

Questions Christmas Hymns Week 3

- Let's see how many enduring myths of Christmas you have bought into:
 - Christmas has always been celebrated on December 25th? T/F (False)
 - How did Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem? (Unknown)
 - What did the innkeeper tell Mary and Joseph? (He is never mentioned)
 - How many wisemen came to see Jesus? (Unknown - thought 3 b/c of gifts)
 - What did the angels sing when appearing to the shepherds? (Did not sing)
- It seems only natural that we look at a second song by Charles Wesley considering he wrote between 6000-7000 hymns.
- Charles Wesley was a reformer in the church. Translation: He sought to modernize the church of his day.
 - Do you find it odd that we are hearing a similar story of a person trying to change the church's approach to worship back in the 1700's? Why or why not?
 - Do you feel Christians are resistant to change in the church? Why or why not?
- As per Pastor Keith's description of George Whitefield as a fiery, evangelistic, revolutionary; a man that often leapt before he looked; a man that changed someone else's work without permission, do you find yourself drawn to him or pushed away from him?
 - Do you think the lyrics being changed is a big deal? Either in the way they were changed or in what they were changed into (they are not biblically accurate)?
- God has an interesting sense of humor. Even after the lyric change, another man years later combined Wesley's changed song with music honoring the man that first mass-produced the Bible.
 - Given that Wesley lived to tell the world about Christ, how do you think he would feel knowing his song had been set to the music to honor Johann Gutenberg?
 - How would you feel if you were in Wesley's shoes?
- The first verse of the song calls attention to the birth of Christ, but then asks for a response - both emotional and physical. (Be joyous, join the triumph of the skies)
 - How well do you heed Wesley's call to respond?
 - Does the coming of Christ make you joyful?
 - Does it lead you to praise and worship?
 - What about Christ's second coming? Does that make you joyful? Longing for His kingdom? Lead you to praise?
- Charles Wesley combined a lot of scripture references in his music and in this song.

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- What does it mean for us that God sent His Son at just the right time?
(Galatians 4:4-5) (Late in time, behold Him come)
- Where do you have trouble trusting God's timing? Where are you good at trusting His timing?
- What could help you increase in your trust?
- What does it mean that Jesus laid aside Himself to come to earth?
(Philippians 2:5-11) (Veil in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate deity, pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel)
- Do you enjoy the theology of these hymns?
 - Do you think the songs of today carry the same level of theology? Why or why not?
 - If the average Christian were to write a hymn today like Wesley wrote, one that is deeply theological and filled with scripture, do you think it could be done?
 - Could you do it (the biblical end, not the musical)?
 - If yes, what would you write on? If no, why not? Is there something you could work on to change that?