

# Christmas Sunday - Whole Service

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Date: 22 December 2013

Preacher: William Philip

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, good morning, everyone. Welcome to our Christmas Sunday morning service here at the Tron. It's good to see you, and it's good to see families here today. We have no senior Sunday school or Bible class. Everyone's in with us today, but there is Sunday school for the primary children, age three to seven, and they'll go out during the offering about halfway through the service or a little bit before that. If you need to take young ones out before then, of course, you can feel free, and we have our creches as usual. But we're going to begin by listening to the words, the familiar words from Luke chapter one. In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you. But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom there will be no end. And Mary said to the angel, How will this be, since I am a virgin? And the angel answered her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. And therefore the child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God.

The promised time arrives, the time of God's appointing, the time when one is born who bears the Lord's anointing. We sing together.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

[ 3 : 0 6 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Let's pray together as we sit.

[ 5 : 2 4 ] Thank you. Amen.

We're going to sing again a second carol this morning, When God from heaven to earth came down on Christmas Day in the morning. And you'll see that some verses are allocated for all of us, and some are for the ladies, and some are for the gentlemen.

So when it's your turn, sing out loudly, and we'll encourage one another. When God from heaven to earth came down. Thank you. Amen.

Thank you. Amen. Amen.

A■, a pith and a pith and a light in a heavy heart and a frozen rhythm and a frozen surge, a■ when the dawn of early on.

[ 7 : 51 ] Now, you'll be seated, and Juliet's going to read to us the next portion of Luke's story. In those days, a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria, and all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

There was no place for them in the inn. To sing now a lovely carol, There was no room in Bethlehem for him who left his throne to seek the lost at countless cost, and make their griefs his own.

But there was room at Calvary, upon a cross of shame, for him to die, uplifted high, and bear the sinner's blame. .

[ 9 : 30 ] . . . .

Thank you. Glory to God, glory to God, and will the sinless way.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Now Stephen's going to continue the story.

[ 12 : 19 ] And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. And when the time came for the purification, according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

Now there is a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. And this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel. And the Holy Spirit was upon him.

And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation.

That you have prepared in the presence of all peoples a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.

And Simeon blessed him and said to his mother, Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel and for a sign that is opposed. And a sword will pierce through your own soul also, so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.

[ 13 : 41 ] What child is this who laid to rest on Mary's lap is sleeping, Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?

This is Christ the King, whom angels guard and shepherds sing. Haste, haste to bring him Lord, the babe, the son of Mary.

esteemed 10-13-4 DANGEN SINGER The day must struggle again.

God above Jesus he has sin He has all the ground needed Who can't see forever since the The son's records is leading Way as a small sp carting As ever tardy will see Where he's caught gate and see The river of suffering Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 16 : 56 ] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. pies, mulled wine, tea and coffee and so on and a time of fellowship together. Now you may have noticed that the weather forecast is not just absolutely wonderful. However, my forecast this morning said it should be dry between five and seven. So the Lord is looking after us and what I would say is pray hard and bring an umbrella. Do come anyway because if it does turn out to be pelting rain, well we shall just carol sing in here and a good time shall be had by all. But we'll do our best to get out and sing the good news in Glasgow City Centre. Now if you feel that being out in the cold and standing for an hour carol singing is just a bit too much for you and there may be one or two of shall I say the more senior members of the fellowship who just feel that could be them, well come along anyway because you can sit here, you can have a lovely hot drink and you can pray for the rest of us while we're out carol singing and give us a warm handshake when we come back. So do come along this evening at five. Then of course Tuesday is Christmas Eve and we have our

Christmas Eve service also at five o'clock aimed just to catch people perhaps while they're still in town but to allow you to get home well in time to dress the turkey and do all those other things you need to do on Christmas Eve. But from five to six we'll be here for a lovely candlelight carol service and a chance to share in the message of the Lord Jesus. We'd love to see you coming to that. We'd love you to bring friends and family too. It'll be a very happy occasion. And of course on Christmas Day we're here in the morning at 11 o'clock which will feel like 7 p.m. to some of you who will be up from 4.30. I know but nevertheless how about having a break at 11 before your Christmas dinner and coming to welcome the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ and to celebrate on Christmas Day for a very brief service with us. And next Sunday of course we'll be here as usual in the morning. Next Sunday evening we don't have an evening service. We encourage you to share that time of fellowship with friends and with family but we will be here as usual in the morning. So do come and join us then.

I think that's perhaps all the notices except to say congratulations to Fiona Porter and Ollie Morrison who got engaged last Sunday. So we're delighted for them and an added bonus this Christmas.

[ 20 : 09 ] Well now as our primary Sunday school kids go off for their class together we're going to take up our offering and the musicians are going to play. the choir music and that music and the dancers are going to play.

Father 5000 Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 22 : 41 ] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[ 24 : 19 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. I'm going to do.

Thank you. here. It's really quite a stark message. But of course, Peter is an apostle of Christ, and he is the one who has the authority to proclaim to us the genuine Christian message. And that means we've got to pay attention to his interpretation of what Christmas is all about. If we didn't do that, it would be dishonest, as well as plain foolish. So let's focus for a little on what Peter is telling us here. First of all, Peter tells us that the message of Christmas is first of all about something pitiful, the infinitely pitiful futility, he calls it, of human life that is liberated from God. Look at verse 18 again. You were ransomed or redeemed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors. Well, I guess today we like to think we've moved a very long way from our forefathers, from our ancestors, don't we? In the West, we like to think of ourselves as advanced, very liberated, unshackled by all of those, what was it Tony Blair called it, the forces of conservatism that we've got to put behind us so that things can only get better. Well, I'll leave you to judge whether you think things only got better under Mr. Blair's government. But we think that, don't we? We think we're very developed and we're very advanced. We call nations like our nation a developed nation. And we think we're very sophisticated and very liberated, free from any inhibitions, and able to live our own lives as we please. We're free to do as we please, and to think as we please, and to be free from any consequences of our actions beyond, obviously, the mere consequences that we find in this world of humanity. Because most people in our world today, at least in our society, they don't give God any thought at all. Or if they do, well, it's just to mock the idea. Remember just a few years ago, there was those adverts on the

London buses. Do you remember? Partly funded. I think the biggest funder was Richard Dawkins. And they had that sign saying, there's probably no God, so stop worrying and enjoy life. Dr. Dawkins wanted something like, there's definitely no God. But they had to get around the Advertising Standards Authority. So they had to say, there's probably no God. So stop worrying and enjoy life. Because if there is a God, you can't enjoy life. So he was saying, there's no God. But if there is a God, well, he's that kind of nasty whistleblower who ruins your enjoyment. So that we must put him aside.

[ 27 : 41 ] We must be free of any thoughts of God if we're going to in any way have a possible chance of enjoying life. Liberation from God is what we need. And people like that think that this is a very modern and sophisticated way of thinking. But in fact, it's quite the reverse. It's as old as time.

That's been the attitude of human beings all the way back to the Garden of Eden, as the Bible tells us. That is precisely the attitude that man exhibited in wanting to throw off the shackles of God and become rulers of their own destiny. That's what the serpent promised to man in the beginning.

Liberty from God that way. But in fact, of course, as the Bible tells us, human beings did not reap liberty, but bondage. Bondage to futility and disillusion and decay and despair. And of course, death itself.

And that, Peter says, is what you, dear readers, have inherited from your forefathers. Whether they were Jewish by background or whether they were Gentile pagans, we all share a common humanity of pitiful futility. And that is because as a human race, we have rejected God and we have resisted God because we have thought of him as the tyrannical whistleblower that we think always will be there to ruin the game of life. We all want freedom. We all want autonomy. We all want self-determination because we think that we can do it best. But the Bible contends that when you reject the truth about God, when you reject the rule of the only true God, then what you reap is not freedom, but futility.

Not liberty, but in fact bondage. Not a game of bountiful beauty, but one of bitter brokenness. I wonder if you remember a few years ago, just about Christmas actually, there was a strike, wasn't there, of the football referees. They were all fed up. Do you remember? Fed up with all the abuse that gets heaped upon them by the terraces, but above all, fed up with the abuse that was being heaped upon them by football club managers like Alec Ferguson. They're always blowing their whistle far too much and ruining my team's game. Well, just imagine if the fans on the terraces and the players and the managers, just imagine they got the liberation that they all thought that they wanted. They just got rid of those referees for good. A game without that nasty whistleblowing referee. Surely that would be the most beautiful game of all. Surely the beautiful game would emerge in all its magic. Everyone on the field would have perfect freedom, wouldn't they? No whistles, no fouls, no yellow cards, no red cards.

[ 30 : 54 ] Wouldn't that be just fantastic to watch? You don't think so? Well, of course not. There would be no hope, would there, of a great game of football. In fact, there'd be no hope of any game at all. Probably most of the players would be carried off within about the first 20 minutes. It would be a picture of utter futility.

Well, let's ask the question, what does our human world most resemble? As we live like our ancestors did and as we've always done since, seeking to be liberated from God, liberated from that unpopular whistleblower whistleblower that ruins human life. What does our human world look like? Does it resemble a beautiful game played by a well-drilled team whose synergy and whose teamwork conspires like clockwise towards a common goal with a relentless success and beauty and harmony? Is that what our world looks like?

Or does it more resemble the chaos of every man for himself in a game with no rules and no boundaries, just purposelessness and futility, something very far from beautiful to behold?

Well, the apostle Peter, for one, offers his clear verdict. He says, you have inherited the futile ways of all who have gone before you. Not freedom, but futility, which means vain and pointless and deceptive and empty. That's what you've inherited from your forefathers, says Peter. Not freedom, but in fact, bondage, slavery, needing redemption, needing ransoming, is what he says. It's like those captives that we hear about today in various parts of the world being taken captive and requiring a ransom to free them. Now, you might object to what I'm saying and say, well, look, that's ridiculous. I'm not in bondage like that. I am free to do as I please. I live like I want to. But you see, it's a frightening truth, I think, when we realize that it's actually possible to be a virtual slave for a very, very long time and never even seem to realize it and never want to do anything about it. Weren't you staggered when you read in the newspaper a few weeks ago about these slaves who had been liberated from these houses in suburban England and had been slaving in those households for 30 years and yet never tried to escape and only seemed to understand the full enormity of what their life had been when they were actually liberated? Wasn't that staggering?

25 years ago, it wasn't so different, was it, in Eastern Europe? It was only after the Berlin Wall came down and the light of liberation began to penetrate into Eastern Europe from the West. It was only then that many of those people had realized the tyranny and the slavery that they had been living with for decades, some of them all their lives, 70 years.

[ 34 : 25 ] And friends, you see, the message of Peter and the message of Jesus himself is that people are slaves when they are liberated from God. They're slaves, the Bible says, to sin. Everyone who sins, says Jesus, is a slave to sin. And when he says sin there, he doesn't mean sin, those minor peccadillos, those things that we do wrong in our life, but he means sin as a mighty power, a power that grips every human being like a vice, a power that explains the deep-rooted behaviors deep down from inside of us that so often we're ashamed of.

We don't like using language like that, slavery to sin. But we do recognize it. We use euphemisms instead.

We talk about human nature. Oh, it's human nature, we say. When we mean that nobody's perfect, when we mean people do things that are wrong, when we mean that people do things often that are very bad indeed. Well, it's human nature. I remember some time ago, a few years ago, when a particular sportsman was in the headlines for having had multiple affairs. And of course, it was in all the news and the chattering classes were talking about it. And one television program had on this anthropology expert. And he said, well, you see, what this chap is doing, he's a powerful male, and he is following his primeval instincts to spread his genes as widely as possible.

And he said it all with a very straight face. And it was as if to say, well, of course, that makes it all okay, doesn't it? Just doing what a powerful instinct is teaching him to do.

I remember thinking at the time, I don't expect his wife will be terribly impressed with that particular explanation. But you see, there is a grain of truth in it, a grain of truth. The Bible explains it much more fully and honestly. Of course, we're not animals. We're not driven just by instinct. We're responsible beings. We're made in God's image. But in seeking to liberate ourselves from God, we are in fact in the grip of another power. Not primeval instinct as though it was somehow natural, somehow innocent, but rather the power of sin, which is ubiquitous. But it's far from natural, except in the sense that sewage is natural. It's a fact of human life, but it makes our world stink to high heaven. The truth is, according to the Bible, according to Jesus, according to Peter, we are not free as human beings. We're in bondage to the power of sin. And that is why human life and human society is marked out not by freedom, but by futility. If we humans really were free to be all that we wanted to be, to build the societies, to build the world that we yearn for, that we hanker after, then we would be playing the game of life in harmony, wouldn't we? Our relationships on every level would be marked by fidelity, and by honesty, and by trust, and by peace.

[ 38 : 01 ] But are the hallmarks of this world's relationship not very different to that? On every level, between governments and nations, between employers and employees, in our personal relationships, is it not more true that relationships are marked by infidelity, and deceit, and suspicion, and war?

Our world is not a world of freedom. It is a world of futility. And Peter, in his second letter, says that the things that we look to so often for liberation are the very things that actually enslave us, because whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved, says Peter.

You see, when people seek liberation from the one true God, as our forefathers did, when they seek liberators in other things, then these worthless idols can only enslave us in utter futility.

Futile, worthless, vain delusions, that's the language that the Old Testament prophets constantly used, of all the idols of the nations that so often tempted God's people Israel away from the one true God.

And it's still the same the world over today. In some parts of the world, perhaps particularly in the East, it is still often idols of wood and of stone and clay. I've seen that myself with my own eyes in India and elsewhere.

[ 39 : 41 ] People offering money and offering goods and food to images of monkeys and dogs. But it's no different, friends, in the Western world today. In fact, I recall when I was in Delhi a few years ago, Isaac Shaw telling me a story about an American who was visiting them at the Delhi Bible Institute, and he was so shocked and aghast at the worship of dogs that was going on everywhere. There's dogs everywhere on the streets in Delhi, and the council feed them.

They don't feed the humans who are living in the streets. And he said, this is shocking. But Isaac turned to him and said, well, hang on a minute, it is shocking. But you come from America, and it's just as bad there. You've got dog salons and dog hairdressers and dog funerals and dog goodness knows what. The dollars spent on dogs tell you about the idolatry in your country that's just as bad as mine, perhaps even worse. And that's true, isn't it? We are enslaved to a whole myriad of idols in our Western world today, to education, to wealth, to getting up the greasy pole, to having or finding the perfect relationship, to having the perfect body, to having the perfect home, to having the perfect family, you name it. We are worshiping at the shrine of idols of futility.

Do these things bring us liberation? Do these things bring us freedom? Or do they bring us the relentless pressure to perform and to conform and to come up to scratch and to meet expectations so that we're not rejected, so that we're not left as outcasts in a world that is full of exacting judges of our religious observations?

It seems the gods that we've chosen to be masters have great power indeed over us. Yes, they do. But not power to liberate. Instead, great power to condemn, great power to bring us into bondage, into futility. And if you don't believe any of that, friends, in the end, none of us, none of us surely can deny that one power has an iron grip on our life, and that is death itself.

Here's what one artist said. The fundamental thing behind all motivation and all activity is the constant struggle against annihilation and death.

[ 42 : 19 ] It's absolutely stupefying in its terror, and it renders anyone's accomplishments meaningless. Futility. That is the infinitely pitiful futility of the life that we have all inherited from our forefathers, a life liberated from God, and therefore without the one true and living and life-giving God.

That's why Peter says the message of Christmas is, first of all, about something pitiful. But Jesus Christ came to ransom us, to liberate us from that futility.

Before I go on, let's sing another carol that reminds us of that wonderful truth. He came, the prisoners to release, in Satan's bondage held. The gates of brass before him burst.

The iron fetters yield. Hark the glad sound, the Savior comes. Seal theoroman play the silver feeling. Here a aquesta by Stephenooo. Hawk the laden Which of the men have been In the middle ofream Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[ 45 : 18 ] Amen. Amen. Peter 18 and 19.

Because Peter goes on to say that it's because Jesus came to rescue us from futility that the message of Christmas is about something precious.

It's about the infinitely precious freedom of human life liberated by God. Peter points us in verse 19 to two things of infinitely precious value.

One explicitly and one implicitly. First of all, he's explicit about the infinite value of the Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ.

You are ransomed not with perishable things such as silver and gold, but with the imperishable. We say, don't we, that that is what marks out precious metals today.

[ 46 : 44 ] It's that they don't perish. They don't perish like paper money or other things. But Peter says that even silver and gold are not ultimately imperishable because they belong to this world.

They belong to what is time bound, to what is finite. But he is saying to us that not all the gold in the galaxy is worth one drop of what he calls the precious blood of Christ, our Redeemer.

Like a lamb without blemish or spot. Language, of course, is the Old Testament language of sacrifice for sins. Just after Leviticus chapter 16, chapter all about the sacrifice of the great day of atonement.

There's a verse in the next chapter that sums up why the blood of the sacrifice is so precious. Because it represents life given in death for another.

Listen. For the life of the flesh is in the blood. And I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls.

[ 47 : 52 ] For it is the blood that makes atonement by the life. And Jesus' blood represents his life. The infinitely precious life of the Son of God.

The only begotten Son of the Father. But given in death to bring redemption. To bring true liberation from the power of sin.

Just as the spotless lamb without blemish, the lamb of the Passover, brought redemption to God's ancient people Israel from the bondage of Egypt. When that blood was shed.

When it brought protection for his people from the angel of death and the judgment of God. And so Peter says, Christ, the infinitely precious lamb of God, is the sacrifice so precious that it wins an infinitely precious liberation for his people.

And so what Peter says about the infinite value that God places on the life of his son speaks also, implicitly, of the infinite value that he places on the lives of his adopted children, on those who are redeemed by that precious blood.

[ 49 : 12 ] It's the greatest irony, isn't it, that man thought it would cost him nothing to liberate himself from God and gain freedom that way. And yet it cost him everything.

All he gained was futility and bondage. But God did know what it would cost him to liberate man and to bring him true freedom from futility, from his rebellion.

And yet he gave everything that we might find that infinitely precious freedom of a life liberated truly by God and for God and to be his forever.

So precious are we, his redeemed to God, that he came to obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God, as Paul calls it in Romans, which will one day liberate the whole created order from its bondage to futility and decay.

And he did it at the cost of his own precious blood. The infinite preciousness of the life of the Redeemer speaks eloquently of the infinite preciousness of the lives of his redeemed ones to God.

[ 50 : 33 ] Let's pause on that thought for a moment as we sing another beautiful carol that bids us to come with awe and with joy and with faith and with love, to ponder a love so rich in mercy that stoops to save us.

Jesus, our Savior, the precious Son of God, made man. Come now with awe, earth's ancient vigil keeping. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 52 : 23 ] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[ 54 : 19 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.



Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

As we've been saved, as we've been saved, Jesus was saved, and all alone in heaven.

Do open your Bibles for one last time. And we're going to look particularly now at verses 20 and 21, because there is one final thing that Peter wants us to be absolutely clear upon here, and that is that the message of Christmas is also about something very personal.

[ 55 : 41 ] It is about the infinitely personal future that is offered to us in the hope that we have in Jesus Christ. Look at verse 20. The message of Christ, Peter makes clear, is an infinite message.

It is eternal. It transcends time. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world. And yet, it has come into time, into the world, and into our world, to become deeply personal.

Do you see? He was made manifest in these last times for your sake. Verse 21. Who through him are believers in God, who raised him and gave him glory.

It's become personal to give us hope so that your faith and hope are in God. The wonder of this Christmas message, Peter says, is that the eternal message of the living and the abiding word of God, as he calls it in verse 23, that it has become.

Look at verse 25. Do you see? The good news that has been preached to us. That is to all who receive the apostles' gospel.

[ 57 : 01 ] God's infinite word about the glory of Christ has become a personal word of the good news of Christ to you and to me. It is an infinitely personal word.

It was that to Peter's first readers. But it's still that today to each one of us, to everyone hearing this message. Here in this room, downstairs, whoever's watching later on on the recording on the internet.

It is a gospel that has come as personal good news to you. That's why the Bible says, today, if you hear his voice, don't harden your heart.

Don't let this Christmas message pass you by, because it's a personal message addressed to you, to every one of us. At that first Christmas, as we heard in the reading, as we sang in the chorus, there was no room in the inn for the Savior.

No doubt it would have meant far too much of evil, change, rearrangement to accommodate that family and a birth. But the same was true, not just in Jesus' birth, but all through his earthly ministry, right to the end.

[ 58 : 18 ] Many, many people had no room for Christ and his message. Too much change. Too much to let go of, to follow Jesus. Too much to be changed in your life.

Just those same issues face every one of us still today, don't they? When the message of Jesus comes up close and personal and challenges your heart and mine.

But remember the alternative, friends. Liberation from God in Christ can never bring real liberty, can never bring real freedom.

It can only bring futility. Futility in life now and ultimately, infinite futility. A never-ending experience of pointlessness and vanity and deception and emptiness and darkness and frustration and futility.

That's what Jesus called the horror of hell. Friends, Jesus Christ came to redeem us, to rescue us, to liberate us from that terrible tragedy.

[ 59 : 39 ] By his sacrifice so, so precious. He who sent his Son into the world for our salvation at that first Christmas.

He will send the Spirit of his Son into our hearts today. If we will heed that good news so that we also might experience the joy of his salvation.

Personally. In our own lives now. And for all eternity. Infinitely. And that's the joy of Christmas. That's why everybody who has come to know the Redeemer.

Who has come to follow Christ. Who has come to receive his great salvation. That is why we love to sing these songs at Christmas. That's why we love to sing all the time.

All year round. Because of his sacrifice so precious. That tells us. That we are so precious.

[ 60 : 41 ] In his sight. Because in him. The curse to blessing turns. My barren spirit flowers. As o'er the shattered power of sin.

The cross of Jesus towers. Oh what a Savior. What a Lord. Oh Master. Brother. Friend. What miracle.

Has joined me. To this life. That never ends. Let's close our service together. By singing the words of that hymn.

Oh what a mystery I see. What marvelous design. That God should come. As one of us. A son. In David's line. And you'll remember when we get to the very last line.

Of the last verse. We draw it right out. As a grand finale. Led. enlarged soul and papel. Open the Lord. Behold. Laded soul and Egypt dilated little Mia.

[ 61 : 39 ] Hold Stand by ■ little oil. The grace. Save him. Ladies takes care for who to be east. Father of the conect impacted by him. Lets come see every night and Africa. Medal of an angel. Was 71 grand. Than a heavenly, Patrick corazón. Yes for your love.

All generous. Yes. And CH SEE. Of your blue ■. What doe. India low s Jean gue. You'll be held Ahí. Of your smiles. I'm still there. You'll be held in as way. This excellent with me. and I'll be held brick for you. Wo te ■ ■ ame. mitigating the American ghost. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. As we stand, let's pray.

[ 64 : 42 ] Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, that of a lamb without blemish or spot, he was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in these last times for your sake.

And so, Lord, we, having received this good news, echo the words of old Simeon. Now you are letting your servants depart in peace according to your word, for our eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

And so may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the blessing and presence of his Holy Spirit in your hearts abide with you now and always.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.