

The Reason For The Season

“And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: For thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call him Jesus.”
– *The Gospel according to St. Luke*

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”
– *The Gospel according to St. Luke*

“Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O’er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o’er its Babel-sounds
The blessed angels sing.”

– Edmund Hamilton Sears, *It Came Upon A Midnight Clear*

“What child is this, Who, laid to rest,
On Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
This, this is Christ the King,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.”

– William Chatterton Dix; *16th century English carol*

“All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Good will henceforth from heaven to men
Begin and never cease!”

– Nahum Tate, *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night*

“Let every heart prepare Him room.”

– Isaac Watts, *Joy To The World!*

“God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day.”

– *London Carol, 18th century*

“We love him, because he first loved us.”

– *The Gospel according to St. John*

“Green grow’th the holly,
So doth the ivy;
The God of life can never die,
Hope! saith the holly.”

– Anon.

“The manger still
Outshines the throne;
Christ must and will
Come to his own.
Hosannah! Christus natus est.”

– Countee Cullen, *Christus Natus Est*

“Christmas hath a beauty
Lovelier than the world can show:
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,
Brought for us so low.”

– Christina Rossetti, *Christmas Eve*

“Of all the gifts of all the angels, I find that this small box pleases me most. Its contents are of the earth and of men, and my Son is born to be king of both.”

– Charles Tazewell, *The Littlest Angel*

The Day Itself, and Christmastide

“Some say that ever ‘gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour’s birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long
So hallow’d and so gracious is the time.”

– William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Act I*

“Heap on more wood!—the wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We’ll keep our Christmas merry still.”

– Sir Walter Scott, *Old Christmastide*

“The hushed sea seems to hold her breath, and o’er the giddy, swaying spars,
Silent and excellent as Death, the dim skies are bright with stars.
Dear God—they shone in Palestine like this, and yon pale moon serene
Looked down among the lowing kine on Mary and the Nazarene.”

– John Masefield, *Christmas Eve At Sea*

“Mankind is a great, an immense family . . . This is proved by what we feel in our hearts at Christmas.”

– Pope John XXIII

“Christmas is the family time, the good time of year.”

– Samuel Johnson

“Now Christmas comes, ‘tis fit that we
Should feast and sing and merry be:
Keep open house, let fiddlers play.
A fig for cold, sing care away!”

– *Virginia Almanack, 1766*

“Christmas waves a magic wand over the world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful.”

– Norman Vincent Peale

“A good conscience is a continual Christmas.”

– Benjamin Franklin

“Unless we make Christmas an occasion to share our blessings, all the snow in Alaska won’t make it ‘white.’”

– Bing Crosby

“It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you . . . yes, it is Christmas every time you smile at your brother and offer him your hand.”

– Mother Teresa

“It blooms for us when wild winds blow, and earth is white with feath’ry snow;
A voice tells, all its boughs among, of shepherd’s watch and angel’s song,
Of holy Babe in manger low, the story of so long ago.”

– *O Christmas Tree, A German Carol*

“I love Christmas. I love the music, I love the holiday spirits, but most of all I love the rebirth of hope for a better world.”

– Perry Como

“May we not ‘spend’ Christmas or ‘observe’ Christmas, but rather, ‘keep’ it.”

– Peter Marshall

“Somehow, not only for Christmas, but all the long year through, the joy that you give to others is the joy that comes back to you. And the more you spend in blessing the poor and lonely and sad, the more of your heart’s possessing returns to you, glad.”

– John Greenleaf Whittier

“Christmas is joy, religious joy, an inner joy of light and peace.”

-- Pope Francis

Children and The Christmas Spirit

“To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas.”

– Calvin Coolidge

“Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist . . .

The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see.”

– Francis P. Church, *The New York Sun*, 1897

“The only blind person at Christmastime is he who has not Christmas in his heart.”

– Helen Keller

“For it is in giving that we receive . . .”

– St. Francis of Assisi

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

– *Acts of the Apostles*

“And he who gives a child a treat
Makes joy bells ring in Heaven’s street,
And he who gives a child a home
Builds palaces in Kingdom come.”

– John Masefield

“Let the children have their night of fun and laughter; let the gifts of Father Christmas delight their play.”

– Winston Churchill

“It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas time, when its mighty founder was a child Himself.”

– Charles Dickens

“Only the children clasp His hand;
His voice speaks low to them,
And still for them the shining band
Wings over Bethlehem.”

– Ogden Nash, *A Carol For Children*

“In the very toe of each stocking was a shining bright, new penny! They had never even thought of such a thing as having a penny. Think of having a whole penny for your very own. Think of having a cup and a cake and a stick of candy *and* a penny. There never had been such a Christmas.”

– Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Little House on the Prairie*

“Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with Thee there.”

– *Away In A Manger*

“Other voices joined in a round song of good nights until all the people in the house had said so many good nights that they could not remember whom they had said good night to and whom they had not Around the house the world lay bright as day. The moon blazed down its cold light on an earth that was touched with magic. An ancient wind sighed along the ridges of crusted snow. Angels sang, and the stars danced in the sky.”

– Earl Hamner, Jr., *The Homecoming*

“For Christmas, with its lots an’ lots of candies, cakes, an’ toys,
Was made, they say, for proper kids and not for naughty boys;
So wash yer face an’ bresh yer hair, an’ mind yer p’s and q’s,
An’ don’t bust out yer pantaloons, and don’t wear out yer shoes;
Say ‘Yessum’ to the ladies, and ‘Yessur’ to the men,
An’ when they’s company, don’t pass yer plate for pie again;
But, thinkin’ of the things yer’d like to see upon that tree,
Jest ’fore Christmas be as good as yer kin be!”

– Eugene Field, *Jest ’Fore Christmas*

“Children stir in their dream and then
Drowsily sigh and turn over again.
Airs of the morn in the orchard flow;
Lo, in the apple boughs, mistletoe!
For the Old Year’s sands are well-nigh run;
This is the Birthday of the Sun.”

– Walter De La Mare, *Christmas Eve*

“The shepherds had an angel, the wise men had a star,
But what have I, a little child, to guide me home from far,
Where glad stars sing together, and singing angels are?
Christ watches me, His little lamb, cares for me day and night,
That I may be his own in heaven: So angels clad in white
Shall sing their ‘Glory, glory,’ for my sake in the height.”

– Christina Rossetti, *The Shepherds Had An Angel*

“St. Nicholas as we know him now, our jolly, shouting friend, a frolic for the children, may become the saddest of all the saints again, someday. What made us brighten him into Santa Claus was our knowledge that the world was growing kinder than it was in 1507. St. Nicholas of Bari knew only a cruel world. Christmas of this year needs the transfigured image of him—the jolly one who is merry because the world is wise—and kind.”

– Booth Tarkington, *Christmas This Year*

“And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons, it came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled ‘til his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn’t before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn’t come from a store? What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more.”

– Dr. Seuss, *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*

“Always on Christmas night there was music Looking through my bedroom window, out into the moonlight and unending smoke-colored snow, I could see the lights in the windows of all the other houses on our hill and hear the music rising from them up the long, steadily falling night. I turned the gas down, I got into bed. I said some words to the close and holy darkness, and then I slept.”

– Dylan Thomas, *A Child’s Christmas In Wales*

“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!”

– Clement Clarke Moore, *A Visit From St. Nicholas*