!

But how could the magi be so audacious in their claim of knowing the Messiah has been born? Why should Herod give any credence to their words? The magi go on to reveal their statement about the star – as we've already noted. They say, "we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."⁹ At this point, Herod hid his idolatry and "kept his cool" so that he could try to be in control. He heeds the words of these magi and asked the religious leaders where the Messiah was to be born. Low and behold, the religious leaders have an answer. According to the prophet Micah, the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem.

Herod then tells the magi where the Messiah was to be born, and then Herod asks them to go in his place. Then they are to return to Herod to tell him if they found the Messiah. The magi seem to believe Herod's words, and they gladly go to Bethlehem – which was about six miles south of Jerusalem.

Let's pause for a moment to make sure we're all tracking together here. Remember the original question we're trying to answer in studying the magi? The question is, "How can it be that the Magi worship Jesus?" We've already seen that the Old Testament prophecies support the worship of the magi. But now we move forward in this story and we see God's providential care encouraging their worship.

2. God's providential care encourages the magi to worship Jesus (vv. 9-12)

Let's read verses 9-12 together again: "⁹When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. ¹¹And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way."¹⁰

The magi were deceived by king Herod, but through the deception of king Herod, God was still guiding these magi to worship Jesus. This is their intent. Now, at this point, I want to make a comment about the magi's worship. In verse 2, we are told that the magi's intent is to worship

⁸ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Mt 2:2.

⁹ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Mt 2:2.

¹⁰ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Mt 2:9–12.

Jesus. Herod tries to befriend the magi by picking up on the word “worship,” too. Then in verse 11, we read that the magi do indeed worship Jesus. But I want you to note that the word “worship,” doesn’t have to mean to ascribe ultimate worth to something. It can also mean “do homage” (Gaebelein, p. 86). According to D.A. Carson, the magi’s own “statement suggests homage paid to royalty rather than the worship of Deity. But Matthew, having already told of the virginal conception, doubtless expected his readers to discern something more – viz., that the Magi “worshipped” better than they knew” (Gaebelein, p. 86).

The Magi may not fully understand everything, but they know that who they’re seeking for is worthy to be honored. And, God is graciously guiding them in this pursuit. Now, after they receive the information from Herod and receive his “go-ahead,” the star is seen again. Isn’t this interesting? That star prophesied in Numbers is bright for the magi’s travels. And, I believe this star was nothing short of a miracle. It seems to appear and also move in such a way that it specifically shows where the Messiah is. However this star came into being is not so much the point. We are to understand that God is guiding the magi by this star.

While the birth of Jesus didn’t bring much fanfare, Matthew shows us, even by this star, that God was in and over the whole thing. And, if God is in and over all of this, that’s what matters. We should become growingly convinced and encouraged in the God who is sovereign over all events – even the movement of a star. And, if God can miraculously place stars in the sky, what else can He do? This is truly phenomenal.

At this point, we see that when the star appeared, the magi “rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.” Get these descriptive words. Rejoice, exceedingly and great! What a contrast this creates with Herod. As we learned about Herod last week, Herod was troubled internally. He was in turmoil. But the magi rejoice exceedingly with great joy! For some, the entrance of Jesus created turmoil because their idols were confronted and they wanted to hold on to their own turf. But for the magi, they were learning that the entrance of Jesus was the fulfillment of their longings. Therefore, there’s a natural response to understanding and knowing Jesus: JOY!

Isn’t this like the angel’s statement to the shepherds: “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.”¹¹ Don’t be afraid. There’s news that causes great joy. The Messiah, the King of the Jews, has been born! The King is here. I don’t know if this affects us like it ought to, Ventura. Think about this. For centuries, God had been promising the coming Messiah. After Adam and Eve sinned, God said that there was one to come that was the seed of the woman who would crush the serpent’s head. When Eve had her firstborn son, she thought the Messiah had come. She names him, “Cain,” which means “acquired” or “here it is!” Eve thinks the Messiah is born, but the Messiah is not. An anti-Christ is born and he kills his brother. Then, we go down to Seth, but the lineage of Cain moves on and even the lineage of Seth is sinful. But Noah received mercy. God protects Noah in the flood while punishing the rest of the world. Noah is savior-esque, but even Noah is imperfect. We go down through history. We get to Joseph. People are saved, but Joseph dies. We get to Moses. People are rescued, but Moses is imperfect and the law pinpoints our sinfulness. Joshua comes on the scene. Each generation is looking for a good ruler. Where is He? We finally get to Kings. You get to David and think, “Maybe this is the One,” but his failure is clear. We clearly see that we’re looking for One through the lineage of David. Where? Where is our Savior? Millennia go by. Then we’re told in Galatians, “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”¹² In the fullness of time. At the perfect

¹¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Lk 2:10.

¹² *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ga 4:4–5.

moment when everything is aligned how God had ordained, God sent forth His Son. And, here in this story, we find that there ought to be *great* rejoicing in our hearts at this news.

Do you experience that joy when you think of God's salvation plan through a little baby coming to earth? Are you in awe of a God who does this? Or do you just have a ho-hum, that's-just-how-God-had-it-planned view of all of this. I fear many Christians today have the attitude of the scribes and chief priests. There's no amazement. There's apathy at the Truth. We read the prophecies and think, "Oh yeah, whatever. Let's just get back to real life." Oh, please listen. If your heart isn't gripped and amazed by the fact a baby came to earth to save the world, plead for mercy. You don't see the angels say, "Oh yeah, that's just how it is." They were always with God and they were amazed and joy-filled. The magi who didn't have a heritage of looking at prophecies rejoiced exceedingly with great joy! They were confronted by God in their idolatry of astrology and God revealed the King of the Jews to them and they were amazed.

Are you amazed? Please don't be like so many people who think that silence is close to godliness when it comes to knowing Christ. How can we shut our mouths at the knowledge of the eternal Lord, the God-Man, who humbled himself and became flesh? Jesus left heaven's glories to save real people in real time. What immense love!

Now we move to verse 11: And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him.¹³ It's this verse that causes us to immediately realize that the way the crèche have the wise men right next to shepherds is not historically accurate. While I understand we only have so much space on our shelves, and I too put our wise men next to the other figurines, maybe it would be more accurate to have the wise men on the other side of the room – looking in another direction. When the shepherds were worshipping Jesus, the magi were probably studying their stars. In verse 11, we find that the magi showed up once Mary and Joseph had a home in Bethlehem.

Now, we don't know how long they lived in Bethlehem, but according to Matthew's account, a star appeared in the sky for a period of time, and it took the magi an unknown time period before finding Jesus. Some people might be frustrated at the lack of timeline details, but there's a bigger point here. **The point of the star in the sky was to fulfill the prophecies, lead Gentiles idolaters to the Messiah, confront the Israelite nation and to encourage Matthew's readers to worship Jesus!**

The magi come into the home and they see the young child with Mary. Note Jesus is no longer an infant. He is a young child. Also note that Matthew maintains a specific type of wording here. The child comes first then the mother. Matthew is emphasizing that this child is the central emphasis! The magi aren't coming to worship Mary. They're coming to pay homage to the Child. This child who was born King deserved the adulation.

Matthew is again contrasting the magi with Herod and the people of Israel. But Matthew's reaching us today. Will you worship Jesus? Will you bow down and worship Him? This may seem to many to be a ridiculous story. To talk about God coming in the flesh and having grown men travel a distance to worship Jesus may seem crazy. But you have to ask yourself this question, "Just because it may sound crazy, does that mean it's untrue?" The more I think of this, the more I realize how almost-too-good-to-be-true this story is.

Let me put it this way. If God wanted to impress people according to worldly standards, He wouldn't have chosen shepherds and magi to come to Jesus. Shepherds were some of the lowest in

¹³ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Mt 2:11.

the social order. Magi were idolaters. But to these types of people, God made the Messiah known. Don't you think that should bring hope to us as well? After all, who are you? Are you the most special person to come on the face of the earth? You might think so, and if you do, you're wrong. Most of us know that we are weak, frail and sinful people. We often want to act like Herod and worship ourselves and protect the idols of our lives that we cling to with fervency. But Jesus' birth and the story of the magi reveals that God, in His great power, shatters our self-centeredness and draws people to Himself – even people like us who are relative nothings in this world. We were blasphemers. We were nothing but idolaters. But God in His great mercy has set many of us free.

Now, even if the Magi didn't understand the full ramifications of what was happening and who Jesus is, Matthew calls our attention to understand the significance of what the Magi are doing. And, I think we should ask ourselves this, "What is worship?" Worship literally means to ascribe worth or "weight" to something. As I explained last Sunday evening, think of precious metals. Silver weighs less than gold and gold less than platinum. In general, the weight signifies how much more value something is. To worship means that we say something is the weightiest or something is of supreme value. These magi reveal a worshipful spirit. Worship, at a heart level, means that we value Christ over all created things. And, as a result, there are things we do in response to that worshipful spirit. Think about the magi here. They gave up time, energy and money. We even see in verse 12, that they give up their safety in running from King Herod. In doing all of these things, they revealed that the Messiah, the King of the Jews, was of greater worth than anything they had.

What about you? Is Jesus the center of your life and affections? You see, in Matthew telling us about the Magi, he's pointing us forward to the truth of why Jesus came to the earth. As the King of the Jews, Jesus not only reigns over the Jewish people, but as God promised to Abraham, through him all the nations will be blessed. The King of the Jews is the King over All. And, we know the rest of the story of Jesus' life. This one who was declared King of the Jews was also declared King of the Jews at His death with a sign hanging over Him in multiple languages. The Jewish people wanted the sign down. They didn't want it said that they killed their Messiah. But they did. And, not only them, but it was a result of our sin as well that God's wrath poured out on Christ. But God's wrath poured out on Jesus so that those who believe would be saved from God's wrath! And, Jesus' resurrection affirmed that He truly is the King of the Jews. Then Jesus ascended to Heaven as the God-Man King. As a result of this, the Scriptures tell us over and over again that Jesus came not only to save the Jews and rule over them but to save people from every tribe and nation and tongue. Listen to Romans 1:5: "Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name."¹⁴ Hear Revelation 7:9-10: "**After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb**, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'"¹⁵

This beginning story in Matthew points to post-resurrection days of Jesus that God no longer is working through the nation of Israel, but instead He is working through people throughout all nations to bring glory to His name. In addition to this, I believe the magi point us to the New Heavens and New Earth where we read in Revelation 21:24: "²⁴ And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it."¹⁶ In that future day, the kings of the earth will bring their glory and honor into the city. What's the glory and honor? It's the gifts of the land.

¹⁴ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ro 1:5.

¹⁵ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Re 7:9–10.

¹⁶ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Re 21:24.

What else can we do when we understand our Savior? We give our all. Our lives revolve around Him! He came to earth. He took our punishment and pleased the Father. He rose again. He reigns. He is King and He is our Savior! So, let us adore Him. We didn't seek Him. He sought us. Let us worship Him because we were created to know Him. Let us adore Him because He is eternally and infinitely glorious. But let's have a real view of worship. Worship is pervasive. As the apostle Paul taught the Roman believers, he praised God after telling them many of the glorious ways of God in saving people, and then in chapter 12, he went on to say, "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."¹⁷

Does the response of the Magi confront you today? I pray you repent. Does the grace of God towards idolatry "wise men" melt your heart today? I pray you would turn to Christ. Do you recognize your worship-defect? I pray you'd be moved by the grace of our King Jesus and trust Him to rescue you and cause you to worship at His feet today and every day. Jesus sets us free to worship God fully and truly.

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¹⁷ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001), Ro 12:1.