

O Come All Ye Faithful
December 7, 2008
Psalm 100
Dr. Jeff H. McCrory Jr.

Synopsis:

The next three weeks in preparation for Christmas we will look at the *stories* of three beloved Christmas Carols and the texts that gave rise to them:

O Come All Ye Faithful
Joy to the World
Silent Night

My hope is that you will enter into the *biblical story* of Christmas; for it is an *alternative story* that strikes at ancient/modern culture.

I.

A Text for a Carol

Ps 100:2 Come into his presence with singing

I. Texts:

A. Psalm 100 = entrance liturgy for thanksgiving
(READ emphasize 7 IMPVS and 1 REASON)

IMPVS

Shout
Serve
Enter
Know
Enter
Give Thanks
Bless

REASON: LORD is good, steadfast love endures, faithfulness to generations

Why important for hymn?

- Entrance liturgy in mind in hymn (“Come”)
- Thanks in mind (bring something in hand)
- *Joy in the LORD (not something else!)

B. Luke 2:8-20 READ

-Story emphasizes: songs, shepherds, JB and Jesus, echoes of Abraham and Sarah, history/emperor:

(*eu-angellion* Luke 2:10 and *pax* Luke 2:14)

-Shepherds reply 2:15b “Come let us go”

-Shepherds:

negative usually

positive (ruler vs emperor)

Why important for hymn?

-Provides story, language, setting in history/emperor culture

II.

A Carol Seeking a Context

Luke 2:15 Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing

II. Hymn History

Sum: A Mystery Story

-not until post WWII did we know who wrote it

-thought to be unknown cleric in Middle Ages

A. History:

After WWII: Scholar Maurice Frost discovered 7 signed mss

Who whose name was on the mss?

1. John Wade:

-1745, 35 years old, English RCath priest

-fled Britain to Douay, France (RCath center)

-job to research and id RCath church music

-calligrapher and musician

*1750 wrote *Adeste Fidelis* (tune)

-published *Cantus Diversi* 1751

-10 years later wrote 4 verses in Latin

2. English Versions:

-translated by Frederick Oakeley in 1841

-thought to be 13th cen (Bonaventura?)

1860 performed at Portugese embassy in London

“Portugese Hymn”

-attributed to John Redding by organist Vincent Novello

-but mss 100 years older!

-used in 9 Lessons and Carols (Cambridge), 2nd to last hymn

3. American Versions:

-Prior to 1900, popular in caroling movement (mobile choirs)

-1905 recorded by Peerless Quartet #7 on Hit Parade

-1915 Irish tenor John McCormack #2 on Hit Parade

-1925 American Glee Club top ten Hit Parade

-Most popular carol until *White Christmas*

(Bing recorded *O Come* on his album)

-YouTube version of Twisted Sister doing *O Come* (2006)

-Toby Keith (2007) country music

-Variation in Italy (1917 *Gesu Bambino*)

III.

The Carol Text

Luke 2:13 Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude

III. Hymn Text: READ HYMN #145

Sum:

Originally 4 verses

Expanded to 8 by others

Usually in 3 verses (leave out verse 2)

Text and Scripture:

Verse 1

Words of shepherd in Luke 2:15b “Come, let us go”

Also entrance liturgy in mind (Psalm 100)

Angels Luke 2:9-10

Verse 2 (Left out)

True God of true God
Light from Light Eternal
Lo he shuns not the Virgin's womb
Son of the Father
Begotten not created

*comes from Nicene Creed

"True God from true God
"Light from Light"
"incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary"
"The only Son of God
"Begotten, not made"

Verse 3

"choirs of angels" Luke 2:13 actually "armies" *stratia*
"glory to God" Luke 2:14

Verse 4

"word of Father, now in flesh appearing" John 1:14

Chorus: Come, Adore

-Ps 100;shepherds (Luke 2:15)
-Christ/Lord angels (Luke 2:11)

IV.

The Text for You

Luke 2:10 I am bringing you good news

Take Home:

Great Christmas carol that uses:
Psalm 100 entrance liturgy
Luke 2
Nicene Creed to tell gospel story

*WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS FOR YOU?

Gospel = READ Luke 2:10-14
-*eu-angelion* (Good News = emperor bgd)

Not Caesar Augustus = consumer capitalism

Jesus in his birth, death, and resurrection is Israel's Messiah
and thus Lord of the world