



THE GOOD NEWS MESSENGER

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Christmas... The Beginning of Many Miracles

M. Chancellor

“It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold;
“Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
From heav’n’s all gracious King:”
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.”

As the sound of the music fades away, I pause in reflection on this season of the year, and just what it means. That time, so long ago, when a miracle came to the earth. For the most part, the event went unnoticed by those of that time. Oh, there were a few shepherds who knew, and a few travelers from far away who came to pay homage, but most people went on about their busy lives, content in their everyday routine, not realizing what a momentous occurrence had taken place.

To those who heard about the angels’ song, the song of peace and good will to men, I wonder if they shook their heads in bewilderment and confusion when Herod sent men to kill every child under the age of two years. Did they wonder why the angels sang that song? God had a plan, even when it seemed obscured by the sinfulness and wickedness of men. He had a plan even when it seemed that everything was working to destroy it. You see, he worked another miracle, one that would allow his plan to unfold. He sent the child and his parents to Egypt for

safety.

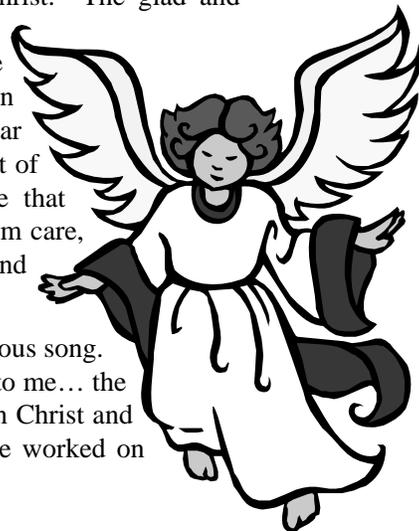
If you look at the story of the life of Christ, it is one of reaching out to people, lifting loads, bearing burdens, pointing people to the way of truth, and one that is full of miracles. His birth led to a life filled with good deeds and truth, and brought about the greatest miracle of all... salvation.

By his death we are saved, and by his life we can live the life God would have us to live. Because he lives, we can live a life that is pure and holy... a life that is at peace with God. The night Jesus was born, angels sang of peace on earth. This peace on earth that the angels sang about is peace in our hearts toward God while we live here on earth. The goodwill toward men was shown in the sacrifice that Jesus gave for us.

“O ye, beneath life’s crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,
Look now! For glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing.”

In his ministry, Jesus said, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” We can trade life’s crushing load for the joy, the peace, and the righteousness that are found in Christ. The glad and golden hours can come because we’re at peace with him. We can sit in heavenly places and hear the angels sing. And most of all, in him, we can have that rest; rest from sin, rest from care, rest from the burdens and trials and troubles of life.

Come listen to this glorious song. This is what Christmas is to me... the miracle that we can find in Christ and in the plan of salvation he worked on this earth.



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Don't Look at the Storm

M. Chancellor

I sat up, and shook my head, trying to clear away the stars and flashes that were circling my head like little buzzing bees. What had happened? I had been walking along, and everything had been going pretty smooth. I tried to get to my feet but nausea overcame me, and I decided to sit tight a while longer. I figured that it must just be shock. Whatever had happened, I was having trouble comprehending, and having trouble getting my bearings. For a while, I stayed in that position, not sure what to do, fearing to make a move because of the pain. After a little bit, I got frustrated. Why was I feeling like this? This didn't make any sense at all!

It took a while, but finally I pushed passed the shock, nausea and frustration and was able to look around a bit. It was then I understood why my world was so unsettled. I was on a boat and there was a storm going on. No wonder I was having trouble getting to my feet! The wind was blowing hard, and the waves were making me sick. I managed to stagger to my feet and started off to investigate the situation. I found a few people and tried talked to them, but in my present state, I could only half listen to what they were saying. I couldn't make them understand what I wanted to know or find out what was going on and why. It just made my head hurt. I walked away, confused and hurting. The boat rocked as I walked and I went down in a heap again.

Crawling over to the cabin of the boat, I leaned back against it and looked out at the waves, the grey clouds, and the rain that was starting to fall. I panicked. I had no idea where the boat was going, or who was driving it. It was storming, and here we were in the middle of a great big ocean! I couldn't see a driver... just a bunch of people milling around on board. It was confusing. It made no sense to me. All I knew was that I was hurting, afraid, and felt all alone... lost in the confusion that was happening on the boat... afraid of the storm... and not knowing what direction we were going, and whether or not it was the right way to go. Things were out of control, and it was making me crazy!

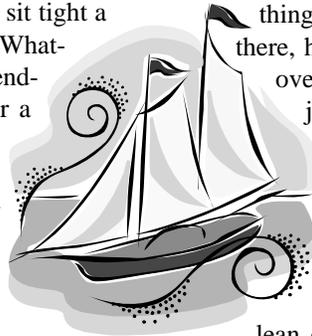
Finally, in my despair, confusion, pain, and anxiety, I called out to God for help. Here's what I heard in reply,

"Don't look at the waves; don't look at the sea,
Don't fall in despair, just come unto me.

I'm holding you still in the palm of my hand,
So don't be afraid, it's all in my plan.

Throw out your anchor; I'm still the rock,
Let me take the blows, let me bear the shock.

You'll make it through if you'll just trust me and stay
Right where I put you... it'll be okay."



I leaned back on God and started to cry. They were tears of relief... it was all going to be okay. God still has control of the boat. I can put my trust in him, and it's going to work out like it should. The storms can blow, the winds can rage, and everything can go absolutely insane, but God will still be there, holding me in his hand. He won't let the storm overwhelm me... he won't let it overcome me... I just have to keep my eyes on him. You see, I'd had my eyes on the storm, on the way the boat was rocking and creaking and being tossed around, and not on him. The storm brought fears and doubts and despair... When I got my eyes on him, all of that just faded away. Learn from my story... Turn your eyes upon Jesus... lean on him... he promised to be there, and he will

be.

My Anchor Holds

By: William C. Martin

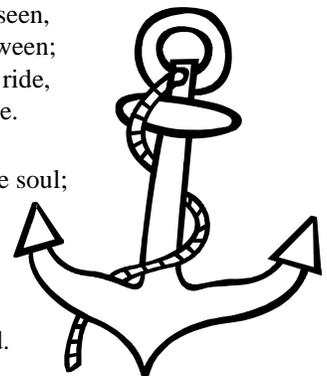
Though the angry surges roll
On my tempest driven soul,
I am peaceful, for I know,
Wildly though the winds may blow,
I've an anchor safe and sure,
That can evermore endure.

*And it holds, my anchor holds: blow your wildest, then, O gale,
On my bark so small and frail; by His grace I shall not fail,
For my anchor holds, my anchor holds.*

Mighty tides about me sweep,
Perils lurk within the deep,
Angry clouds o'ershade the sky,
And the tempest rises high;
Still I stand the tempest's shock,
For my anchor grips the rock.

I can feel the anchor fast
As I meet each sudden blast,
And the cable, though unseen,
Bears the heavy strain between;
Through the storm I safely ride,
Till the turning of the tide.

Troubles almost 'whelm the soul;
Griefs like billows o'er me roll;
Tempters seek to lure astray;
Storms obscure the light of day:
But in Christ I can be bold,
I've an anchor that shall hold.



What Hath the Lord Done for Thee?

By. C. W. Naylor

What hath the Lord done for thee?
I was laden with sin when I came unto him,
But he hearkened to my earnest plea;
He had promised to save, and he freely forgave—
All this hath the Lord done for me.

What hath the Lord done for thee?
When I found that within was inherited sin,
Unto him for relief did I flee;
By the blood from his side he my soul sanctified—
All this hath the Lord done for me.

What hath the Lord done for thee?
He hath banished my night with his glorious light,
For my bondage he gives liberty;
All my sorrow of heart he hath caused to depart—
All this hath the Lord done for me.

What hath the Lord done for thee?
He doth give me each day grace to walk in his way,
Makes me happy each moment I see;
And with joy he fills up and o'erfloweth my cup—
All this hath the Lord done for me.

All this hath the Lord done for me;
He hath banished my night,
He hath made my heart white;
All this hath the Lord done for me.

Thanksgiving

November 30 Devotional—Streams in the Desert Vol. 2

Whoso offereth the sacrifice of thanksgiving, glorifieth me, and prepareth a way that I may show him the salvation of God. (Psalm 50:23) - Margin R.V.

We read in the book of Joshua how the walls of Jericho fell flat after they were compassed about seven days. God had declared that He had given them the city. Faith reckoned this to be true, so they began their march around the walls using as their only weapon that which indicated triumph—a ram's horn! Unbelief might have prayed this kind of prayer, "O Lord, make the walls totter just a little, or loosen a few stones so that we may have a sign that Thou art going to answer our prayer, and then we will praise Thee." Prudence might have said, "It is not safe to shout until the victory is actually won, lest the Lord be dishonored before the people and be greatly humiliated." This would not have been faith at all. They acted on the authority of God's Word and shouted the shout of faith before there was a sign of encouragement, and the Lord accomplished the rest. It is after we make a full commitment that "He will bring it to pass."

How many walls of difficulty would fall flat were we to simply march around them with shouts of praise? As we compass walls with praise, the Lord has promised to "compass us about with songs of deliverance."

There is a legend which tells of two angels who come from Heaven every morning and go on their rounds all the day long. One is the Angel of Requests. The other is the Angel of Thanksgiving. Each carries a basket. The one belonging to the Angel of Requests is soon filled to overflowing, for everyone pours into it great handfuls of requests; but when the day is ended, the Angel of Thanksgiving has in his basket only

Trust

December 15 Devotional—Streams in the Desert

"Trust also in him." (Psalm 37:5)

The word *trust* is the heart word of faith. It is the Old Testament word, the word given to the early and infant stage of faith. The word *faith* expresses more the act of the will, the word *belief* the act of the mind or intellect, but *trust* is the language of the heart. The other has reference more to a truth believed or a thing expected.

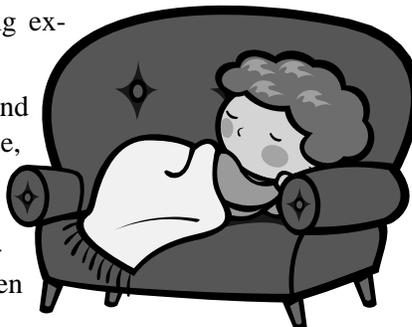
Trust implies more than this, it sees and feels, and leans upon a person, a great, true, living heart of love. So let us "trust also in him," through all the delays, in spite of all the difficulties, in the face of all the denials, notwithstanding all the seemings, even

when we cannot understand the way, and know not the issue; still "trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass." The way will open, the right issue will come, the end will be peace, the cloud will be lifted, and the light of an eternal noonday shall shine at last.

"Trust and rest when all around thee

*Puts thy faith to sorest test;
Let no fear or foe confound thee,
Wait for God and trust and rest."*

*"Trust and rest with heart abiding,
Like a birdling in its nest,
Underneath His feathers hiding,
Fold thy wings and trust and rest."*



The Unfriendly Samaritans; the Ten Lepers

From *Egermeier's Bible Story Book*—Luke 9:51-62; 17:11-19

One day Jesus and his twelve disciples left Capernaum and took the south road leading through the country of Samaria. They were going to Jerusalem. On their way they came to a certain village in Samaria where Jesus wished to spend the night. So he sent messengers to find a place for him and for his disciples to rest.

But the Samaritans in the village would not permit Jesus and his disciples to stop with them. They would not allow them to rest in their village. They knew Jesus and his disciples were Jews, and the Jews had often been unkind to their people. Now they, too, would be unkind.

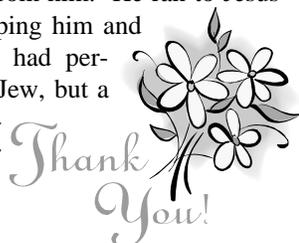
Two of the disciples, James and his brother John, were very much annoyed by the unfriendly actions of these village folk. They felt that their master had been mistreated, and they wished to see the villagers punished. They remembered how Elijah, the prophet, had once called fire down from heaven to destroy some wicked people, and now they came to Jesus and asked, "Will you permit us to call fire down from heaven to destroy these unkind people who have turned us away?" But Jesus answered, "Your desire is not good, for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Then he went with his disciples to another village.

And as they went a man came to Jesus and said, "Lord, I too would follow you wherever you go." No doubt he believed as did the disciples, that Jesus would soon be the great king of the Jews for whom so many were looking, and he desired to be a friend of such a great person. But Jesus answered, "Foxes have holes in the ground for their homes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man is so poor that he has not even a place of his own to lay his head."

Farther on the road ten men who were lepers saw Jesus and his disciples passing by. These men had heard about Jesus, how he healed other lepers, and now they called loudly to him, for they stood far off. They cried out, "Jesus, master, have mercy on us!" And Jesus heard their cries.

Never did Jesus pass by and refuse to help one who called earnestly to him. And now he stopped and called back to the lepers, telling them to go and show themselves to the priests, as Moses had commanded every leper to do who was healed. They understood what Jesus meant, and they started at once to go to the priests for an examination. And as they went the leprosy left their bodies and they were made every bit well.

One of these lepers stopped and turned back just as soon as he saw that his leprosy had gone from him. He ran to Jesus and fell down before him, worshiping him and thanking him for the miracle he had performed. And this man was not a Jew, but a Samaritan. The other men, however, hurried on their way, never stopping to thank the great healer.



Bible Study—Thanksgiving (Psalm 50:14)

From *Bible Readings for Bible Students* by S. L. Speck & H. M. Riggle

I. We are commanded to give thanks

1. In the name of Christ—Eph. 5:20
2. Through Christ—Rom 1:8; Col. 3:17
3. Unto God the Father—Col. 3:17; Psa. 136:1-3
 - A. At the remembrance of his holiness—Psa 30:4
 - B. For his mercy—Psa. 136:1
 - C. For the gift of Christ—2 Cor. 9:15
 - D. For deliverance from sin—Rom 7:22-25
 - E. For victory over death and the grave
1 Cor. 15:57
 - F. Before taking food—John 6:11; Acts 27:35
 - G. For the supplying of temporal needs
Rom 14:6, 7; 1 Tim. 4:3, 4
 - H. For all things—2 Cor. 9:11; Eph. 5:20
4. Continually—Heb. 13:15, 16
5. In everything—1 Thess. 5:18
6. In worship
 - A. Private—Dan. 6:10
 - B. Public—Psa. 35:18; Psa. 122:4

II. Thanksgiving to God should be

1. Always accompanied by prayer
Neh. 11:17; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2
2. Always accompanied with intercessions for others
1 Tim. 2:1; 2 Tim. 1:3
3. Always accompanied by praise
Psa. 92:1; Heb 13:15

III. God's saints should

1. Be exhorted to give thanks—Psa. 105:1
2. To approach God with thanks—Psa. 95:2
3. Enter God's gates with thanks—Psa. 100:4
4. Habitually offer thanks to God—Dan. 6:10



The Church of God Pastor: David Chancellor
701 S. Eastern Ave. Email: dchancellor@juno.com
PO Box 6187 Website: <http://www.moorecog.org>
Moore, OK 73153 Phone: (405) 794-2765

Spanish interpretation is available in the services.

Service Times:

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|---------------------------------|------------|
| Wednesday Prayer Meeting | 7:00 p.m. |
| Sunday School | 9:30 a.m. |
| Sunday Morning Worship | 10:30 a.m. |
| Young People's Service (Sunday) | 4:45 p.m. |
| Children's Service (Sunday) | 5:00 p.m. |
| Sunday Evening Service | 6:00 p.m. |

We have literature available for those who would like to study the Word of God in the confines of their home. Let us know if you are interested by contacting us at the above telephone number, address, or website.