



It's Jesus' Birthday – But Who Gets the Gifts?

Mathew 2:11

And they came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshiped Him; and opening their treasures they presented to Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Christmas gifts and birthday parties. It started with the Magi. They gave Jesus a birthday party, not when He was one, but when he was born. They had it right. Christmas celebrates Jesus' birth-day. And that's when the Magi brought gifts.

Every Christmas, whether we know it or not, we reenact the Magi's party. Except, of course, we give the gifts to each other rather than to Jesus. I used to tell our kids that Christmas was Jesus' birthday and we were so happy He was born that we had a party too. And that's true, but now, as I look back at our family celebrations, I realize I missed an important detail: who gets the gifts.

The Magi gave their gifts to Jesus. We give our gifts to each other. In a way, gifting each other is gifting Jesus. He makes that point Himself when He explains how our heart towards people equates to our heart towards God. (See [Matthew 25:35-45](#)) Feeding the hungry or ignoring their rumbling bellies, inviting in strangers or snubbing them, visiting the sick or leaving them alone in bed staring at the ceiling ... if we do it to people, we're doing it to Jesus. So, in that sense, gifting each other *is* gifting Jesus. But now, as I think about it more carefully, I haven't taken gifting Jesus far enough.

Giving Gifts to Jesus

Giving Jesus gifts means more than recognizing that my gifts to various relatives and friends somehow roll over to Him. That's true, but it sounds so ... secondhand. I want to do something more deliberate, more personal. I want to give Jesus firsthand gifts, gifts intended specifically for Him.

My grand-kids eyes light up when they see the gifts I've hidden inside foil and ribbon. The kids know I love them. They know I love to delight them. And that's what I want to do for Jesus when I party on Jesus' birthday. I want Him to know – not just on Christmas, but perhaps especially on Christmas – that I love Him. I want to make His eyes light up. And so they will when He experiences me doing something just for Him.

Who gets the gifts this Christmas? Family and friends, of course. But the most important gifts will go to Jesus. I'll plan gifts specifically for Him. I'll think about what will make His eyes light up. Perhaps I'll say a kind word when I'm feeling irritated. I'll notice when someone needs attention or a hug. I'll take time in the midst of the bustle to soak in His awareness about what's going on. Perhaps I'll remember that He's at the party and simply enjoy His presence. He'll like that.

This Christmas, as you give gifts to people you love,
plan (like the Magi) on what to give to Jesus.
(It is, after all, HIS birthday.)

A Christmas Question

As you plan your Christmas list, think about what to give Jesus.
What might you give Him that would delight His heart?

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