

RECAPTURING THE WONDER, Part 3!

Scripture used: [Matthew 2:1-2 \(NLT\)](#) & [Matthew 2:9-10 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon delivered a powerful follow-up message to last weekend's Be Rich community service. Our church's commitment, despite the cold and rain, helped create a sense of wonder for the Santee and Garfield schools. We demonstrated the generous, extravagant, unconditional love that God shows us as described in [John 3:16 \(NIV\)](#). Our example inspired the students to organize their own acts of service, raising money for the local homeless community. This is exactly what Pastor Hurmon hoped would happen. Wonder creates more wonder! The Wise Men in this week's scripture were also inspired by wonder. They journeyed far from their homes to worship the savior, convinced this baby was the one prophesied in Scripture. They were led by a single star and arrived at Bethlehem. Wonder brought them to God, just like it can bring us to God!

KEY POINTS

- 1) **Wonder has three elements.** We can experience all of them when we slow down enough to notice all the amazing things in the world around us.
 - a. **Wonder surprises and attracts us.** We can be amazed at the beauty of everyday things. And then we naturally want to learn more.
 - b. **Wonder causes admiration and delight.** It's genuinely fun to experience wonder. We take pleasure in all aspects of God's creation.
 - c. **Wonder leaves us astonished, and inspires curiosity.** With a sense of wonder, the world seems to be more open and mysterious (in a good way). Like a child, we ask basic questions that lead us in interesting, fulfilling directions.
- 2) **Genuine wonder is the clearest connection to God's love.** Wonder is a sign that God is in the neighborhood and His Spirit is at work! Even when the circumstances of life make it hard for us to recognize wonder around us, we can ask God for help in having open hearts to be sensitive to God's goodness and love.
- 3) **A life of wonder is a better life.** There are reasons beyond our faith to create more wonder. Research has shown that people who experience wonder live longer, are healthier, and experience less intense symptoms even when they do get sick.
- 4) **Most of us are too busy to see the wonder around us.** Silicon Valley is an intense place. Everyone seems to be busy all the time. There aren't many opportunities to slow down and notice things around us. Pastor Hurmon offered a few examples: taking a different route home to noticing what's different; walking a few blocks instead of always driving; and having each family member giving thanks in the middle of a meal if there isn't enough time for a long grace.
- 5) **Experiencing wonder makes us want to share it.** Once we feel this intense appreciation for God's creation, it's natural to express this feeling towards family and friends. God gives us the opportunity to be a part of His work in the lives of those around us - as we care for them and invite them to a deeper experience of God (one way to start is by inviting them to NBCC's Christmas Gatherings!). We want everyone to develop a deep relationship with God that strengthens and nurtures them.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Today's message is all about the benefits of living a life of wonder. Do you experience wonder on a regularly or rarely? What causes you to feel wonder? What keeps you from feeling wonder?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - The Wise Men in [Matthew 2:1-10 \(NLT\)](#) recognized the star as a sign of God's Presence and God's intention to work redemptively. What are the "stars" that God has placed in your life that are intended to be pointers to God's Presence and redemptive work? The Wise Men followed the star for a long time, needing faith, perseverance, and community to ultimately encounter Jesus. Do you sense God calling you to a journey of faithfulness and perseverance in order to know Him better?
- 3) **DO** - Pastor Hurmon wants us to look for opportunities to re-express the love of God to the people around us. Every morning this week, exclaim "I will release God's wonder!" Pray especially for courage to invite those in your life to [NBCC's Christmas Gatherings](#) this Saturday and Sunday!