

Message 7 The Wise Men

My name is Brad, and I'm from the church in Cleveland. To me, message 7 has been the best message so far. It has stirred up in my heart some things that I think the Lord has been priming me for. Along with some other verses I've been in the past few weeks, it's made me reflect on my life and it's given me a lot to think and pray about.

The past year was a pretty big adjustment for me. It was my first year back in school after taking a couple years off. That, along with working as much as I could to stay on my feet, occupied a lot of my time and energy. I felt hardly involved with the church. I often missed the meetings and activities at the brothers' house I lived in. My capacity to serve was really small. Sometimes I felt like I was just trying to survive in school and work. Even still, it was a new season for me in my walk with the Lord as well. To use the language of the message, I felt as if there was a morning star rising in my heart. It was very inward and personal. Quietly, the Lord was growing in my heart. Many times I felt so drawn to Him on my long walks to my car, late at night after work. Many times I just felt so content to be quiet with Him, just sighing and calling His name. I learned how to talk to Him. I learned a little bit to abide in Him. It was a year that I felt somewhat isolated and limited because of my busyness. At the same time, it was a year of the Lord quietly and inwardly drawing my heart and giving me His sweet presence. Though I often felt like I was just trying to survive, I think the Lord was somewhat having His way in me.

The last couple months though, I haven't been working and my school has gone online. With a lot more free time, I've started wondering what I'm supposed to do. I've thought about it. I've prayed about it. I've wondered if or how I should do more to serve. I've been thinking about the phrases about the body and its members in Ephesians 4: "working properly," "builds itself up," "joined and held together." *How do these apply to my life?*

This message about the wise men stirred up my heart and has helped me as I think about these things. The past year the Morning Star has been rising in my heart. And now, to borrow the language of the message again, I can be a star. And I *want* to be a star in the church life; one filled with glory. I realize it's not *it* just to be filled with the Star only, maybe like I was the past year. But I want to be reflecting that same glory in the church life. The phrase that stood out to me the most was "*life-dispenser*." I want to be a life-dispenser to the ones around me. I want to be full of life, and I want to give that life to people I come in contact with.

With that in my heart, the other night I sat down before bed and wrote the names of people that are in my life or that I've been thinking about. As I wrote them down, I just began to pray for them. And I also began to pray about how I can be with them. So I don't know if there's a certain role of serving that I should take on now, but I do know that there are brothers and sisters around me that I love and I want to be a life supply to them. To the brothers I live with, I want my living to be refreshing to them. To my friends, I want to be able to really enjoy the Lord with them. To the junior high kids that I help with, I want to be an example of a life lived with the Lord, and encourage them in the same way. I want to be filled with the Lord's life, not just for myself to enjoy, but to spill out to the ones around me.

-Brad

"Oh Lord, forgive me for being a star with no light, with no glory. Make me a star with glory, held in your hand, with my pursuing causing me to even have a star growing in me. Make me bear your testimony to match your declaration."