

"Joy To The World"



Joy to the world! The Lord has come;
Let Earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

• **Real Joy?** During this season of the year, many look forward to happy times with family and friends. Is this the kind of joy you think of when you hear Isaac Watts' carol, *Joy to the World*? On the other hand, some actually find this "joyous season" depressing because of all the disappointment and frustration at this time of the year. Then too, if one is alone in life, traditional holiday festivities aren't very joyful.

The joy Watts writes about in the carol above goes far beyond a once-a-year celebration. Long before "Christmas" was ever thought of, an angel announced to the shepherds watching over their sheep: "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day ... a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Lk. 2:10-11).

• **Found Where?** Whether excited or depressed by the traditional celebrations of the birth of Christ, you can have this joy the angel spoke about—not just once-a-year, but permanently! It is obvious that the world does not have this kind of joy. Ever-increasing problems produce ever-increasing fear and despair, because, sad to say, "Earth" did not "receive her King." The only source of true joy was rejected and crucified almost 2000 years ago.

There have been people all down through the years who have experienced the joy of knowing Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Their joy does not come from a few exciting events or material possessions. It springs, instead, from knowing that their sins are forgiven through the death of Jesus Christ and from having a right relationship with God.

They realize that when God said, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), He knew what He was talking about. They know that "Unless you repent, you will all perish" (Lk. 13:3). They also joyfully know their future is secure. No

matter what happens to them or this world, they have the assurance that there is “fullness of joy” in God’s presence forever (Ps. 16:11).

One of the early followers of Jesus once said to a troubled man ready to kill himself: “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved*” (Acts 16:31). That man believed and his fears were changed to joy. This same follower of Christ wrote, “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace *in believing*” (Rom. 15:13).

● **You Can Have It!** Do you want this joy and peace in your heart permanently? If so, then “confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, and you will be saved” (Rom 10:9).

– S. Hadley

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