

Carols by Candlelight - Joy for the Humble - Mary's Song

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Date: 14 December 2014

Preacher: William Philip

[0 : 00] Well, good evening, everyone, and welcome to our Carols by Candlelight service tonight here at the Tron. We're delighted that you're able to share with us in this celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, the one who alone explains our humanity, and the one who alone is the key to all history and indeed to eternity.

So we begin this evening by singing a beautiful ancient carol that speaks of how the story of Christmas begins before creation, before time itself, in the love of the eternal God, of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[1 : 46] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

We are so tired of our surrounds. Live Thirty ■■■■■■■■■■ we find placing Please seem to be a part of our might.

beaches are the ones we live with. Buzz ■■■ pursuant to the world the do Amen.

Amen. He said, Who told you that you were naked?

[4 : 30] Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat? The man said, The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree and I ate.

Then the Lord God said to the woman, What is this that you have done? The woman said, The serpent deceived me and I ate. The Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the fields.

On your belly you shall go and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring.

He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel. Then the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil.

Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever. Therefore, the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken.

[5 : 37] He drove out the man and at the east of the garden of Eden, He placed a cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life. The cherubim, fierce, fiery angels with swords barring the way to Eden.

And they symbolize the terrible separation that there is of humanity from God's presence, the isolation from our true destiny. But the wonder of the Christmas story is that it's about how this terrible tragedy is overcome.

Not by us, by man, we are powerless. But by God himself in sending his own son, Jesus Christ, into the world. So that the angels now have a new role.

Not barring the way, but instead proclaiming the good news. That now at last there can be peace and goodwill from man to God.

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold. The angels now have a new role.

[7 : 07] Margaret's endu■■■■, the Lord and clear, that glorious song of old from Jesus Christ, into God with Saul's witheti- vil. The angels and acids, who you want to hail, to say the angels and willm used to describe His time, the angels.

The ■■■■■■ heyologian jorters, who you want to ■■ lait, praise ofal, to say the Lord. Thank you.

Rew aaria.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[10 : 26] Amen. Amen. Amen.

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain.

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. O Zion, that bring us good tidings, get thee up into the mountain, O Jerusalem, that bring us good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength.

Lift it up, be not afraid. Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God. Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him.

Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

[12 : 31] Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Words from the prophet Isaiah, spoken hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus, and telling of God's promise not to forget his people despite all their waywardness, despite all their sin, despite all their rejection of him, and telling of the wonderful promise of the coming one who would be Emmanuel, which means God himself with us.

nos. Amen. Amen.

[15 : 03] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[20 : 03] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

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

Amen. 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, all 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.

[22 : 18] 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.

Therefore, the child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son.

And this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.

And Mary said, Behold, I am the servant of the Lord.

[23 : 30] Let it be to me according to your words. And the angel departed from her. The promise was for God himself to be with us.

And in the birth of Jesus Christ, he who was truly God became truly man. He really did come to be with us. And to be one of us.

Jesus, our Emmanuel. And he came for a purpose. 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. O Lord. crest. Behold. ■■■■.

Gonstead III. 2. Feather praise. Please. Love. May. Give, If. Mother. May.

[24 : 28] Thank you. May. 11ées. May. God. perequence. May. The addition of ourRock.

■, Let us pray.

Let us pray.

Let us pray.

Let us pray.

[26 : 41] Let us pray.

Let us pray.

Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.

Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.

Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.

[28 : 22] Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[32 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

A God who has not remained hidden and far off, but a God who has drawn near to make himself known forever as our wonderful Savior.

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth. Ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth.

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

[33 : 39] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. So Abraham went as the Lord had told him.

[36 : 51] When Abraham was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to Abraham and said to him, I am God Almighty, walk before me and be blameless, that I may make my covenant between me and you and may multiply you greatly.

Then Abraham fell on his face. And God said to him, behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abraham, but your name shall be Abraham.

For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations and kings shall come from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.

Having heard of all the fulfillment of what the prophets had looked forward to in the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, that reading takes us way back again, right down the centuries, all the way back to the book of Genesis, to remind us just how long the covenant promise of God had glimmered through the darkness of history.

[38 : 22] But the message of Christmas is that in the birth of Jesus Christ, that yearning was over for them and also for all the peoples of the earth.

Because all that God promised to Abraham and through Abraham for the world has now come. And that's why the Christmas message is one of joy and of song and of great rejoicing.

Good Christian men rejoice with heart and soul and voice. Now ye need not fear the grave. Jesus Christ was born to save.

Jesus Christ was born to a servant. Jesus Christ was born to save.

Jesus Christ was born to save. Jesus Christ was born to save. Jesus Christ was born to save.
[39 : 23] Jesus Christ was conviled to have fun to save. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

It's never just been the story of Christmas alone, enchanting as that story is, that makes people want to sing. The multitude of lovely carols were written by people who understood what that story means.

In our last reading, we're going to listen to Mary, a humble peasant girl from Galilee, singing her song of joy about what Christmas really means.

And she of all people ought to have a good grasp of it, shouldn't she? Listen to her song from Luke's Gospel, chapter 1. Mary said, My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked upon the humble estate of his servant.

[41 : 52] For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed, for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm. He has scattered the pride in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of humble estate. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his offspring forever.

Well, before we think together for a few moments, a little about what the birth of Jesus means as the Savior who brings joy to the humble, we're going to sing together one of the simplest, perhaps one of the loveliest carols of all.

[42 : 59] Son of God, oh, how bright love is smiling from your face. Strikes for us now the hour of grace, Savior, since thou art born.

You are the one of the most part of your heart.

You are the one of the most part of your heart. You are the one of the most part of your heart.

You are the one of the most part of your heart.

Christ the Redeemer is here.

[45 : 00] Christ the Redeemer is here. Christ the Redeemer is here. Christ the Redeemer is here. Christ the Redeemer is here.

One of the most part of your love is shining. India parallel is here. San Jose the Redeemer is here. The King is done■■■■■■■ for the family child in Gloria Church It's time to get up to the table Save us now, Lord.

Save us now, Lord. Well, over the last few months here in our morning services, we've been reading and studying Luke's gospel together.

Luke was a first century physician, a doctor, and he was writing, first of all, for a friend called Theophilus, probably a Roman, so that his friend and others could have a carefully researched and orderly account gathered from eyewitnesses of the words and works of Jesus in order that he might have certainty about everything that he'd heard, about who Jesus was and what Jesus came to do.

[46 : 39] And Luke's gospel, in fact, is one of the best attested works of history in the whole world. But it's not just history, it is a gospel.

That means it announces good news, good news for the world, about salvation for the world. Luke wrote his gospel so that we could have certainty about the most important issue for every human being in this world.

It's a book all about our certain salvation. So if you've never read Luke's gospel, please do pick up a copy of it at the end of our service.

We've got lots of copies, and we'd love you to have one. We'd love you to read his whole story. In our Sunday studies, we've got to chapter 8 of the gospel, but for Christmas, we're coming back to some of these wonderfully familiar parts in chapters 1 and 2.

And we're going to focus on a great feature of Luke's gospel in particular. His account is full of songs. Christmas songs.

[47 : 44] Not Bing Crosby, not Jingle Bells, but real Christmas songs. Songs for the Savior's birth. Now, of course, Christmas is always a time of song and of singing, isn't it?

Everybody wants a new album for Christmas. Why? Well, because people love music at Christmas. When I was young, which is now a long time ago, the thing that we all wanted to know as

youngsters was who was going to have the number one hit at Christmas.

I think the first one I really remember was Slave, Merry Christmas, Everyone, 1973. Do you remember it? I think the first one I bought myself as a single was Mull of Kintyre.

That was 1977. And the next year it was Boney M, Mary's Boy Child, 1978. I heard it on the radio yesterday. Can anyone remember that? Now, you may not know why we are also attracted to music at Christmas.

But the Bible tells us the answer. It's because the coming of Jesus Christ into our world is the focus of all the rejoicing and joy of history and of eternity in earth and in heaven.

[48 : 58] And joy and rejoicing really needs music. It needs song. Someone has put it very eloquently. When Jesus came into the world, poetry expressed itself.

And music was reborn. Now, that last reading that we heard has the words of one of the most famous Christmas songs of all, the Magnificat.

It's been set to music by many, many composers. Magnificat just means magnify. It just comes from that first line. My soul magnifies the Lord. And Mary is giving voice to words that are inspired by God's spirit in her after she receives the promise of the angel that we heard earlier.

That she was to bear a son who would be God's chosen king forever, to reign in a kingdom with no end. Because he would be the son of God himself.

And Mary had plenty of reason to sing. The angel had also told her of another miraculous birth that was going to precede hers, of her elderly cousin, Elizabeth.

[50 : 10] She was already pregnant. She would give birth to John the Baptist, who would be a prophet to go before and announce the Lord Jesus Christ. So no doubt, both of these women had plenty to sing about.

And Mary went off to visit her cousin. I'm sure they had lots to talk about in their impending motherhood. But I wonder if you noticed the strange thing about Mary's song.

It isn't about a baby at all. It's not the sort of song that you're likely to hear wandering around the aisles in mother care. In fact, it's an extraordinary song. It's a theological song.

It means it's a song about God. But not just even thanking God for what's happened in her life.

Mary's song had far, far bigger horizons than just that.

She seems to see in this divine intervention into her life something that affects the whole wide world forever, for every generation.

[51 : 12] And that's why Mary doesn't, in fact, sing about her pregnancy. That's why she doesn't sing about parenthood at all. Wonderful as these things certainly are, all by themselves. Now instead, she sings about the significance of this birth that's to come.

A birth that will be unlike any other birth in history. She understood the message to be that this first Christmas brings something unique into our world.

And that's why she was rejoicing. That's why her spirit was rejoicing in God, her Savior, and the world's Savior. She understood that in the coming of Jesus at that first Christmas, God was speaking.

He was telling her, and he was telling the whole world that he is a God who saves. He's the Savior. And that's what the coming of Jesus means.

And that's what Mary sings about. And as she does so, she tells us just how it is that Jesus proclaims God's great salvation. Let's begin at the end of her song and work backwards to try and understand what it means.

[52 : 25] First of all, if you look there at these verses at the end of the song on the screens, it tells us that in Jesus' coming, all history is explained by God. What Mary is saying is that Jesus gives meaning to banish all the mystery about the world, the world as we know it, and about all its history.

At the end of her song, Mary looks right back over the whole of past history. And she sees that in Jesus' coming, God has at last kept the promises to human beings that he has been making since the very beginning of time.

You see that on the screen, verse 54? He's remembered his words of mercy, words that go right back to Abraham to the very start of Israel's history as a people.

In other words, Jesus is at last the explanation that Israel's history and indeed that human history has been waiting for. Our world, with all its history, it's such a mystery to us.

It's so hard for us to fathom with all its shifts in geopolitics, with its changing powers, with its progress and so on. Yet in another way, so little changes in our world.

[53 : 44] Isn't that true? You went to the Middle East today. I suspect you'd find in so many places it's not really so very different from the way it was right back in the first century.

I guess a peasant girl living in the West Bank of Palestine today, it's really not so very different. It was occupied territory then as it is today.

And for many living then, it was a great mystery that God seemed to be absent. The God they believed in and spoke of seemed at very best to be far away and distant to them.

Israel then had many enemies. Her history was very, very hard to fathom for the people living then. Israel had even been involved in being subjugated and exiled.

The people taken in slavery miles and miles away to a foreign land. It was a terrible, unthinkable fate for them. Of course, they'd returned later on, as the prophets had said, with great, great expectations.

[54 : 47] And yet centuries had passed and nothing much seemed to have materialized. Just year after year after year, more of the same.

It's really very familiar, isn't it? People live and die, generations roll on, and life is full of mystery. And for many, apparent meaninglessness.

And yet now, suddenly, into Mary's world came something new. And she saw and she understood that in this birth to come, somehow, all history was being explained by God.

All the heartfelt longing of the past, all the waiting. Because now in Jesus, God at last was fulfilling his promise to Abraham. A promise that through him and through his seed, all the nations of the world would be blessed.

All the peoples of this earth could know the blessing of God's salvation. That's an extraordinary claim, isn't it?

[55 : 55] Sounds shocking to our modern ears in the kind of pluralistic and multicultural world that we're so used to. That this one man, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, alone, can completely explain the whole of history.

It sounds a height of arrogance to us. But that is Mary's claim. That's why she's rejoicing. That's what she believes. All the prophecies that we've heard tonight, spanning the centuries, that they're all coming to fulfillment in this one birth.

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in this birth in Bethlehem. According to Mary, this is what the whole history of the world is all about.

And this birth explains all the past for Mary. And this birth, therefore, explains all human history for us too. That's what the Christmas message is. That may seem unbelievable to some of you.

Maybe it is. But let me ask you this. Isn't it true? Isn't it true that deep down in our hearts, whatever our beliefs may be, we know that there must be something more to this world.

[57 : 13] There must be something more to our life, to our loves, than what we see in our world's history. And what we experience in this relentless cycle of ashes to ashes and dust to dust.

Isn't it true that when we allow ourselves to really think about the deep things of life, we don't do it often, do we? But when we do, isn't it true that if we're really honest, there is deep within us, as C.S. Lewis called it, an inconsolable longing, an unappeasable want, deep in our spirit, for something more, for something better, for something greater, than the life that we just see in our world, and all around us.

Something that we feel must be possible, because we're capable of imagining it. And yet something we just do not see. Isn't that true?

If it weren't true, why is the world of the arts, and music, and poetry, so full of the searching, the longing, expressing what's true of the human spirit?

Well, that brings us to the second thing in Mary's song. She tells us that, not only in Jesus is all human history explained, but she says, in Jesus, eternity is being proclaimed by God.

[58 : 44] That Christmas is a message of hope, that banishes despair. That there is a future. There is the future that we all long for. And we long instinctively for a better world.

A world very different from the one that we know. Not losing all the beauty, and the wonder, and everything that's lovely. But certainly a world without the injustices, without the horrors, without the miseries, and the perplexities that so shroud our existence.

But why do we long so? Once again, I think C.S. Lewis offers us the obvious answer. He says, If I find within myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.

And that world, the eternal world, does exist. It did exist once, long ago in this world, just for a brief moment.

Like a light bulb being switched on, and immediately blowing its filament, and going dark. So likewise, man's rebellion plunged our world into darkness right from the beginning.

[60 : 05] And that is the world that we now know, and see, and understand. But hints, hints of that beautiful world, memories of the world that once was, remain deep down within us.

And that is because, friends, that is the world that we were made for. And in Jesus, God proclaims to us the certainty that that world shall exist again forever and ever.

Indeed, in his very coming to earth, it's been assured. A total transformation. Look on the screens at verses 51 to 53. They speak, don't they, of a transformed world.

And notice the tense, by the way. It's past tense. It's so certain, that what Mary is proclaiming, is that it's accomplished already, in the very coming, of the Christ.

In Jesus' coming, eternity, is proclaimed, by God. It's the future as it ought to be. It's the future that we long for it to be. And as it will be, because of Jesus.

[61 : 16] Justice, justice for the proud, the arrogant, the exploiter. And justice for the humble, for the hungry, for the lowly. This isn't just some sort of utopian hope or fantasy.

It's not just about changing the world through politics. Who on earth could have any hope in that? Do you? Not through changing the world through economic theory. What on earth do economists know?

Just six weeks ago, I was reading in my paper that the oil price was never going to come down again. And yesterday, in my paper, I'm told it's going to half again. It's not through changing the world through war, or through recycling, or through a great new treaty on climate change that's just been signed this weekend.

Well, maybe we can change nature just a tiny little bit here and there. Couldn't really change this week's weather bomb, could we? But who, friends, who can tame the human heart?

Isn't that what we really need if we're to have a better world? Now, this isn't some vague hope of betterment in our world by degrees.

[62 : 32] This is a transformation on a cosmic scale that's being described. Mary's last word in her song is, forever. Because in the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, eternity itself is invading human history.

It's taking over history. And that is the Christmas message. Nothing less than that. The birth of Jesus Christ is the beginning of a new world.

And that's why in Jesus' life, if you read through Luke's gospel, you'll see glimpses of that world. In his presence, that world's power kept breaking in to our world of history.

It couldn't be hidden. Water into wine. Lame people leaping. Deaf people hearing. Blind seeing. Even the dead being raised to life. It's like the trailer, isn't it, of a film that you see in the cinema. Just a taster of the story to come. But enough to tell you that there's no way you want to miss seeing that story. And that's the Christmas message.

[63 : 42] Not making this world a better place. A little more peaceful. A little more loving. A little more hopeful. No!

This is the birth of a new world. A new universe. An eternal world that's proclaimed to us in the coming of Jesus. A world where everything and everyone is transformed.

Transformed into the world that we dreamed of and still deep down do dream of and long for with an inconsolable longing. And doesn't that longing, that ache so often well up within us, particularly at Christmas time, what will be the greatest cause of sorrow and grief this Christmas?

It'll be the empty place, won't it? At the dinner table. It'll be the memory of the loved one who's no longer there, no longer with us. It's a centenary, isn't it, this year of the Great War.

I was reading some of the letters of teenage soldiers back to their families. from the trenches whom they never saw again. But even, friends, when somebody that we love who's died of a ripe old age is painful, the sorrow is searing, the desolation is awful, even when we have the most wonderful and lovely memories of them.

[65 : 20] But you see, Christmas proclaims a future and an eternity in a world without any injustice, without any sorrow, without any pain, and a world without death.

Christmas means, again, as C.S. Lewis put it, he so often put these things so wonderfully. In the words of Aslan, in the Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, Christmas is the beginning of death

working backwards.

In Jesus, God has proclaimed eternity and eternal life to our world with a shout of great joy. In Jesus, there's meaning for all history.

History is explained. In Jesus, there's hope for the future. Eternity is proclaimed. And finally, Mary tells us, in Jesus, humanity is reclaimed for God.

It's not just about the past. It's not just about the future. It's also about the present. And it's not just about the world and the cosmos and its renewal.

[66 : 30] It's deeply personal. Look there, right at the very start of Mary's song. It's so clear, isn't it? There's real joy now. There's joy that banishes fear forever.

Because our personal world is transformed in the coming of Jesus Christ. Look at verse 49. She says, He who is mighty has done great things for me.

For me, personally. See, when you see in Jesus, the Savior, who can forgive sin, when you see him who can reverse the tragedy of the human heart, who can reverse the frailty of the human body, then that is to find joy.

Joy unspeakable and full of glory. And it's to find it now. It's to find peace. Peace indescribable.

And to know it right now, here on earth. And that's why Christian songs are songs of joy, songs of rejoicing.

[67 : 37] Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee from depths of hell thy people save and give them victory over the grave. Disperse the gloomy clouds of night and death's dark shadows put to flight forever.

That's why Christmas is about rejoicing. That's why Christians rejoice to join in Mary's song of rejoicing and sing, my soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior because he's our Savior too because of Christmas.

He's looked on the humble estate of his servants and he who is mighty has done great things for me. Friends, that's why I'm up here speaking to you this evening because he who is mighty has done great things for me.

That's why all of us come here week by week every Sunday. That's why people have invited you perhaps here tonight to join us. It's to tell you that we also know what Mary knows and to tell you that we want you to know it too.

You see, Mary, she found that joy. It's not just that she saw what it all meant that she understood it in her head understanding the meaning of history, understanding the great hope of eternity.

[69 : 06] It's much more even than that because she entered into the story. It became her story. This humble peasant girl, she was taken up into the great story of God himself.

She became part of it and her life forever became interwoven with it. That's why she says all generations will look back and call me blessed.

Not because of anything special about her. She was just a humble, ordinary woman. But because of what God did through her in bringing Jesus into the world.

Mary and Joseph, Zechariah, Elizabeth, and all the others that we know so well from these stories, the shepherds, the wise men, the disciples, all, they too entered into the story, the great story, or rather the eternal story invaded their time and their world as it invades our time in the coming of Jesus to answer every inconsolable longing of the human heart.

It's a story that goes on forever in which every chapter is better than the one before and they enter that story themselves.

[70 : 24] And that's the message of Christmas. the message is that so can you enter that story. It's not just humanity reclaimed by God, it's real people, living people, ordinary people, people with names, people like you and like me.

You see the last verse, verse 50 up on the screens? Don't miss it. His mercy is for those and that means all those who fear him from generation to generation.

everyone, men and women, boys and girls, old and young, red and yellow, black and white, everyone who will fear him.

It just means like Mary, to humbly believe the message that Mary sings. And that's where Mary's joy came from. She believed.

We heard that when the angel spoke to her, the message of Christmas, she said, let it be to me according to your word. That's what the Bible means by faith.

[71 : 33] It's just saying yes, yes to the message of Christmas, yes to the message of Jesus, the message that explains all history, the message that proclaims eternity, always to you today, the message in which God says to everyone and to you, I have come to reclaim you, to reclaim you for the world that you have yearned for, but never yet seen.

The message of Christmas is simply God singing to his world, let it be for you also, through Jesus Christ my Son.

Mary said yes, let it be so for me, and she entered, joy, never ending, forever.

Friends, I want to say to you tonight, let it be for you also, this Christmas, so that you also will join that joy forever.

Amen. Let's pray. O come, all you faithful, joyful, and triumphant, come to Bethlehem, come and behold him born, the King of angels, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

[73 : 08] Gracious God, grant this to be the response of all of our hearts this Christmas, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

We sing the words of our final carol together, O come, all ye faithful, O come, and behold him. we sing we sing of our Miss of the Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[75 : 50] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. That you long to hold out to us.

[78 : 53] To that end, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and always.