

A Christmas Message 12/20/41.
Luke 2:7.

Nineteen hundred forty one years ago there was born a precious little baby at the back door of Bethlehem. A place down there that would compare to what we use to see in our towns as the Livery stable section of the town. It was not a disgraceful place but was popular as a place where you went to get conveyance to go places. However, it was quite different from the residential section, and did not resemble a nice hospital. It was not a nursery ward. But right there was where Jesus was born. Although the parents were poor and the surroundings bad for the birth place for a child, he was a perfect child.

From all we can learn about the night it was still. When we sing about it we say, "Silent night Holy night." The stillness that characterised that night must have prefigured the peace that Jesus was to bring as HIS Kingdom became established. No clouds seemed to darken the sky but stars were seen. I can just see them showing their diamond faces as they smiled at their Maker in the little manger.

LET US NOTICE HOW THE PEOPLE BECAME AWARE OF HIS PRESENCE:

1. The common uneducated people. They were Shepards who were tending their flocks by night. They were made aware by the music of song in the air...up yonder in the sky. It is remarkable how music and song have gone with Jesus every where He has gone or else places He went and experiences He had caused songs to be written. A song did not go with Him to the Cross but look through your hymnals and see how many songs are about the Cross. There was a song on the night when He was betrayed. When He had established the Lord's Supper the Scripture says, "And when they had sung an hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives." Mark 14:26.

The great Wesleyan Revival was characterized by the greatest hymns of the church. The hymns of the Wesleys sound as if inspired. At Christmas time there is nothing more in prominence than Christmas Carols. It is sweet to go through your town some weeks before Christmas and hear Christmas music in the air. Then too when Jesus comes into a human heart one feels like saying, "He put a new song into my mouth."

2. There were the scientists. Educated men. They were made aware of His birth by the stars. They came saying, "We saw His star in the East and have come to worship Him." *Song and Star pointed to the Babe - Shepherd and Scientist found Him at the same place.*

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The poet may have had this in mind when he said so beautifully,

"Let every kindred every tribe on this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe and crown Him Lord of all."

3. Simeon..not known to the world but longing for Christ. He was made aware by the Holy spirit.

Now you will notice that these people coming from their various posts of duty got closer together as they approached the Christ. This has always been true. Picture Jesus there in the center of the world and the human race formed in a circle at the rim of the earth. Let them face Christ and begin to approach Him..all of them get closer together as they approach Him.From a physical standpoint this would be true of any object placed at the center and approached. But from a spiritual standpoint to approach Jesus way of life is the only approach that brings us closer together *in spirit of love and brotherhood*

Jesus was the recipient of their gifts.They offered unto Him gold, Frankencence, and myrr. Costly gifts.They did not bring the top crop of cotton or the runt from the herd of swine, but the best. He was the center of their adoration. It is pitiful to see some of our Christmas celebrations. Some people make the devil or their own selfishness the center of their attention at Christmas time, and Christ is forgotten. This ought not to be.

I am thinking to day of the contrasts of the message from the skies on the first Christmas night and from the skies this Christmas night. The first proclaimed "Peace on earth and good will toward men." But this year the bombers will say, "Hate in earth, sea, and sky and ill will toward men and rebellion against God."

Instead of making Christ the center and facing HIM and marching and thus coming closer to each other, much of the world has turned its back on Him and marching away and there-
by ever drawing farther and farther apart.

May our Good Lord and all the people who follow Him, hasten the day when the word COME from the mouth of Jesus will take the place of the word MARCH, which comes from mouths of dictators, and cause marching armies to halt, right about face, lay down swords and guns, fix their eyes upon Him WHO is the Fairest among ten thousand, harmonize the voices of the world

#3

into one song.....like this

"Oh brother man fold to thy heart thy brother
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there.
To worship rightly is to love each other
Each smile a hymn each kindly deed a prayer."

"Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of Him whose holy work was doing good.

So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude."



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