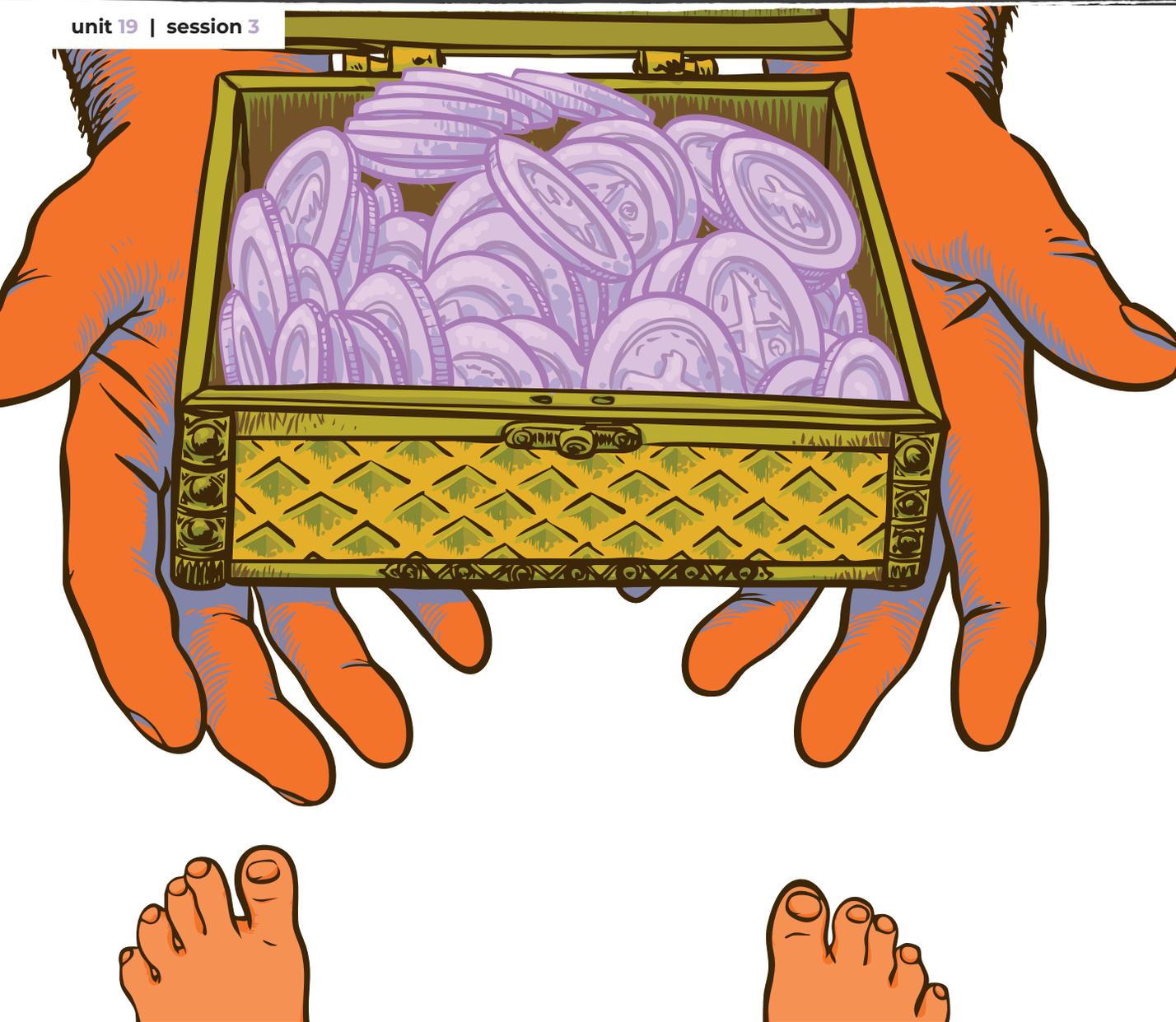


WE SAW HIS STAR

unit 19 | session 3



CHRIST CONNECTION

Jesus was born to be our great Shepherd. When the wise men came before Jesus, they worshiped Him and offered Him gifts fit for a king. Jesus, even as a baby, was the King of kings and the Lord of all creation. One day, He will return to rule His eternal kingdom.

RESPONDING WITH WORSHIP

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to dig in and read all of the content on this timeline.

Matthew 2

WE'RE CALLED TO RESPOND TO THE SAVIOR

MATTHEW 2:1-8

1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star at its rising and have come to worship him." 3 When King Herod heard this, he was deeply disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 So he assembled all the chief priests and scribes of the people and asked them where the Messiah would be born. 5 "In Bethlehem of Judea," they told him, "because this is what was written by the prophet: 6 And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah: Because out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." 7 Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. 8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship him."

WE'RE CALLED TO BRING OUR GIFTS TO THE SAVIOR

MATTHEW 2:9-12

9 After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was—the star they had seen at its rising. It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy. 11 Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

MAIN POINT.

Knowing Jesus as King compels us to surrender all to Him.



THEOLOGY CONNECTION

STEWARDSHIP

God's intention is for us to serve Him as faithful stewards of His creation (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 4:1-2). We are to invest the time, talents, and material possessions God has given us for His kingdom work (Matt. 25:14-29), knowing that God is the true owner of all we have and that our true treasure is found in heaven, not on earth (Matt. 6:19,21; Luke 12:16-21). Motivated by God's generosity to us made most clear in the gospel, we are to give God the best of what we have (Prov. 3:9), regularly (1 Cor. 16:2), sacrificially (Matt. 12:41-44), humbly (Matt. 6:1-4), and cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:6-7), praying that God is glorified in our giving of His provisions.

DISCUSSION

WE'RE CALLED TO RESPOND TO THE SAVIOR

MATTHEW 2:1-8

- What is something you've traveled a long way to see or do?
- 🧠 • What does this passage show us about why Jesus came and what He'd be like? Read Psalm 23. What connections do you see?
- ✝️ • Break down how Herod, the chief priests, and the wise men each responded to Jesus's birth. How do our lives reflect our response to Jesus?

WE'RE CALLED TO BRING OUR GIFTS TO THE SAVIOR

MATTHEW 2:9-12

- What is the evidence that the star was more than a natural phenomenon? How would you explain it?
- ♥️ • What did the wise men do when they saw Jesus? How can we follow their example now?
- 📖 • Why do we sometimes withhold our best (our gifts, talents, time) from God? How can we offer them in worship instead?



IN WHAT AREAS OF YOUR LIFE ARE YOU NOT GIVING GOD YOUR BEST? HOW CAN YOU?

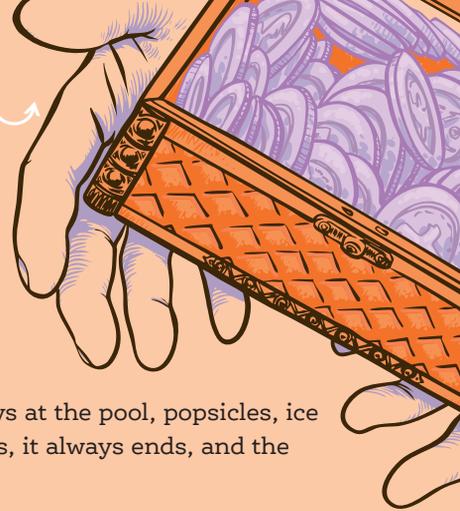
CULTURAL CONNECTION

Some of us grew up with a warped view of God. Maybe we didn't go to church or misunderstood Scripture. We may have believed God is harsh, stern, angry, and eager to punish us. And believing this way leads to a distorted view of God. Let's get honest: If this is our view of God, then we'll see Him as a threat—a threat to our fun, to our passions, to our lives. In response, we'll run; we'll hold back because we fear surrendering to Him. We'll fear what He'll take or how He'll change us. We need to reorient our understanding and look to Jesus to show us God's character—because He is God. God loves us. He sent His Son to save us. He gives us good gifts. He is compassionate and slow to anger. We don't have to fear surrender or that God will take away everything we love. God will use our surrender and transform our hearts to love what is good and holy. When we fully surrender and loosen our grip, God exchanges our offerings for peace and joy. He gives us meaningful, abundant life (John 10:10)! We have nothing to fear.



DAY ONE

ISAIAH 60:1-6



For many of us, summer is our favorite time of year—no school, days at the pool, popsicles, ice cream, and fun memories. However, no matter how great summer is, it always ends, and the school year comes. You can't stop it, no matter how hard you try.

In the same way, we can't stop the fact that eternity is coming. Even though it can feel long at times, life is short, and Jesus is coming back. When He returns, every knee will bow before Him, and everyone will be in awe and wonder, declaring that He is Lord of all (Rom. 14:11). Jesus reigns as the King of kings now. So, we shouldn't wait until He returns to bow our knee in worship—we should do it now.

Today's passage is prophecy concerning what would happen when the Messiah came: Caravans of camels would carry precious gifts for the newborn King (v. 6). These caravans would be accompanied by men of great honor who would bow before Him. This prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus was born, and wise men followed a bright star to worship Him, bringing precious gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matt. 2:9-11).

We can learn a great lesson from these wise men. Just as they were drawn by a shining star to a place of worship, we too can be drawn by the shining light and life of Jesus. In the same way, we can bow our knees in worship and bring to Him the very best of what we have. As we do, we live lives that honor Jesus and give Him what He truly deserves—everything.

- **THE WISE MEN BROUGHT THEIR VERY BEST GIFTS TO JESUS. WHAT CAN YOU BRING TO JESUS TO WORSHIP HIM LIKE THIS?**
- **WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO WORSHIP JESUS NOW RATHER THAN WAITING UNTIL LATER?**

PRAY

JESUS, I BOW MY KNEE TO YOU IN WORSHIP TODAY AND CHOOSE TO BRING YOU MY VERY BEST. MAY MY WORSHIP AND THE GIFTS I BRING HONOR YOU AND GIVE YOU GLORY.



DAY TWO

PSALM 72:8-14

Have you ever heard someone compare two things that really weren't the same? For example, someone who loves to swim and is good at it might be compared to a fish. You may have heard the expression, "They swim like a fish." But no matter how good a person is at swimming, he or she will never really compare to how a fish swims.

In the same way, no earthly king or kingdom can ever compare to King Jesus and His kingdom. In today's passage, we read that God rules from sea to sea and over all the earth (v. 8) and that all kings and nations will one day bow before Him, offering worship and gifts (vv. 10-11). God is the one true God, and He has highly exalted Jesus as the King of kings and Lord of lords (Phil. 2:9-11). Jesus rules and reigns, and no other rulers compare to Him.

If we aren't careful, we can be deceived into allowing other things to compete with Jesus's rule and reign in our lives. In a culture filled with consumerism, self-worship, and celebrity idolatry, our hearts can be tempted to treat people or possessions as if they are "god" instead of worshiping the one true God. This world is temporary. Focusing only on what we can see is easy, but we must let Scripture direct our hearts to what is true: Jesus rules and reigns, and He has no rivals. Rather than bowing our knees to anyone or anything else, we must choose to bow before the Lord, allowing Him to rule and reign in our lives today, as He will for eternity.

- **IN YOUR LIFE, WHAT ARE YOU TEMPTED TO BOW YOUR KNEE IN WORSHIP TO APART FROM JESUS? WHY IS THIS A TEMPTATION FOR YOU?**
- **WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE FOR YOU TO BOW YOUR KNEE TO JESUS ONLY AND ALLOW HIS RULE AND REIGN IN YOUR LIFE?**

PRAY

JESUS, HELP ME TO SEE PAST THE PRESENT AND TO SEE YOU FOR WHO YOU ARE, THE KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. I BOW MY HEART BEFORE YOU AND INVITE YOUR RULE AND REIGN IN MY LIFE.



DAY THREE

MATTHEW 2:11

What would you consider your most valuable possession—not necessarily the most expensive, but the thing that means the most to you? Maybe a rare baseball card, a letter someone wrote to you, a meaningful gift you received, or something you worked hard for holds great value. Now, can you imagine giving that away? For most of us, parting with something so valuable feels impossible because of how much it means to us.

In today's passage, we're reminded of the kind of worship Jesus both desires and deserves—worship that costs us something. When the wise men came to Jesus, they opened their treasures and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. These were some of the most valuable possessions in their land. Yet, it wasn't difficult for them to give these gifts because they knew Jesus was worthy of them and worthy of their worship. In the same way, our worship should flow from the desire to offer Jesus what is most valuable to us, from a heart that doesn't hold anything back. Does God need our stuff? No. God doesn't need anything from us, but He does want our hearts fully surrendered to Him. And if we're honest, we know that our hearts often get attached to our possessions. Jesus explained that our hearts belong to what we treasure (Matt. 6:21). When we give Jesus what we value the most, we are giving Him what He deserves—our hearts. Maybe Jesus won't ask you to give up your baseball cards, but if He did, would you be willing? Our answer should be an emphatic "yes" because He is worthy of that kind of worship.

- **WHAT IS MOST VALUABLE TO YOU (POSSESSIONS, PASSIONS, RELATIONSHIPS)? WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO SURRENDER THIS TO JESUS IF HE ASKED FOR IT?**
- **HOW DOES SEEING JESUS FOR WHO HE IS AND THINKING ABOUT ALL HE HAS DONE EMPOWER YOU TO FREELY GIVE HIM EVERYTHING IN WHOLE-HEARTED WORSHIP?**

PRAY

JESUS, YOU ARE WORTHY OF MY WHOLE LIFE AND ALL THAT I HAVE. I SURRENDER TO YOU ANYTHING THAT YOU ASK OF ME BECAUSE YOU ARE WORTHY OF EVERYTHING I CAN OFFER.



DAY FOUR

ROMANS 12:1

People stand to their feet and clap in celebration when someone does something incredible. This is called a standing ovation. We see this happen at sporting events, concerts, plays, or after powerful speeches. In each case, something so moving happens that people rise physically to applaud. The audience was moved by what they witnessed.

Did you know that what God has done for us should move us even more than any sporting event, concert, play, or speech ever could? We were lost in our sin, separated from God, and destined for eternal judgment. We owed a debt we could never pay and were stuck in a pit we could never climb out of. But God demonstrated His great love by giving us His Son, Jesus, when we did nothing to deserve it (Rom. 5:8). God saw us in our hopeless state, and in His mercy, He made a way for our sins to be forgiven and for us to be restored into relationship with Him (2 Cor. 5:18). We didn't earn this; we never could. God did it all because of His great love and mercy toward us.

Today's passage urges us to recognize God's love and mercy, and in response, to offer our lives to Him as living sacrifices. God offered His Son as a sacrifice, and Jesus willingly gave His life for us. Our reasonable response is to offer our lives back to God—daily dying to ourselves, taking up our cross, and following Him in loving obedience—wherever He calls us to go and whatever He asks us to do. This is a type of worship that goes beyond a song we sing or a gift that we give; it is worshiping God with our lives.

- **WHEN IS THE LAST TIME YOU THOUGHT ABOUT ALL GOD HAS DONE FOR YOU AND WHAT IT COST HIM?**
- **HOW DOES REMEMBERING ALL GOD HAS DONE MOVE YOU TO LIVE YOUR LIFE IN WORSHIP TO HIM?**

PRAY

GOD, HELP ME TO REMEMBER ALL YOU HAVE DONE AND THE GREAT PRICE JESUS PAID. MOVE ME TO WORSHIP YOU WITH MORE THAN SONGS AND GIFTS BUT WITH MY WHOLE LIFE.





DAY FIVE

REVELATION 7:9-17

At times, we can feel like we are the only ones who have chosen to serve God and live for Him. Deep down we know this isn't true, but for many of us, it seems that way. We live surrounded by people who don't live the same way we do. We can feel like we're the only ones among our classmates, teammates, coworkers, or in the culture around us. Those feelings can be discouraging, even tempting us to fit in rather than standing strong in our devotion to God.

In today's passage, we find both strength and comfort in remembering that we have made the right choice in bowing our lives in worship to Jesus and that we're not alone. First, we see that eternity is real, and one day we will stand before the throne of God in worship as He rules and reigns forever (vv. 10-12). Second, we see that there will be a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, and tongue, proving that we're not alone now and will not be alone then either. Third, we see that a day will come when Jesus wipes away every tear and leads us to living waters, where we will find rest and restoration for our souls (vv. 16-17). While we can't see it with our eyes right now, this is the foundation of our faith. The hope of our salvation is eternity (Rom. 8:24).

Worshipping God and serving God with our whole heart does cost us and does require endurance. But knowing that Jesus will reign forever, and that we will stand with Him among countless others who have made the same choice, should give us the strength, courage, and endurance to keep going and to stand against temptation.

- **HOW DOES JESUS'S PROMISE OF ETERNITY STRENGTHEN US FOR THE TEMPTATIONS AND TRIALS WE FACE TODAY?**
- **WHAT ARE WAYS WE CAN BE MINDFUL OF ETERNITY WHILE LIVING HERE ON EARTH, WHERE WE CAN'T SEE ETERNITY WITH OUR EYES?**

PRAY

GOD, I KNOW THAT ETERNITY IS REAL AND THAT ONE DAY I WILL WORSHIP YOU FACE TO FACE BEFORE YOUR THRONE. MAY THIS PROMISE STRENGTHEN ME WHEN I'M STRUGGLING WITH TEMPTATION.