

A Gift for Jesus

Matthew 2:1-2; 9-12 (NIV), “After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.” . . . ⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.”

As we consider our gift to Jesus for the support of international missions, what can the gifts of the Magi teach us?

1. Our gift to Jesus should represent the best of _____.
2. Our gift to Jesus should represent our understanding of _____.
3. What _____ us to give and how God _____ what is given are often different.

“Lord, thou shalt have my worship, and my gifts; for thou art the sole Monarch of my soul: and I will aid thy missionary cause, that when thou goest into Africa with thy Gospel, my gifts may go with thee.”

--Charles Spurgeon, English Baptist Pastor, 19th century

What is the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering?

The annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is named for the Southern Baptist missionary, Lottie Moon, who served in China in the late 1800s. All money given to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goes directly to support the mission efforts of the International Mission Board (IMB). By giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, you are supporting over *three thousand* missionaries all over the globe.

The Story of Lottie Moon

Nicknamed “Lottie” by those around her, Charlotte Moon was born in 1841. She was the third of seven children in a wealthy Virginia family. After graduating from college with honors, she wanted to devote herself as a missionary, and in 1873 she left for China.

She started to work in the city of Tonchow in northern China. It was very difficult because of language problems and cultural differences. She even tried baking cookies for the children. At first, the parents

were suspicious of what the cookies contained. But the sweet smell of the baking cookies was hard to resist. Gradually, children, later even adults, came to her house. She was called “cookie lady.”

She wrote home about these events and her letters were printed in the Baptist foreign missions newspapers. Many women became eager to join foreign missions. Lottie wrote, “I propose that Southern Baptist women dedicate a week of prayers and offerings for foreign missions and domestic missions. I would suggest the date for the foreign missions be one week before Christmas. Will you not, in appreciation of what Christmas means to you, share in the work in this area?”

Lottie served in northern China during severe famine and epidemics. Lottie suffered this deprivation with those she served, refusing to eat any more than what was available to those around her. She soon became ill. She was sent back to the United States, but before the boat left the port of Kobe, Japan, she died. It was Christmas Eve, December 24th, 1912, and Lottie was 72 years old. Now, Southern Baptist have an offering called “the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering” to honor her name. This offering is used solely for international missions.