



Advent

the coming king

A stained glass illustration featuring three trees with yellow and orange foliage and purple trunks, set against a dark blue background with a cracked, mosaic-like texture. A path leads from the bottom towards the trees. The word 'JOY' is written in a white, serif font on the right side of the image.

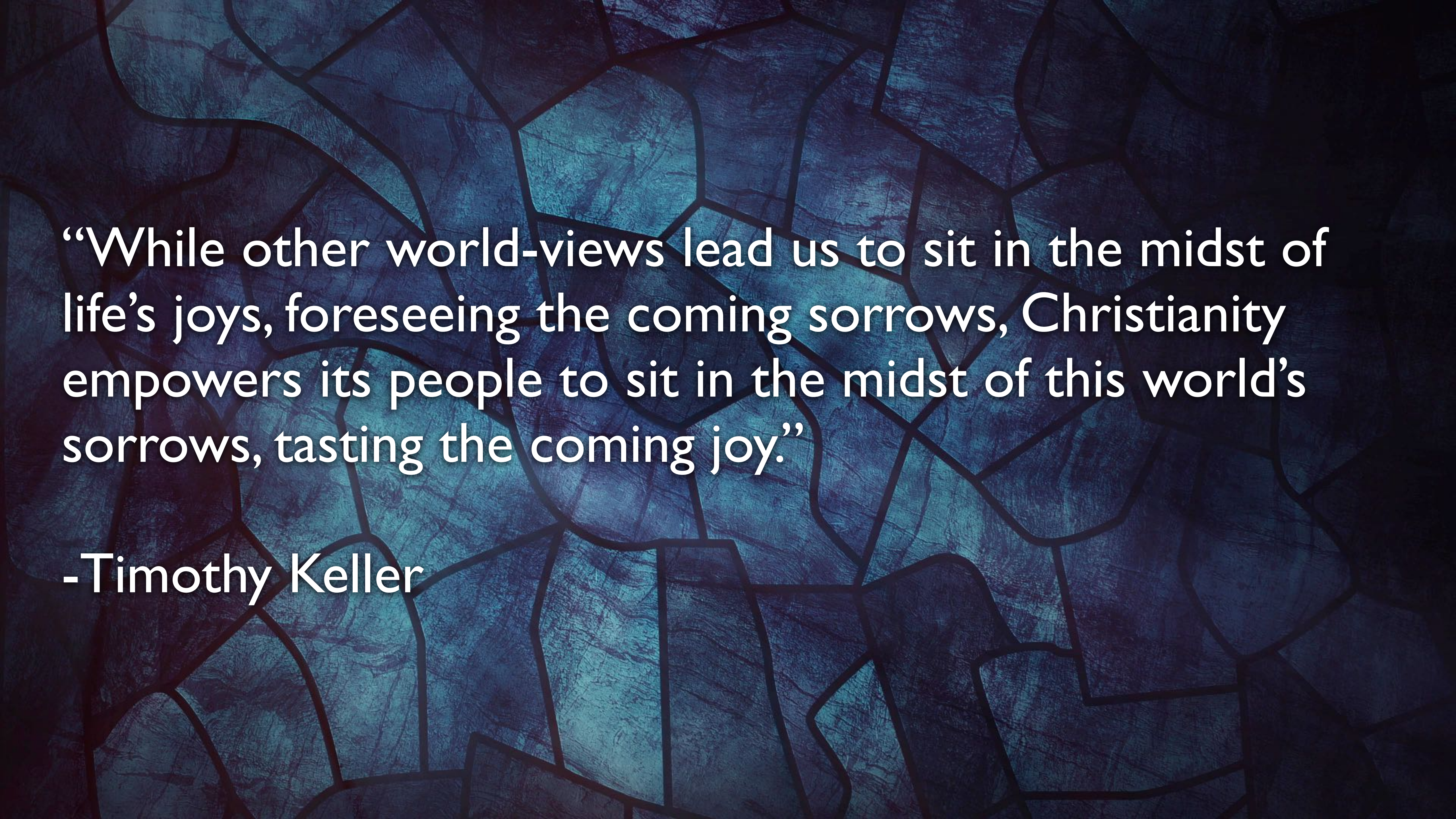
JOY

“Joy, it seems, is everywhere these days. It is used to sell boxes at Ikea. It is included in ads for drinks at McDonald’s and there are T-shirts that tout joy as “an act of resistance.” There is the “Chasing Joy” podcast. And a number of books are being published each year devoted to joyful living, including marriage and productivity. But if joy is everywhere, why does happiness feel so elusive? Politics in America has divided into two camps: angry and angrier. Our world is threatened by climate change. And the booming United States economy is showing signs of fatigue...”

“...Douglas Abrams, author of *The Book of Joy*, said “In an age of despair, choosing joy is a revolutionary act.”

So, are we living in a post-happiness world? According to the World Happiness Report happiness in the United States is declining. Americans said they were less content in 2018 than a year earlier, ranking No. 19 behind Australia and Canada. The 24-hour news cycle, combined with the onslaught of natural disasters, social upheaval, and political strife, has left Americans exhausted. Worse, the agitation shows no sign of abating; psychologists suggest anxiety is on the rise.”

-Laura M. Holson - NY Times

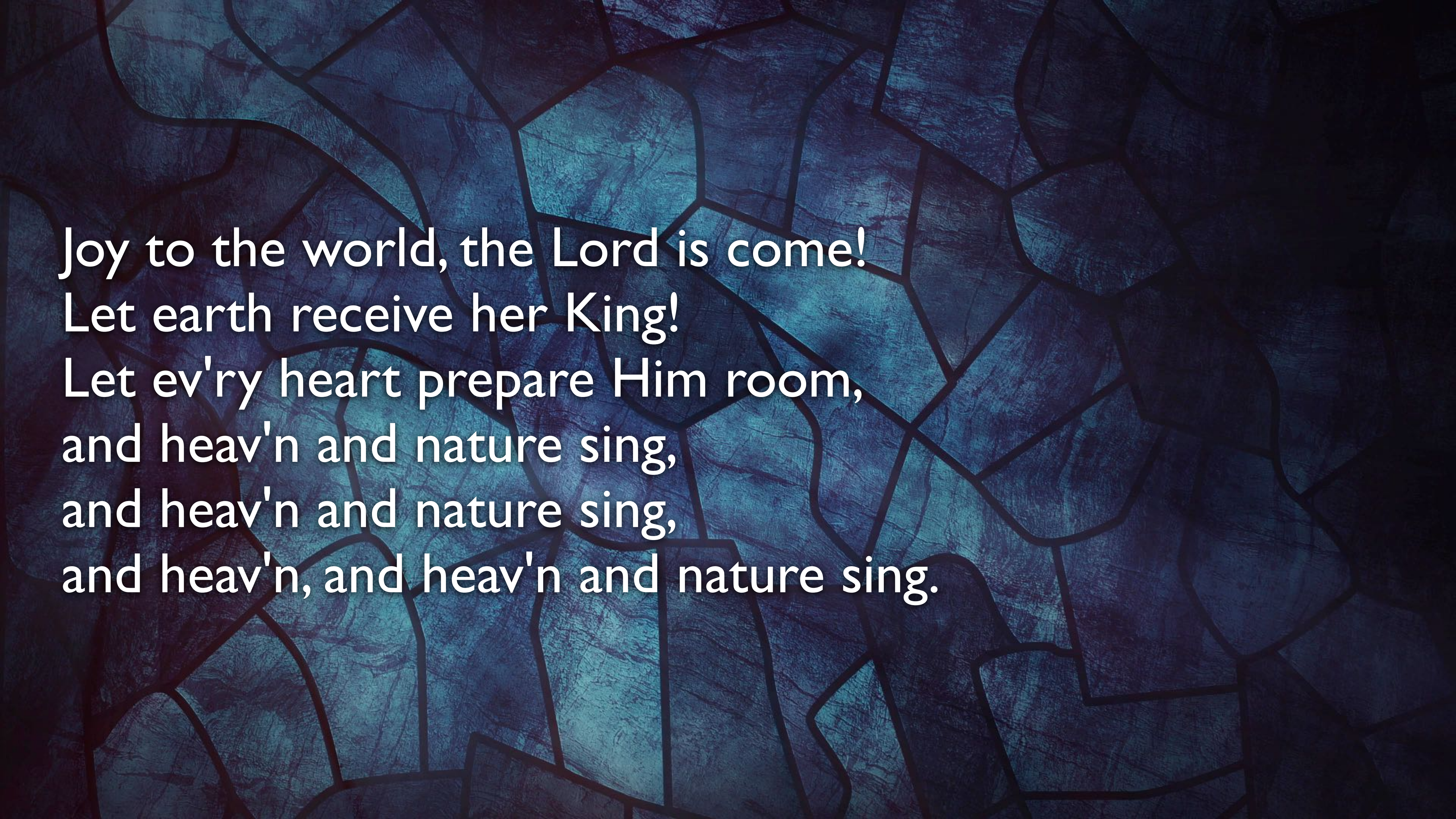


“While other world-views lead us to sit in the midst of life’s joys, foreseeing the coming sorrows, Christianity empowers its people to sit in the midst of this world’s sorrows, tasting the coming joy.”

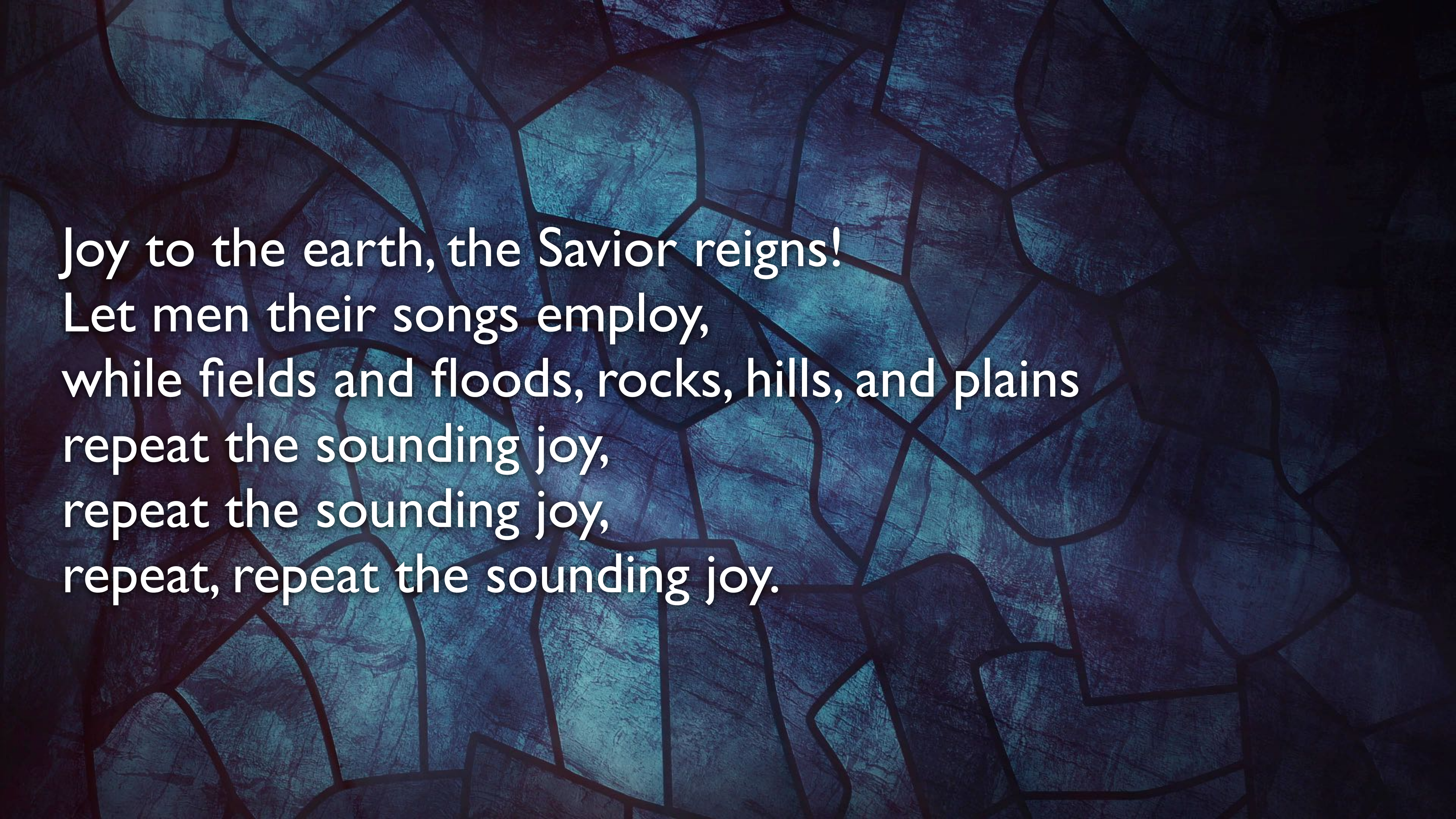
-Timothy Keller

“To see the dull indifference, the negligent and thoughtless air that sits upon the faces of a whole assembly, while the psalm is upon their lips, might even tempt a charitable observer to suspect the fervency of their inward religion.”

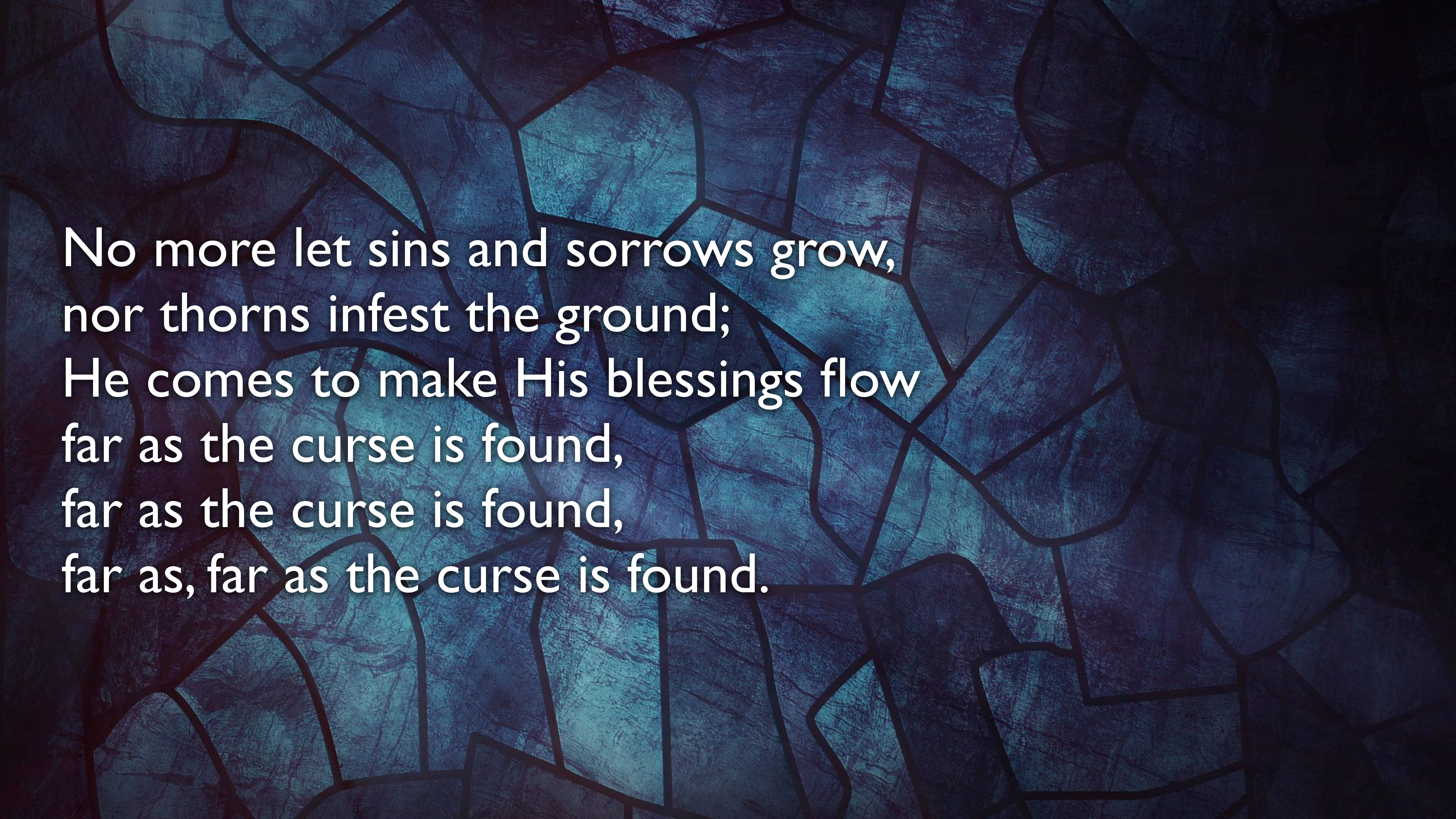
-Isaac watts



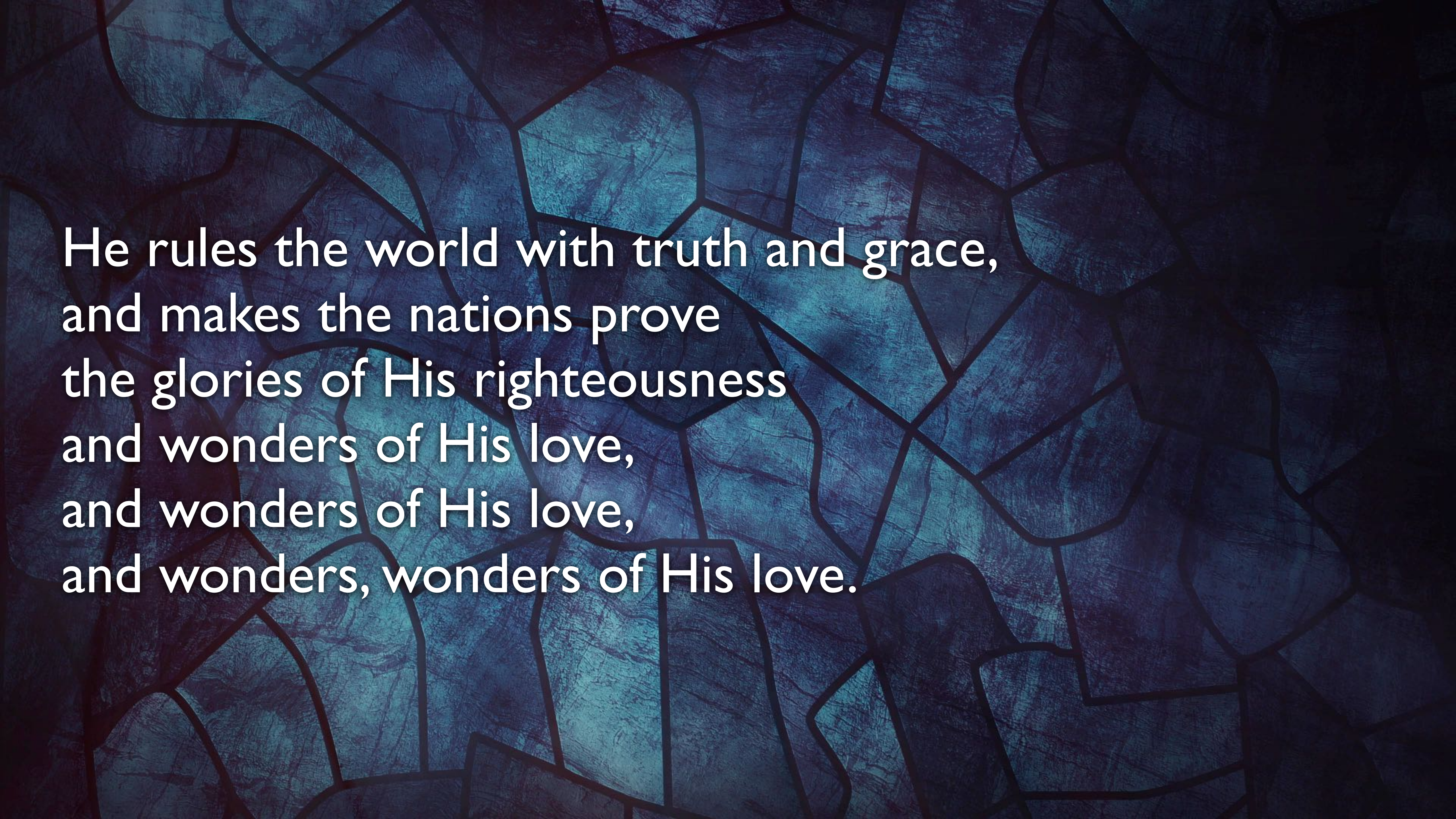
Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King!
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.



Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.



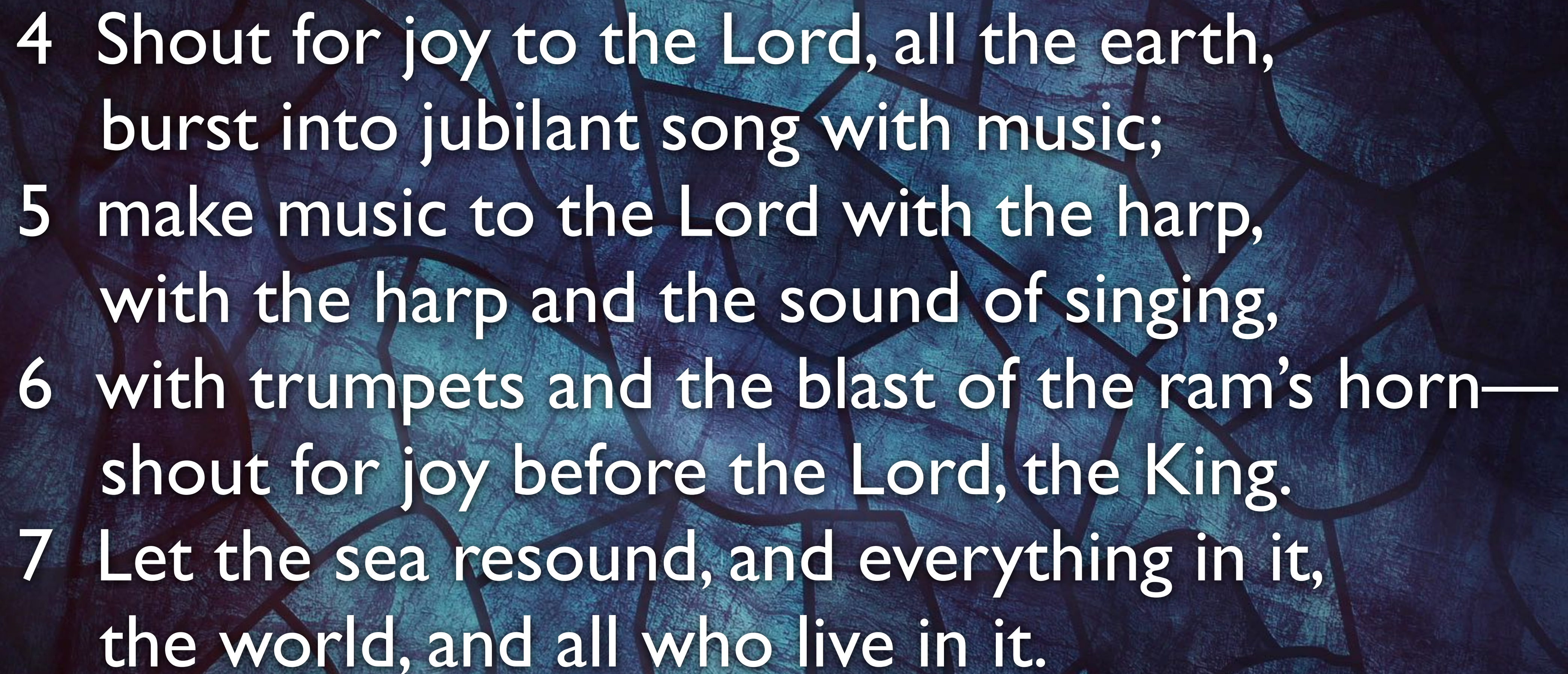
No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.



He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of His righteousness
and wonders of His love,
and wonders of His love,
and wonders, wonders of His love.

Psalm 98

- 1 Sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvelous things;
his right hand and his holy arm
have worked salvation for him.
- 2 The Lord has made his salvation known
and revealed his righteousness to the nations.
- 3 He has remembered his love
and his faithfulness to Israel;
all the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

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- 4 Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth,
burst into jubilant song with music;
 - 5 make music to the Lord with the harp,
with the harp and the sound of singing,
 - 6 with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn—
shout for joy before the Lord, the King.
 - 7 Let the sea resound, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it.

8 Let the rivers clap their hands,
let the mountains sing together for joy;
9 let them sing before the Lord,
for he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples with equity.

“Advent contains within itself the crucial balance of the now and not-yet that our faith requires ... The disappointment, brokenness, suffering and pain that characterize life in this present world is held in dynamic tension with the promise of future glory that is yet to come. In that Advent tension, the church lives its life.”

Fleming Rutledge



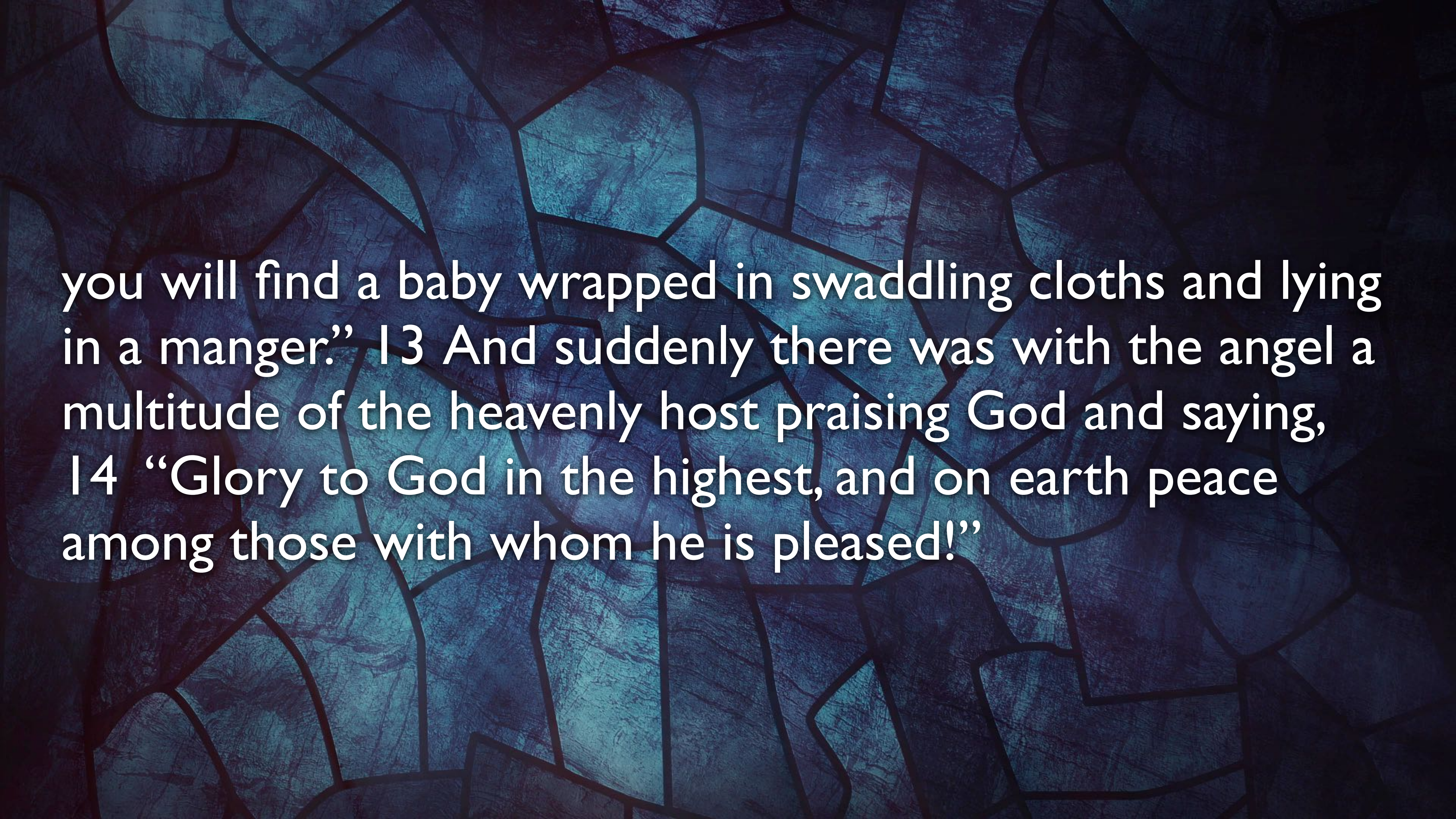
Great Joy



I. Great Joy Because of His Salvation

Luke 2:8-14

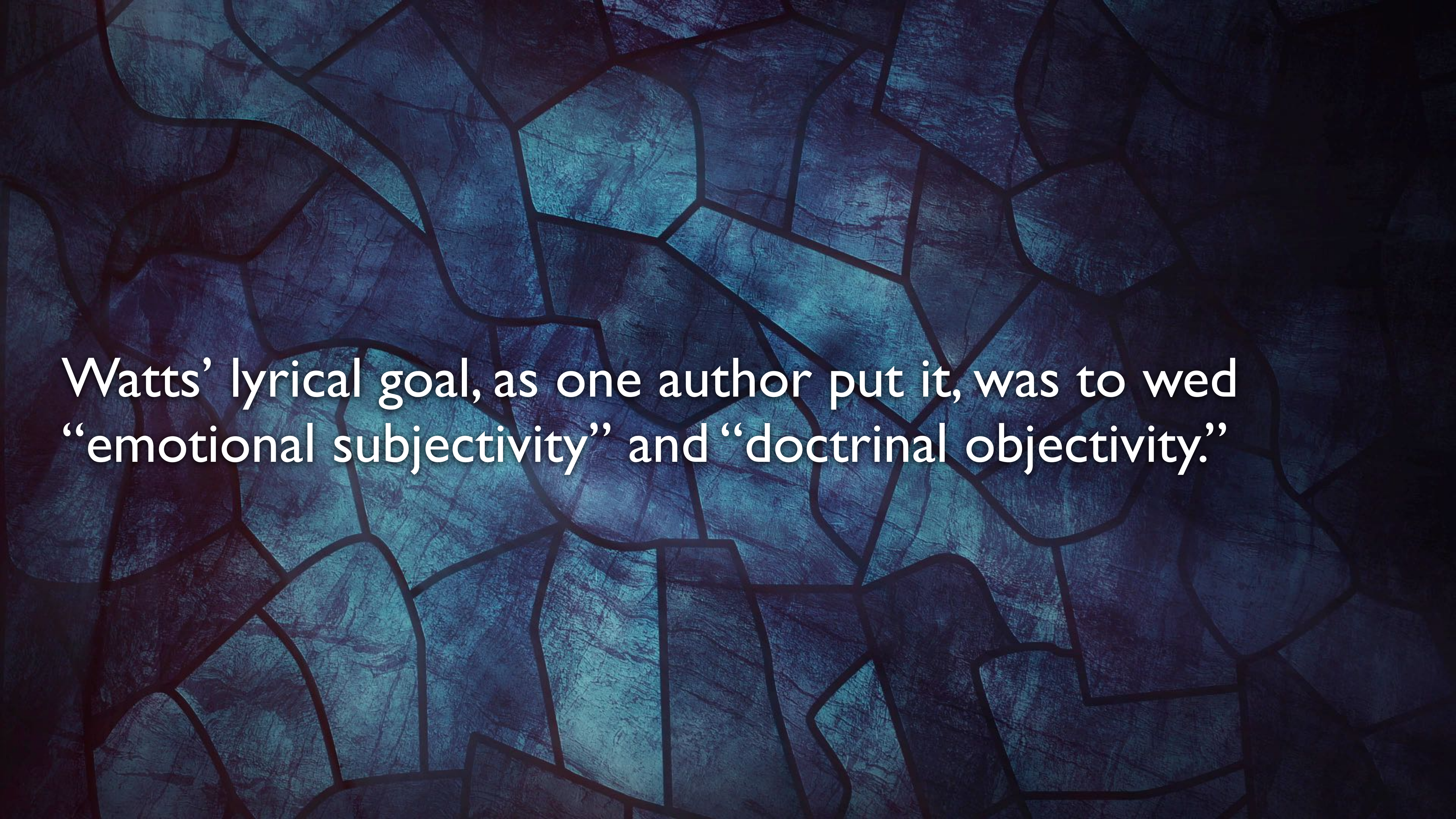
And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. 10 And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be a sign for you:



you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 14 “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”



Hazel - God Sees
Nunziata - The Annunciation



Watts' lyrical goal, as one author put it, was to wed
“emotional subjectivity” and “doctrinal objectivity.”

Nehemiah 8:10

Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

Nehemiah 8:12

Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.



2. Great Joy Because of His Presence

Jude 24-25

To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— 25 to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Psalm 16:11

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Romans 14:17

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.



3. Great Joy Because He Will Return

I Thessalonians 4:13-18

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.

14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep...

16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Peter 1:7-9

so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

4. REJOICE!

1 Thessalonians 5:16

Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Isaiah 35: 10

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain gladness and joy,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

“Suppose a man was going to New York to take possession of a large estate, and his [carriage] should break down a mile before he got to the city, which obliged him to walk the rest of the way; what a fool we should think him, if we saw him ringing his hands, and blubbering out all the remaining mile,
“My [carriage] is broken! My [carriage] is broken!”

—John Newton

A stained glass illustration featuring three trees with yellow and orange foliage and purple trunks on the left. A path leads from the bottom center towards the right. The background is a dark blue, textured pattern of irregular shapes. The word 'JOY' is written in a white, serif font on the right side.

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