

Series: God Sent His Son #1605

**Title: Galatians 4.4-5
Merry Christmas!**

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. Here we are, very near Christmas. And we have learned that, **"⁴When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."** Galatians 4, verses 4 and 5 has been our text this month leading all the way to Monday, Christmas Day 2023!

I do not know most of you. I do not know where you are. I do not know what you are going through, what is happening in your life and in the lives of your family members and friends. I do know that for many people Christmas is a day of great joy, of hope, and celebration. It is good that you gather with family and friends, with people in your church, in your community. Christ has redeemed you from your sin, rescuing you to live not under the Law but under His consuming grace! You have been adopted into the family of God. And God *is* your Father.

I am like you then. I belong to Christ. He is my Lord and my Savior. He is my Redeemer. And it will be good for me to spend this time with family and friends who love the Lord Jesus. Together, we will rejoice and be glad, because God Sent His Son!

And my prayer is that you and I will do something else. This carol says it well,

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills, and ev'rywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.

1 While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light.

2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth.

3 Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn.

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills, and ev'rywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.

We have been saved! God has rescued us from our sin by sending us Jesus, and now it is our joy and responsibility, it is our calling and our command, to go tell everyone about Christ. All throughout the place where you live (where I live) there are a multitude of people who do not know Jesus the way we do. Oh, they may have heard of His Name. They may have been to church or Sunday school as a kid. They may have heard the gospel, even many times. But they need to hear it again! They need to hear it from us.

You and I are the ones to tell them: God Sent His Son. God sent His Son for them, also. So, let's listen to the Holy Spirit and follow His prompting to verbalize, to use our words, and calmly and lovingly – to graciously and boldly – proclaim the Good News of the gospel this Christmas. Take what we have learned together this month and use it to pass along the truth Jesus Christ redeems! Someone you know, or someone you will meet, needs to know this! Go, tell them.

Fulfil the command of the Lord when He told us, **“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...”** Go, my brother and my sister in Christ, and tell the people around you about Jesus.

And then my prayer is that you and I will not have a Christmas where we are self-absorbed when it comes to what we get out of it. But that we will turn our heads and hearts heavenward and ask what does God get out of us? Will we worship Him instead of ourselves? Will we prioritize getting out with other believers and singing His praises? Will we crack open the Bible and indulge the Word of God? Will we be a people of prayer? Will we reflect *deeply* on truths like these:

1 Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

2 Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night!

Indeed, as the similar and familiar hymn declares:

1 O holy night! the stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope - the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!

O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night, O holy night, O night divine!
The night when Christ was born!

A really wonderful way to spend this time is to find a quiet place and to just sing these meaningful carols and hymns. I like to play some of my favorite renditions of these on my phone, to kick back and just listen and think about what it was like when Christ was born. And then to reach for my Bible and read what the text actually says. And just to meditate, to dwell on how marvelous and magnificent it is that God sent His Son.

Turn those reflections into praise and prayer. Worship Christ the Lord. Sing along to a hymn like *Hark The Herald Angels Sing!* And use this as your worship of God.

1 Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King:
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain:

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King"

2 Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel.

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King"

3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King"

We heard part of this hymn earlier in our series and now here, in full, at the end. Friends, let's make Christmas a time of worship, not of ourselves but of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am aware that I also speak to some for whom what I have just said doesn't mean much of anything. If you tune in today and for you Christmas is not really a time of joy or hope and you do not feel much like celebrating. In fact, you may feel the opposite: no joy, no hope. Gathering with family and friends is not good. In fact, that will only add to your heartbreak. Maybe it's that you do not have family or friends. You are alone.

Even more importantly, for you, thus far you have not believed in Jesus. Maybe you do not really know who He is or what He has done for you? Christmas is on the calendar, perhaps it is a holiday where you are, so you acknowledge it as a day off. If you listen outside the United States often the day after Christmas is also a holiday: Boxing Day. You'll take it. You have indulged deeply in materialism, drinking, and partying, but this has all left you bored, depressed, lonely, and fatigued.

I want to encourage you, turn to God today, tomorrow, this weekend. Pray a very simple, non-sophisticated prayer, and pray as you are, where you are: genuinely, from the heart, ask God to forgive you your sins, ask Him to give you Jesus as the one who redeems you from sin. You can be honest with God. He knows all about you any way.

Then, get connected with a Christian friend or family member. Or, if you do not know any Christians, email or write to me. I will be happy to tell you more about this Man Jesus that we love so much. mark@godisministry.org (that's m-a-r-k/mark@godisministry.o-r-g) Or by post, God Is, PO Box 802, Winchester Massachusetts 01890. And these addresses will soon be repeated so please stay tuned. I am giving you a sincere invitation. As you turn to God you will want and need to get connected to other people who love God. So, reach out to one of us. We would love to hear from you.

Friends, thank you for joining me in Galatians. *God Sent His Son!* Now, I will be here on Monday, Christmas Day. Please join us at this time on this station or any time on the podcast. But if you cannot be here, I hope you enjoy a blessed Christmas. On Monday I have a special greeting based on Luke chapter 2 in the Bible and then on Tuesday please be with us as we begin a new series *Communion with the Triune God*. *Communion with the Triune God* starts Tuesday. Be with us we continue to discover who God Is.

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