

I JUST WISH THAT...

WK THREE - 12.10.23
I HAD MORE

INTRODUCTION

When you were a kid at Christmas, you made your "wish list." Remember what was on it? As adults, we've still got our wish lists; they just look a little different. During the Advent season, we're going to talk about a few things that are probably on yours – and what Jesus has the power to do with them at Christmas. In week three, Pastor Jesse shared how easy it can be for us to love our treasure more than Jesus and how worship and joy are the true motivators of our generosity.

DISCUSSION

1. When Pastor Jesse started his message by talking about money, what was your immediate reaction? Did you become intrigued, annoyed, nervous, guilty, affirmed, or some other emotion? Take a few moments to share your initial feelings and why.
2. **Revisit and read Matthew 2:1-3 & 2:9-12.** The Magi came to worship; Herod was disturbed – because he (and the religious leaders) didn't want a (new) king to tell them what to do. Imagine you suddenly had a king of the United States who could immediately dictate your everyday actions and decisions based on their whims. How would you respond?
3. The Magi were overjoyed to give valuable gifts to Jesus when they found him. Is a desire to give gifts to God, and joy when you do give, living in you right now? Is it similar to the joy you experience when giving a really great gift to someone else? Why or why not?
4. **Revisit and read Matthew 6:21.** Now, take a deep breath and be willing to be vulnerable. Remember, your group is a safe place to share together. Is it possible you love your treasure more than Jesus, your King, these days? What evidence can you identify, and how can that healthy and loving conviction move you in a new direction?
5. Remember, we love God because he first loved us. We aren't giving to an earthly king who changes his mind based on his own selfish whims and desires. We are giving back to a God who gave us his Son Jesus' life for us first. When we remember the joy in the truth that this salvation is actually true, it changes everything. How does this help change your perspective or create joy in your giving?

APPLICATION

- **Get real.** Giving to the church is an incredibly healthy way to worship God and help move his mission forward in your local community. If you're not giving financially to church, start. If you find yourself stuck, examine what thoughts and emotions stir up in you and spend time examining those with God and someone you trust.
- **Start simple.** Pick something both realistic and challenging for you. It may be \$20 a week or \$500 a month; it's different for everyone. But the key is starting. When you do, you open yourself to God to reveal what he can do in and through you and your generosity.
- **Remember joy.** Place in yourself in a position to be regularly reminded of what God has done for you, that without him and Jesus' sacrifice, you would still be lost in your own mess trying to figure life out on your own. Remember that God has changed everything for you and that he truly loves you no matter what. Let the joy of this truth drive you.