

Do You Hear What I Hear? **Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

Music: Songs have played an enormous role in our faith.

“...be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 5:18b-20

New Series: This season, we will be taking a closer look at some of the most treasured Christmas carols and hymns. Each one paints a beautiful picture of the birth of Jesus from a unique perspective.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing: Originally written by Charles Wesley (6,500+ hymns) as *A Hymn for Christmas Day*, it was altered into its current version by George Whitefield in 1782, and its melody was set in 1855 by British musician, William Hayman Cummings. Based on the Gospel of Luke’s account of the angels informing the shepherds of the birth of Jesus in chapter 2, it is Christmas from heaven’s perspective. Notice...

“And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 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. 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. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!’ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.’ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.” Luke 2:8-16

Three Major Biblical Themes:

- I. **Christ’s Birth Brought Reconciliation** – *“Hark! The herald angels sing, ‘Glory to the newborn King: peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!’ Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies; with th’angelic hosts proclaim, ‘Christ is born in Bethlehem!’”*

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.” 2 Corinthians 5:17-19

“I’ll be home for Christmas, if only in my dreams.” I’ll Be Home for Christmas

“Faithful friends who are dear to us, gather near to us once more. Through the years we all will be together if the fates allow.” Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas

“All I want for Christmas is you, baby!” Mariah Carey

- II. **Christ Was Fully God and Fully Man** – *“Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord; Late in time behold him come, Offspring of a Virgin’s womb; Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail th’incarnate Deity! Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel.”*

“Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” Philippians 2:6-8

- III. **The Whole World Is Blessed by Him** – *“Hail the heav’n born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness! Light and life to all He brings, Ris’n with healing in His wings; Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die; Born to raise the sons of earth; born to give them second birth.”*

The birth of Jesus isn’t just good news to the Jew or the Christian; it’s good news to the world!

“Joy to the World, the Lord has come! Let earth receive her king.” Joy to the World

“In him was life, and the life was the light of men...” John 1:4

“The sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings.” Malachi 4:2

Why is Christ’s birth to be celebrated more than any other? The song tells us: He was the newborn KING!!!

“He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.” 1 Timothy 6:15-16

Christmas Carols are like resumes. They give you a description of Jesus, the newborn King. Coming to church and spending time with Christians will give you “references” for Jesus. But you don’t really know Jesus until you meet him personally. And you can, today!

Sources & Further Reading Opportunities:

- *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* – Elwell & Comfort (2001)
- *Tony Evans Book of Illustrations* – Tony Evans (2009)