



IMMANUEL CHURCH

Discussion Guide: Just Commerce
December 3, 2017

Opening Questions:

- Have you ever found yourself wondering what someone was thinking when they gave you a gift? How did it make you feel? What did you assume they thought of you based on what they gave you? Be honest.
- How did we get to the place as a society where we base our relational affections on financial transactions? How did we so subtly come to the place of thinking, “It’s the price that counts too?” What would we have to change to reverse this?

Looking at Scripture:

- Read **Matthew 2:1-12...** What must the magi have assumed about Jesus that had them bowing and worshiping him before they gave him gifts? What does this order of action say about their understanding of the relationship between them and Jesus?
- Have you ever thought of commerce as both **financial** and **social**? Obviously one is more tangible than the other, but which do you find to be the most overwhelming? For some, the commerce of Christmas is unsettling (like Herod), for others it’s an opportunity (like the magi) and still others, it’s dependent on how it goes for everyone else (like all of Jerusalem). Which is it for you? Which brand of commerce do you dread most?
- The magi’s intention was not to obligate Jesus to anything, it was a sincere expression of their respect and adoration for Jesus. How might you ensure each gift you give is about adoration and affection? How do we prevent ourselves from putting gifts before the relationships they’re being given to?

Application Questions:

- This week’s bottom line was **WHY YOU SPEND IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT YOU SPEND**. How does the cross prove this to be true? Why did Jesus pay such an unimaginable price?
- How do you think you can be more focused on the name tag than the price tag this year? Josh called the “to/from” on each gift label a *relational equation*—what does that mean to you? Are you tempted to think of it as something that always needs to be balanced (or equal)? What is it really supposed to be about?
- Have you ever read *The Gift of the Magi*? What does the end of that story reveal about gift giving and it’s deeper meaning? What counts most? The thought? The price? Or the relationship? How do you plan to keep that on the forefront of your mind for December?

End your time together praying for one another, asking God to keep you focused on why you spend instead of what you spend. Ask him to make this Christmas about people just like the first Christmas proved to be. Take turns sharing and praying for the people in your life that need the gift of a relationship with Jesus this year.