



# Rockwood Church of Christ

## The Proclaimer

December 22, 2019

P.O. Box 416  
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Rockwood, TN 37854  
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**Elders:**

Dana Carter  
Kenneth Carter  
Don Chandler

**Deacons:**

Kendall Bear  
Larry Brackett  
Larry Hill  
Steve McCreary

**Minister:**

Todd Houston

**Secretary:**

Susan Chandler

**Service Times:**

**Sunday**

Bible Study 10 am  
Worship Service 10:45 am  
Worship Service 6 pm

**Wednesday**

Bible Study 7:00 pm

**Email:**

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Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

## When Giving is Wrong

Ribbons and wrapping paper, shimmering Christmas trees, and children with sparkling eyes are the hallmarks of the “season of giving.” So many of us enjoy the holiday as a time of expressing love through the imparting of gifts. But did you ever consider when giving may be wrong?

Our heavenly Father is certainly a giver of good gifts (**James 1:17**). In fact, Jesus says if we ask, we will receive (**Matt. 7:7-11**) because our Father is good! So we definitely want to imitate Him in our willingness to give.

However, the Bible also shows us there are some things God will not give us, even if we ask. For instance, if we ask something of God out of selfishness (**James 4:3**), or ask for something against His will (**1 Jn. 5:14**), we cannot expect to receive the subject of our request. This is because God is not going to give His children something that will do them spiritual harm. Remember, He gives *good* gifts!

As imitators of God, we have to realize that giving may be wrong if it presents a stumbling block to someone. For instance, giving a person who abuses alcohol or drugs a gift of cash could be a bad choice. Or perhaps video games and electronic devices may be a bad selection if it isolates children and dominates their free time.

So this Christmas season, and on every other occasion, let us consider our gifts carefully. Is there any way our gifts could cause spiritual harm? If so, let us seek a different, more thoughtful gift!

**Matt Clifton**

## Merry Christmas!

# What Some Believe

It is interesting the things that people believe religiously without checking the facts with the Bible. In illustrating this, consider three things that people believe about the birth of Christ.

**First**, many believe that the star that led the wise men to the Christ was of the magnitude of a distant super nova, something very bright and magnificent.

**Truth:** If the star that guided the wise men was of great brilliance, why does King Herod need to ask the wise men when the star appeared? **Matthew 2:7**, *“Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.”* This was something that was recognized by the wise men (likely astronomers) and not a country wide event.

**Second**, many believe that “three” wise men came to see the newborn Jesus on the night of His birth.

**Truth:** The Bible teaches that there were three gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh. **Matthew 2:11**, *“And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, His mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh”* Likely the belief there were three wise men stems from the fact that there were three types of gifts. However, there may have been two wise men, there may have been 10 wise men, we simply do not know.

**Third**, many believe that the wise men came to see the Christ while He was still in the stable.

**Truth:** Again, **Matthew 2:11** says, *“And when they were come into the house.”* While the shepherds came to the manger (**Luke 2:8-10**), but the wise men came to Joseph’s house. Additionally, Herod ordered the slaughter of the babies two years of age and younger. This means that the child would be well under two years old, in order that no error could be made in killing Jesus, but it also indicates that Jesus was older than a newborn.

As we ponder this, let us consider that if a person will believe something religiously merely because it is believed by a large number of people and not based upon the Bible, is it likely they err on other points for the same reason, merely because many people believe it?

Let us remember that we must *“learn not to go beyond the things which are written”* (**1 Corinthians 4:6**).

Jerry Sturgill