

Date: December 24, 2020 – Christmas Eve

Series: *The First Songs of Christmas*

Title: *“The Song of the Christ”*

Preacher: Mark Adams

Scripture: Hebrews 10:5-7

One of my favorite book trilogies is Calvin Miller’s, *The Singer, The Song, and The Finale*. I first read these three little novels many years ago and remember being moved by the way Miller depicted Jesus, the Son of God, as a SINGER Who came from Heaven to share the truth of God’s love with all mankind in SONG form.

Miller’s work of fiction isn’t that far from the truth because, as I said a few weeks back, the Bible is full of songs inspired by God’s interaction with mankind. Here are some examples:

- In Deuteronomy 31 God led Moses to teach the people of Israel a song to help them remember all that God had done for them in freeing them from Egyptian bondage.
- In Judges 5 Deborah and her general, Barak, sang a similar song recounting God’s workings for His people.
- King David is known not only for his valor in battle but also for the songs of praise he composed and recorded in the book of Psalms.
- And then Zephaniah 3:17 tells us that God Himself sings.

This minor prophet writes: ***“The Lord is with you. He is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you. He will quiet you with His love. HE WILL REJOICE OVER YOU WITH SINGING!”***

Now, as you know, during this Advent season, we’ve been studying the first songs of Christmas recorded in the Gospel of Luke and sung by Zechariah, Mary, the Angels, and Simeon.

Have you ever wondered if Jesus sang? The answer is “yes.” In fact, we know that He did, because He grew up in a culture in which singing was an integral part of worship. No doubt He sang the songs of Moses and Deborah and David, the same songs He had inspired them to write! But Jesus also sang a song of Christmas. It’s recorded for us in Hebrews chapter 10, verses 5-7. These verses are set apart from the surrounding text in that they appear in poetic form, just like the other Christmas songs in the Bible we have studied. And the context indicates that Jesus would have sung this song on the night of His birth. In fact, this song forms sort of a farewell--the farewell that would have taken place in Heaven just prior to Jesus’ coming to earth. Let’s look at it together and you’ll see what I mean.

Hebrews 10:5-7

***5 – Therefore, when Christ came into the world, He said [or SANG]:***

***“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,  
but a body You prepared for Me;***

***6 – with burnt offerings and sin offerings  
You were not pleased.***

***7 – Then I said, ‘Here I am--it is written about Me in the scroll—  
I have come to do Your will, O God.’”***

What do the lyrics of Jesus’ song of Christmas tell us?

**1.) First, they remind us that Jesus lived the kind of life we were intended to live.**

When I say this, I'm referring to the fact that, our Lord lived a life of complete obedience to the will of God. Every day of His 33 years He fulfilled the last stanza of His song of Christmas where He sang, ***"I have come TO DO YOUR WILL, O God."***

And that's the way we were supposed to live. When God created Adam and Eve it was His intent that they walk in complete obedience to Him and they did---at first---but eventually that horrible day dawned when they both disobeyed God by eating of the forbidden fruit. And since that day every single one of their descendants---you and me included---have followed suit. As the prophet Isaiah says, ***"We all, like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way."*** (Isaiah 53:6)

In other words, each of us live contrary to the will of God. We sin, we disobey Him repeatedly, daily; in action and inaction. But not Jesus. No, He lived the way we are supposed to. Jesus lived a life of complete obedience to the will of God. Every thought, every word, every action was perfectly in line with the will of His Father.

Do you remember the old story of the little boy whose parents told him to sit down? He refused so they told him again and he still refused so they told him again and he still stubbornly refused so they gently caused minor discomfort in his posterior. With this loving discipline he finally submitted and sat down but in defiance he told them, ***"I want you to know that I'm sitting down on the OUTSIDE. But I'm standing up on the INSIDE!"***

That's not the way Jesus lived. No, His actions AND HIS THOUGHTS always, every moment of every day were in perfect line with the will of God. As Jesus said in John 15:10, ***"I have obeyed My Father's commands and remain in His love."*** Jesus lived the kind of life we were supposed to live and this leads to the second thing Jesus' song can tell us. You see, since He lived the life we were supposed to live...

## **2.) Jesus died the death we should die. The kind of death we deserve.**

As He sang in His song of Christmas, Jesus' body was specifically prepared to be SACRIFICED---sacrificed on the Cross for you and me. As Paul says in Romans 3:23, the consequence of our sinful disobedience is death. Well, Jesus was born to die in our place, to suffer in our stead, to pay the consequences for our sins.

Have you ever asked a fellow Christian, ***"How are you doing?"*** And they answered, ***"Better than I deserve."***

That's a great answer because as a sinner we DESERVE God's wrath, we deserve death. But, because of our faith in Jesus Who died in his place, we are adopted children of God, forgiven, and headed to Heaven. We enjoy abundant life and eagerly anticipate eternity in Heaven thanks to Jesus Christ, Who died the death we deserved.

The lyrics to the song David and Marilyn played earlier, ***"The Holly and the Ivy"*** refer to this:

*The holly bears a blossom as white as lily flow'r  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to be our dear Saviour*

*The holly bears a berry, as red as any blood  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to do poor sinners good*

*The holly bears a bark as bitter as any gall  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ for to redeem us all*

Speaking of songs, Philippians 2:8, a text that scholars tell us was one of the popular songs of the early church. Its lyrics remind us of this purpose of Jesus coming. Remember these familiar words? ***"And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death---even death on a cross!"***

Now, the Hebrew people understood that death was the required payment for sin. This is why they offered animals on the altar---as an atonement for their sinful disobedience. Under this Old Covenant the priests in Jerusalem were busy all day long in the temple, from dawn to sunset slaughtering and sacrificing animals. In fact, it is estimated that at Passover as many as 300,000 lambs would be slain within a week. The slaughter would be so massive that blood would run out of the Temple ground through specially prepared channels and down into the Brook Kidron. Every year during this week the brook would seem to be running with blood instead of water. But no matter how many sacrifices were made, no matter how much blood was shed, these sacrifices were ineffective. As the verses just prior to Jesus' song of Christmas say, these animal sacrifices were just ***"a shadow of the good things that are coming---not the realities themselves."*** (Hebrews 10:1ff) Remember, a shadow is made by an interruption of light; that interruption being made by the true image itself. Coming events cast their shadows before them so the coming of the TRUE cast its shadow in the sacrifices of the Old Covenant.

Just as a shadow is not real, these sacrifices were not the real work of God in redemption. They only pointed to it; they pointed to Christmas when Jesus would be born because due to His perfect obedience to God, His sinless life, only He was an acceptable, perfect sacrifice. In eternity God had willed that only the sacrifice of a perfect person could provide the condition necessary for man's redemption and the only perfect Person--is Jesus. So, just as Revelation 13:8 says, Jesus was the ***"Lamb slain before the foundation of the world."*** And this leads to a third truth that we can see in Jesus' song of Christmas:

### **3.) You see, its lyrics tells us that Jesus knew why He was being born.**

This was the plan all along. FORGIVENESS was in the HEART of God long before SIN was in the HEART of man. Jesus' death was planned. It was God's calculated choice. As Isaiah 53:10 says, ***"It was the Lord's will to crush Him."***

Max Lucado writes, *"The cross was drawn into the original blueprint. The moment the forbidden fruit touched the lips of Eve, the shadow of a cross appeared on the horizon. And between that moment and the moment the man with the mallet placed those spikes against the wrist of God, a master plan was fulfilled. What does this mean? It means Jesus planned His own sacrifice. It means Jesus intentionally planted the tree from which His cross would be carved. It means He willingly placed the iron ore in the heart of the earth from which the nails would be cast. It means He voluntarily placed His Judas in the womb of a woman. It means Christ was the one Who set in motion the political machinery that would send Pilate to Jerusalem. And it also means He didn't have to do it...but still He did. Our Master lived a three-dimensional life. He had as clear a view of the future as He did of the present and the past. So, the ropes used to tie His hands---and the soldiers used to lead Him to the cross were unnecessary."*

Jesus willingly came to the earth to die in our place and we know this because He sang of this fact that night of nights before He entered Mary's womb. Look at verse 7 again where our Lord sings: ***"Here I am--it is written about Me in the scroll---I have come to do Your will, O God."***

History records that in 490 B.C. as Xerxes was advancing into Greece, he came to Thermopylae, a small pass in central Greece. Herodotus tells us that by the time he got there, he had something like six million troops on land and sea. And as you may know, for this story is familiar, gathered there to stand in his way were a mere handful of Greeks--300 Spartans led by the Spartan king Leonidas. When Persian scouts came to check out the pass, they saw these 300 warriors and as they watched from hiding, they noticed that these soldiers were behaving very oddly. They were spending their time bathing and brushing their long hair and polishing their armor. These scouts went back to report, telling Xerxes what they saw the Greeks doing and saying they had no explanation for their odd behavior. But Demaratus, a Greek physician, and counselor to the Persian court,

overheard and assured the king that these men were performing a death ritual. In other words, these men had knowingly come to die. It was their intent to sacrifice their lives in that pass in order to slow the advance of the Persian army.

In fact, many more Greeks had volunteered for this suicide mission but Leonidas had accepted only those who had male heirs to continue their family name. And these 300 were bathing and cleaning their uniforms and polishing their weapons to prepare themselves to look honorable in death.

Love of Sparta motivated these 300 men to do this and love of all humanity moved Jesus to come to earth for the express purpose of dying in our place. He wanted the sin barrier to be removed so that we could live in harmony with Him just as Adam and Eve did before their sin.

He wanted to live in communion with us. As someone has said, God would rather die than live without us and so He did! He died in our place and because He did, we can walk through life in fellowship with our Creator and Redeemer.

As most of you know, every Christmas Eve here at Redland we celebrate and remember this wonderful truth through the ordinance of communion. And as we do this year, we invite all Christians present or watching to join us. We do this because even if you're not a member of this church---if you are a Christian---if you are His this is yours...

#### THE ORDINANCE OF COMMUNION

#### BENEDICTION

Now, may the Light of Christmas that illumines our souls,  
Shine and make plain your way, until the light of your life  
Is joined with that Light that is beyond all light,  
And we see even as we are seen,  
And we know even as we are known,  
And we are made perfect,  
Even as the Son of God is perfect  
And heaven and earth are one.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!