

Approaching Jesus with Abundant Praise

Luke 2:8-20

What do you love about Christmas?

Some love the lights, the decorations, the trees, gifts, family, food, etc.

Me: "What I really love is the music!"

I love the songs of this season, because they are joyful, triumphant, worshipful and they declare the truth of what Christmas is all about!

What's your favorite Christmas song? Why?

Music has an incredible way of connecting us with the reality of Christmas!

Music also gives an incredible opportunity to declare this reality to others!

This year's BRC Christmas Concert is titled – "Turn Your Ear To Heaven!"

Consider the words to the song "O Praise Him"

Consider the words to the song "Do You Hear What I Hear"

"With a voice as big as the sea" – Christmas music provides such a voice!

Listen to the proclamations made by many of our favorite Christmas Songs

"Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity"

This song is proclaiming that this Jesus is God in the flesh!

"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"

This God-man was born to die, so that you & I wouldn't have to!

"Peace on earth, and mercy mild – God and sinners reconciled"

This Jesus actually satisfied the wrath of God upon sin on the cross!

"From depths of hell Thy people save, & give them victory over the grave"

Sin is no small problem, & Jesus paid no small price to give us victory!

"He comes to make his blessing flow far as the curse is found"

"So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven"

Sin's curse, though it reaches far, Jesus' blessings reach further still!

"Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace"

This Jesus is the embodiment of grace - God's unmerited favor to us

"God with man is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light"

God's greatest display of favor is to be Emmanuel – God with us!

"And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn"

What Christmas is all about is God's salvation plan being enacted!

I love Christmas music! It makes me want to praise, and it should!

"The King of Kings salvation brings – let loving hearts enthrone Him"

In light of God's salvation, how could we not respond in worship?

"Now let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord"

Worship is often, & appropriately, given through our songs of praise!

"And all the world give back the song which now the angels sing"

Our songs of praise are a reflection/reaction to the angels song!

"And still their heavenly music floats over all the weary world"

We have the opportunity to continue the song/response of the angels to the presence of Jesus in our world today. It starts here w/our praise!

The "A" in our acronym of P.R.A.I.S.E. is "Abundant"!

Abundant means "more than enough", "very plentiful", and "rich".

All these definitions ought to be true of our worship of Jesus.

"More than enough" – Consider that it was a multitude of the heavenly hosts that proclaimed praise before the shepherds in Luke 2 - "**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased.**"

1 angel's proclamation was enough, but a multitude was more appropriate!

"Very plentiful" – I guarantee the heavenly host praising was a sight to see, but the shepherds wanted to join in as well, & that's exactly what they did!

Vs. 20 – "**And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.**"

Will we be known as a church that lifts up plentiful praise, not just the band, but the whole congregation offering up an abundance just like the shepherds?

How would you describe the kind of praise that the angels & the shepherds engaged in that day in Bethlehem? **Wouldn't "rich" be a fitting word?**

How would you describe the kind of praise that is offered up in this place?

My prayer is that we would be like those shepherds, & our praise would be in abundance, in response to what the music/message of Christmas does in us!

If the desire to praise isn't filling your heart this morning, ask God to reveal to you, just as he did for the shepherds, **the glory of the coming of Christ to earth!**

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