

December 2, 2018
UNWRAPPED - Part 2

“Carols”

We want to focus on the why behind the what and allow our celebrations to intentionally reflect our faith.

Philippians 2:6-11 (ESV): “⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Jesus is why we are here as a church, why we do what we do and make a big deal of the Christmas season.

The word “carol” probably comes from the French word “*carole*” or the Latin word “*carula*,” which means a circular dance.

Christmas carols were a way all of us could remember and celebrate Christmas and its true meaning.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Matthew 1:20-23 (ESV): “²⁰...an angel of the Lord appeared to [Joseph] in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’ ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³‘Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel’ (which means, God with us).”

This carol speaks of a yearning for Emmanuel’s coming and the beginning of his gift of salvation through his coming into our lives now, and his coming at some point in the future when his salvation will be complete.

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Luke 2:10-14 (ESV): “¹⁰And the angel said to [the shepherds], ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign

for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.’
¹³And 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!’”

The carol calls us to listen to the angels singing to the shepherds about Jesus’ birth and who this baby is – the king who will bring peace between God and sinners.

Joy to the World

Psalms 98:4-9 (ESV): “⁴Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises! ⁵Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody! ⁶With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD! ⁷Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who dwell in it! ⁸Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together ⁹before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.”

This incredible carol of joy tells us to sing that, with Jesus’ birth, God’s promised King is now coming!

Carols are grounded in Scripture, and the historic carols carry with them the experiences and affirmation of the Church across the centuries.

When we hear or sing these carols, they give us an opportunity to discuss our faith with others, because they point not to myth but a real event some two thousand years ago that demonstrates God’s great love for everyone and His desire to bring us into His family.

Galatians 4:4-7 (NLT): “⁴But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. ⁵God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. ⁶And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, ‘Abba, Father.’ ⁷Now you are no longer a slave but God’s own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.”

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