

Repeat the sounding joy... – All people and all of nature should sing for joy that the promised Savior has come and conquered sin, death, and hell!

3. No more let sins and sorrows grow

Nor thorns infest the ground; – the curse of sin is being reversed in Jesus Christ; *God is making everything new!* Therefore, may our newness in Jesus Christ *show in our daily lives!*

He comes to make His blessings flow

Far as the curse is found... – Wow! To the ends of the earth, *to the worst of sinners*, God's blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation are going forth!

4. He rules the world with truth and grace – In a world of lies, *God's Word is truth*; at a time when people no longer love God or neighbor but self, *God still loves us – that is grace!*

**And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness**

And wonders of His love... – Think about the countless times all of us have gone against the Almighty God; nevertheless, *He continues to love us by providing our needs, saving our souls, and assuring us of eternal life through Jesus!*

Conclusion: Now, may the entire world ✨ recognize the Savior's coming, ✨ receive the benefits He won, and ✨ shout for joy – *both now and forevermore!*

And all God's faithful people said: *Amen!*

“Joy to the World”

Based on: Lutheran Service Book 387; Psalm 98; Romans 5:16-19; Revelation 22:1-5; Other Passages

The Nativity of our Lord, Christmas Day – 2010

December 25 ► at 10:00

Sermon Theme: The JOY is experienced by those who, *knowing of their sin and need*, have received their Savior!

Introduction: My dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, on this Christmas Day 2010 we are filled with JOY! By God's work through His Word He has made us aware of the **bad news:** We are sinners; we cannot save ourselves; we desperately need the Savior! Then, the **good news: Joy to the world, the Lord is come!** He came to save us from ☹ sin, ☹ death, and ☹ hell; to ♥ wash us clean, ♥ give us life, and ♥ make us His holy children!

This sermon will focus on a favorite Christmas carol: **Joy to the World!** We will consider:

- The writer of its text.
- The writer of its musical setting.
- The actual words, their Bible basis, and their application to our Christian lives!

Text: It was written by Isaac Watts, who was born in England in 1674. Both Isaac's father and Isaac himself were free-thinkers; therefore, *uninspired by the current church music of his day and challenged by his father*, Isaac composed more

than six hundred hymns. Our Lutheran Service Book includes 15 of those hymns, such as:

- When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
- Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways
- From All that Dwell Below the Skies
- Joy to the World – *his most famous hymn*, which was originally sung to the tune of “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing.”¹

Musical Setting: Forty years after the death of Isaac Watts, in 1788, Lowell Mason was born in New Jersey. Even though many thought of him as musically gifted, he didn’t think he could make a living at music and became a banker. During his 15 years of banking he continued to grow musically and even submitted his arrangements to a Boston publisher – *but his efforts were rejected!*

Then, in 1827, he was shocked to hear that 50,000 copies of his song book had been ordered! That led him to move to Boston and eventually write the tunes to more than six hundred hymns.² Eight are included in our Lutheran Service Book, such as “My Faith Looks Up to Thee,” “Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing,” and “**Joy to the World!**”

Words, Basis, and Application: Isaac Watts was inspired by Psalm 98 to write **Joy to the World!** To understand the great joy of God’s action in Christ, *we must first understand the great sorrow of sin, death, and hell!* God inspired St. Paul to

¹ Ace Collins, Stories Behind the Best-Loved Songs of Christmas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 94-96.

² Ibid., 98-99.

write this **bad news:** ^{NIV} **Romans 5:16** “...judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation...¹⁷ ...by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man...¹⁹ ...through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners...” *From Adam came sin, death, and hell for all people of all time!*

But the Psalmist wrote this **good news:** ^{NIV} **Psalm 98:1** “...the LORD...has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him...³ ...all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.” **So what did Isaac write?**

1. **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**

Let earth receive her King; – ^{NIV} **John 1:11** “Jesus came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.¹² Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.” Having received her King, *by grace through faith*, God has made us members of His kingdom!

Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room

And heav'n and nature sing... – ^{NIV} **Romans 8:20** “...the creation was subjected to frustration...²¹ but, will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.” When people fell *so did nature*, so even nature sings with joy *as it looks forward to its own liberation!*

2. **Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!** – On Good Friday the Savior won; *now He reigns!*

**Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains**