



# Joy to the World!

**Psalm 98:1-9**

**Sermon given on December 18, 2022**  
**Calvary Chapel French Valley**  
**Week before Christmas Service**

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## *Psalm 98:1-9*

### Opening Comments

- Welcome to the first of our Christmas services
- There is something about this time of year that just makes the world a little more joyous – a little happier
- There will be family gatherings
- Giving and receiving gifts
- And this year you can even come to church on Christmas Day – exciting, right!
- It is not uncommon that right after Halloween that we start seeing stores selling things for Christmas
- And then after Thanksgiving, the Christmas music starts in earnest
- If you are like me, you have been hearing and singing Christmas songs since you were very small
- This week, my grandkids Aurora and Harvey performed in their school's Christmas event – they were the best
- Those songs are as much a part of our Christmas experience as anything else
- One of the things I like to do on Christmas Day is put a video on the TV of a fireplace with Christmas music playing
- If you have a Bible, turn to **Psalm 98**
- Have you ever stopped to think about the message of those Christmas songs?
- That's what we are going to do for our Christmas series – which I have creatively called **The Songs of Christmas**
- Tonight, we will begin with one of the most famous of all the Christmas songs - Frosty the Snowman - jk - **Joy to the World**
- First, let's pray and then we will look at that song

### Teaching

- **Joy to the World!**
- The lyrics of Joy to the World were written by Isaac Watts
- They were not originally written as a song

- It was one of a series of poems based on the psalms of David written and published in 1719
  - It was over 100 years later, in 1836, that Lowell Mason put part of the poem to music
  - And since then, has become one of the most popular Christmas songs of all time
  - We all know that Christmas is about Christ
  - We say, ‘Jesus is the reason for the season!’
  - When we celebrate Christmas, we are remembering the birth of Christ
  - Some refer to this time of year as the season of Advent
- Advent - The coming or arrival of something or someone that is important or worthy of note.**
- Isaac Watts’ poem was based on Psalm 98 which is not referring to the first advent of Christ, but to the second
  - Psalm 98 is about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ
  - Let’s look at Psalm 98 and then we will talk about why we should keep singing it at Christmas
  - **Psalm 98:1-3**
  - Many of the Psalms were actually songs
  - The headings sometimes included what tune they were to be sung to or what instruments were meant to be played
  - When Lowell Mason composed the song Joy to the World using Isaac Watts’ poem, he left out the first three verses
  - It is obvious from the beginning that this psalm is a song of celebration
  - ‘He has done marvelous things’
  - Marvelous could also be translated miraculous
  - While many of those statements might apply in part to the first coming of Christ, the last part of verse 3 cannot
  - It is not until Christ comes and defeats all His enemies and establishes His kingdom that ‘All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.’
  - The lyrics for the song come out of verses 4 to 9
  - **Psalm 98:4**
  - There was praising, maybe singing on the night Jesus was born **Luke 2:13-14**

**And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”**

- Again, notice the phrase, ‘all the earth’ in verse 4 of Psalm 98
- Very few people noticed or were aware of the birth of Christ
- Even throughout the life Christ, only the people in and around Israel knew much about Him
- And they certainly wouldn’t have responded with song, rejoicing, and praising
- When Jesus comes back in the Second Advent, He will deal with the sin-issue forever
- That will be a glorious cause for celebration
- **Psalm 98:5-6**
- When Jesus was born in the stable in the town of Bethlehem, He was not very kinglike
- Throughout His life, He did nothing to promote Himself as King
- He, Himself, said He came for a different reason **Mark 10:45**  
**For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.**
- Jesus did not come to be served as a king would be served
- He came to be a servant, a servant of God, and the culmination of His service was His sacrificial death on the cross for the sins of the whole world
- It is at His Second Coming that the world will acknowledge Jesus as King **Revelation 19:16**  
**He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**
- Christ’s enemies will not celebrate His coming, but all of His people will
- Not only will God’s people rejoice, but even nature will rejoice
- **Psalm 98:7-8**
- When sin entered the world, it wasn’t just people who were affected by it – all of creation suffers under the curse of sin **Romans 8:22**  
**For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.**
- We can all understand how the sound of the waves might sound like roaring

- But then the rivers will clap their hands and the hills will be joyful is not so easy to understand
- We know it is symbolic language, but we can't be certain what the reality that the symbolism points
- Except to say that it will be a very good thing for the earth when evil has been judged and eliminated
- Christmas is a celebration of Christ's birth
- The Bible teaches us that His birth and life had a specific purpose **1**

**Timothy 1:17**

**This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...**

- If you are saved here this morning, it is because Jesus was born, lived, died, and rose again
- Before He left to go back to heaven, He told His disciples that He was coming back **John 14:1-3**

**Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup>In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were not so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.**

- That is good news for God's people but bad news for people who reject Christ
- That is what the last verse of our Psalm tells us
- **Psalm 98:9**
- All of the bad things going on in this world are a result of sin
- A day is coming when Jesus will come back and once and for all deal with sin
- That will be a day when 'all the earth' can rejoice
- It will be on that day that we can sing with all of creation, 'Joy to the World'
- Does that mean we shouldn't treat Joy to the World as a Christmas song? No!
- In fact, in a couple of minutes I will invite David and the worship team to come up and lead us in Joy to the World to close the service
- Joy to the World is about the Second Coming of Christ
- But you can't have a Second Coming without a First Coming
- Because you believe that Jesus was born and lived and died for your sins and was raised again, you can rejoice that he is coming back

- Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ
- It is not as simple as a baby being born – that happens every day
- Jesus was not just a baby; He was God in the form of a baby
- He was the fulfilment of God’s promise to send a Savior into the world
- He was the physical manifestation of God’s love **John 3:16**  
**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**
- **Invite Worship Team**
- Jesus is God’s gift to the whole world
- If you have never received that gift, I will give you an opportunity to do that in a moment
- Jesus is the reason for the season
- He is the reason why we can face this world and still be joyful
- He came once and He is coming again
- And to that I say, ‘Come quickly, Lord Jesus.’
- **Pray!**
- **God bless you – hope to see you on Christmas Eve @6:30 pm!**
- **If not, have a merry Christ-filled Christmas!**