



**Worship is
a gift**


FIRST MELISSA

Worship Is A Gift

Time Is A Gift



1 in 3 Americans get 'Holiday Burnout' before Christmas

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One in three Americans is set to endure 'Festive Burnout' before December 25th, according to new research.

A study examining the impacts of festive stress saw a third of respondents (35 percent) say they're burnt out on the holiday season BEFORE Christmas even comes.

The fascinating new statistic emerged in a study of 2,000 Americans, which also revealed that 68 percent of Americans also consider the holiday season, that special time including Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and Christmas, to be a "stressful" time.

The new survey, conducted by Slumber Cloud, also found that the average American will spend 38 hours — nearly two full days — getting ready or preparing for the holiday season in some fashion.

The biggest chunk of that time is spent shopping, which takes up a little more than 13 hours of the average American's time, whether it be picking out the perfect gift for a loved one or simply getting food for cooking.



Worship Is A Gift... Time Is A Gift

- How have you spent your time this holiday season?
- Are you spending intentional time with your family members this Christmas?
- Are you spending intentional time with your Savior this Christmas?
- Are you investing time or wasting time?



Time is free, but it's priceless
You can't own it, but you can use it
You can't keep it, but you can spend it
Once you've lost it, you can never get it back.

— Harvey MacKay



**How did the characters of that first
Christmas story spend their time?**



Luke 2



Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:1-7



In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Luke 2:8-12





And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.” Luke 2:13-14





When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, “Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.” So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. Luke 2:15-18



Q: Why would God choose the shepherds to hear first?

- They had no political influence
- They had no wealth
- They had little formal education
- They were forgotten by most people
- They were responsible for raising lambs for Passover sacrifices
- They were told of the arrival of the Lamb of God
- Many Bible characters were shepherds who longed to see the Messiah... Adam, Abel, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, Amos

A: Salvation is offered to even the “least of these”



The Christmas Choice

The shepherds had a choice to make regarding their time

- They could have said they were too busy for Jesus that first Christmas
- They could have said they had other responsibilities
- They could have said “no one will listen to us anyway”
- They could have said they simply don’t believe in God coming to earth
- They could have said they didn’t have time to tell others about Jesus



Matthew 2



Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”

Matthew 2:1-2





The Magi

Tradition says that there were three wise men and that their names were Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, but the Bible does not say their names or how many magi there were.

We know that the magi were wise men from "the East," most likely Persia, or modern-day Iran. This means the wise men traveled 800 to 900 miles to see the Christ child.

Most likely, the magi knew of the writings of the Jewish prophet Daniel, who in time past had been the chief of the court seers in Persia.





Time Is A Gift

“magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem”
Matthew 2:1



After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Matthew 2:11



Gifts presented to Jesus by the Magi

Gold = the most precious of metals, a sign of wealth and nobility; given for Jesus' royalty

Parallel for us: We give Jesus our Financial Resources

Frankincense = costly, beautiful-smelling incense that was used only for the most special of occasions; used at weddings if it could be afforded; used in grain offerings at the Temple; given for Jesus' deity

Parallel for us: We give Jesus our Worship

Myrrh = valuable perfume; mixed with spices, it was used in preparation of bodies for burial; given for Jesus' humanity

Parallel for us: We give Jesus our Eternity





Lessons from the Magi

The Magi were men who:

1. read and believed God's Word
2. sought Jesus
3. recognized the worth of Christ
4. humbled themselves to worship Jesus
5. obeyed God rather than man



The Christmas Choice

The magi had a choice to make regarding their time

- They could have said they were too busy
- They could have said the walk was too far
- They could have said the gifts were too expensive
- They could have said the hassle was too great to worship Jesus



This Year Our Christmas Choice



The Christmas Choice

- We have a choice to make regarding our time.
- Will we invest the time to worship Jesus this Christmas?

For He says, “At the acceptable time I listened to you, and on the day of salvation I helped you.” Behold, now is “the acceptable time,” behold, now is “the day of salvation”

2 Corinthians 6:2

