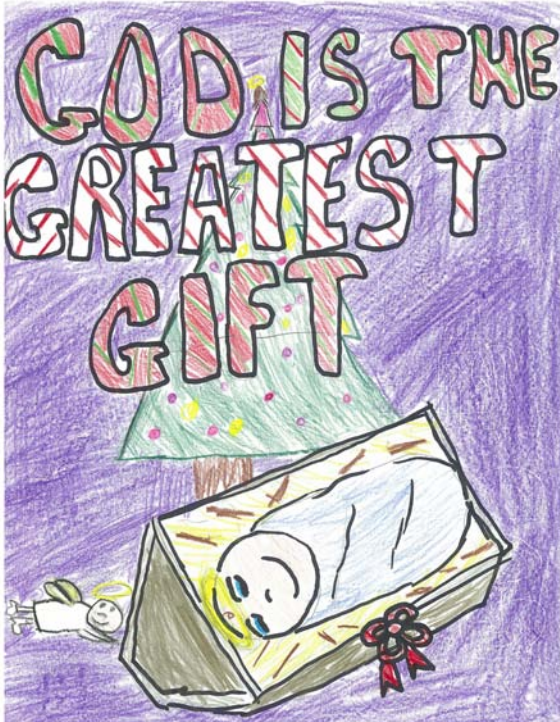


Called to Wonder

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It's the Christmas season - the time when all Christians turn their thoughts only to Jesus, the one and only Christ Child, to celebrate his miracle birth!

(Okay, okay so sometimes we get distracted by the presents. But did you ever stop to think about why we even give (and get!) presents when it's Jesus' birthday, not ours?)

The history of gift-giving goes all the way back to the very first Christmas in a stable, long, long ago. The three wise men that came from the East following the star brought gifts to the baby Jesus. They brought:

Gold: A gift given to royalty. For us, gold reminds us that Jesus is the King of kings, Lord of lords and more precious than anything.

Frankincense: This gift was a costly resin used in incense to represent the prayers of the people floating up to God. Frankincense can remind us that no matter what the cost, he was willing to pay it for us. He paid the highest price so we wouldn't have to.

Myrrh: The gift which foreshadowed Jesus' suffering and death. Myrrh was used medicinally as an anointing oil for wounds, and as an embalming oil following death. The gift of myrrh reminds us of Jesus' sacrifice, his very life for our salvation.

It's nice to give and receive gifts. I am sure Mary and Joseph were happy that people wanted to bless Jesus with gifts. However, if you read the passage on the left more closely, you'll see something that some people overlook during the Christmas season. **THEY BOWED DOWN AND WORSHIPED JESUS BEFORE THEY GAVE HIM THE PRESENTS!**



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They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. (Matthew 2:11)

So, this year, instead of dwelling on the presents, turn your thoughts to Jesus for each and every gift you receive, and think about what his gift means to you.