

## ***“O sing to the Lord a new son!”***

**December 25, 2011**

*Text: Psalm 98, John 1:1-4*

### I.

*O sing to the Lord a new song, for the Lord has done marvelous things.*

On this Christmas morning, these words of the Psalmist inspire us. They inspire us because they push us into the future with hope and promise.

The birth of Jesus at Bethlehem was itself a new song for the world some two thousand years ago. New birth overflows with new hope. It opens the door wide to new possibilities. Again, the future is opened up.

It's important that the future be open because, therein, lies the hope of the world. New life opens the future like nothing else.

The poetic prologue to **John's** gospel testifies to this. CHECK IT OUT!

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.*

*What has come into being in him was LIFE, and the LIFE was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*

***O sing to the Lord a new song!***

### II.

After their church's 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service, Harriet and her family decided to stop somewhere for a late-night breakfast. The only place open that late on Christmas Eve was a Truck Stop at a nearby interstate junction.

- A few big diesels rumbled outside.
- Inside a few truckers sat at the counter.
- A jukebox played a country song that went something like this:

*When you leave, walk out backwards so I'll think you're coming in.*

- In the front window were a few multi-colored blinking lights.
- The place smelled like bacon grease and stale cigarette smoke.
- A one-armed man stood behind the counter.

- As the family squeezed into a booth, a thin waitress name RITA sauntered over, managing a tired smile as she handed them their menus.

As Harriet looked around, she felt a little like a snob and out of place. Her family had just come from a beautiful Christmas Eve service. Soon they'd be heading off to their lovely home for the night. For a flashing moment, she was thinking how one day they'd think back on this occasion, saying something like:

*Remember the Christmas Eve when we stopped by that truck stop for breakfast on the way home from the service? That awful music and those tacky lights?*

Harriet was staring out the window when an old Volkswagen drove up. A young man with a beard and wearing jeans got out. Walking around the car, he opened the door for a young woman who was holding a little baby. Soon, they were inside and sliding into a nearby booth.

When Rita, the waitress, took their order, the baby began to cry and neither of the young parents seemed to be able to quiet him. Suddenly, almost instinctively, it seemed, Rita reached over and held out her arms. *Sit down and drink your coffee, hon, she said, and let me see if I can settle him a bit.*

Clearly, Rita had done this countless times before in her own life-journey. Soon, as she was talking and walking around ...

1. She showed the baby to one of the truckers who began acting silly and making hilarious faces. THE BABY STOPPED CRYING.
2. She showed the baby the blinking lights on the window and the lights on the jukebox.
3. Then, she brought the baby over to Harriet's table: *Just look at this little darlin'*, she said. *Mine are all big and grown.*
4. Soon, the one-armed guy behind the counter brought a pot of fresh coffee to Harriet's table ... and by then, the whole mood in the Truck Stop had changed. You couldn't help but sense it and feel it. As the man refilled their mugs, Harriet felt tears in her eyes.
5. *What's wrong*, her husband wanted to know?

*Nothing, nothing*, she said, *just Christmas*, as she reached for a Kleenex. Then she handed her children some coins and said, *Go see if you can find some Christmas music on the jukebox.*

Not long later, as they were riding home, Harriet said quietly to her husband, *He'd come here, wouldn't he? Jesus ... he'd come here, to a place like this Truck Stop.*

Her husband nodded in silence.

***Sing to the Lord a new song!***

III.

For through the miracle and the magic of the birth at Bethlehem, the power and the hope and the love of new life rises up for all the world to embrace. Again, as **John** reminds us:

***What has come into being in him was LIFE, and the LIFE was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it.***

It's Christmas, friends. Which means there's a fresh LOVE in the air. Embrace it! Don't hold back.

***Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth, cried the Psalmist. Break forth into joyous song and sing praises.***

**All praise be unto God! Amen!**

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