



LWML CNH CHRISTIAN LIFE LINE DECEMBER 2020

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MESSAGE OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

The world is very busy making the most of Christmas – buying, selling, baking, decorating, over-eating and drinking, rushing here and there. We are Christians. Our celebration of Christmas is different from that of the world. We celebrate the fact that Jesus Christ, the Father's only begotten Son, became man through the Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit. Our Christmas celebration includes many customs. Christmas customs often serve good causes. The best customs of all help to draw us to the whole-hearted worship of Jesus, our Savior.

*HARK THE GLAD SOUND! The Savior comes, The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne And ev'ry voice a song.*

*Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring With Thy beloved name.*

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The custom of the Christmas tree helps us express our joy over the birth of Christ. Christmas trees come in all sizes. Some are big, some little, some are real, some man-made. Yet the sight and smell of an evergreen tree shouts "Christmas" to most of us. Martin Luther was one of the first to use a tree as a home decoration. It is said that while on a walk one Christmas Eve, he noticed a snow speckled evergreen tree sparkling in the moonlight. He couldn't forget the beautiful scene, so he brought an evergreen tree home to enrich the Christmas celebration for his family.

In the Bible the tree is both a symbol of man's sins and his deliverance from sin. By a tree whose fruit was forbidden, Satan tempted Adam and Eve, and by their willful disobedience sin and death came into the world. It was also with a tree, the wooden cross of Calvary, that the Savior overcame sin, death and the devil as He suffered and died in our place for our sins and the sins of the whole world.

Evergreens are most often used for Christmas trees. Green is the color of life and living things. Our Christmas trees remind us of life, the everlasting life we are promised by faith in our Savior, Christ Jesus.

*O CHRISTMAS TREE, O Christmas tree, How lovely are thy branches.
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, How lovely are thy branches.*

Your boughs so green in summertime Stay bravely green in wintertime
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, How lovely are thy branches

O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum, How lovely are thy branches
O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum, How lovely are thy branches

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Let us all remember the real and true meaning of Christmas – the birth of our Lord and Savior – in our gift giving and our merriment with our family, friends, and loved ones.

Good news that is not shared does not benefit anyone. On the first Christmas God used two ways to announce the birth of the Savior. He sent angels to the shepherds to tell them that the one to deliver them from the punishment for their sin, their Savior, has been born. The shepherds went to worship Him.

*ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH, Sweetly singing o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains*

*Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav'nly song?*

*Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King*

REFRAIN: Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.
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God placed an especially brilliant and large star in the heavens that told the Wise Men that something wonderful had taken place. They followed the star and went to Jerusalem where they learned the King of the Jews had been born. They traveled on the road to Bethlehem to worship the Savior.

*AS WITH GLADNESS MEN OF OLD Did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light, Leading onward beaming bright;
So most gracious Lord, may we Evermore be led by Thee.*

*As with joyful steps they sped, Savior to Thy lowly bed,
There to bend the knee before Thee, whom heav'n and earth adore;
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ to Thee, our heav'nly King.*
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The ornaments we place on the tree do not make the tree, but they do add to its beauty. In the same way love, joy, gentleness, goodness and all the rest do not make a Christian. However, the tree could use a little patience right now. We are Christian by faith in Christ as our Savior. But these fruits of the Spirit are the outward evidence of Christ's love working in our lives.

The gifts that we place under the tree remind us that God is the giver of all good things. God the Father has given us the best gift of all, His only Son. *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16)

Through Jesus, God's Son, we receive the gift of God's peace that passes all understanding. In John 14:27, Jesus says, *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled and do not be afraid."*

Through the Holy Spirit, God the Father has given us the gift of grace. *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not by yourselves, it is the gift from God – not from works, so that no one can boast."* Ephesians 2:8 4

*NOW SING WE, NOW REJOICE, Now raise to heav'n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth the sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!*

*Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'nly ground?
Where the angels singing With all His saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing In heav'nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!*

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The tree needs water to stay fresh and beautiful just as we need Jesus, the Water of Life, in order to be spiritually refreshed and know God's love for us.

Now let's worship our coming Savior and GO AND TELL!!

*REFRAIN: GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN, Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain That Jesus Christ is born!*

*While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens There shone a holy light. REFRAIN*

*The shepherds feared and trembled When lo, above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. REFRAIN*

*Down in a lonely manger The humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation That blessed Christmas morn. REFRAIN*

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All Scripture is from NIV.
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SAVE THE DATE - LWML CNH Retreat, ECCO - Aug 27-29, 2021