





## Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh

God is not served by human hands as though he needed anything (Acts 17:25). The gifts of the magi are not given by way of assistance or need meeting. It would dishonor a monarch if foreign visitors came with royal care packages.

Nor are these gifts meant to be bribes. Deuteronomy 10:17 says that God takes no bribe. Well, what then do they mean? How are they worship?

Gifts given to wealthy, self-sufficient people are echoes and intensifiers of the giver's desire to show how wonderful the person is. In a sense, giving gifts to Christ is like fasting—going without something to show that Christ is more valuable than what you are going without.

When you give a gift to Christ like this, it's a way of saying, "The joy that I pursue [notice Matthew 2:10! "When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great

joy”] is not the hope of getting rich by bartering with you or negotiating some payment. I have come to you not for your *things* but for *yourself*. And this desire I now intensify and demonstrate by giving up *things* in the hope of enjoying you more. By giving to you what you do not need and what I might enjoy, I am saying more earnestly and more authentically, ‘You are my treasure, not these things.’”

I think that’s what it means to worship God with gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. Or whatever else we may think of giving to God.

May God awaken in us a desire for Christ himself. May we say from the heart, “Lord Jesus, you are the Messiah, the King of Israel. All nations will come and bow down before you. God wields the world to see that you are worshiped. Therefore, whatever opposition I may find, I joyfully ascribe authority and dignity to you and bring my gifts to say that you alone can satisfy my heart.”