

## Week 2: Joy to the World

### Opening.

One of the most popular and favorite Christmas carol is 'Joy to the World.' It was written by The Reverend Isaac Watts, an English Christian minister and writer whose sacred words were inspired by Psalm 98 of the Bible. He wrote this song to teach his congregation about the second advent of Jesus, and paint a picture in song of what His reign looks like. Advent means coming, it is a season of looking forward to the return and the reign of Christ.

### Study.

- Read Psalm 98.
- Psalm 98 and the carol 'Joy to the World' are eschatological—meaning futuristic. They both speak of the Messiah when He returns to earth. But the Psalm is also calling us to praise the Lord.
  - Why should we praise the Lord (Verses 1-3)?
  - How should we praise the Lord (Verses 4-6)?
  - Who should praise the Lord (Verses 7-9)?
- In the first two verses of the carol, we are told that the earth will joyfully receive the Messiah when He returns. Do you think people these days are excited for the second coming of Jesus, or are they afraid? Why?
- The third stanza teaches us that when the Messiah, there will no more evil in this world, and the curse of sin will be overtaken by the blessing of His presence.
- Read Titus 2:13. Why is the return of Christ referred to in the Bible as "the blessed hope"?
- How does one prepare for the coming of the Messiah?
  - Read Matthew 25:1-13, and discuss the lessons below.
  - You are the lamp, and it's what's inside the lamp that matters most (John 1:12).
  - You need Oil of the Spirit to be ready for His coming (2 Corinthians 1:21-22).
  - You need to prepare before not after (Matthew 24:44).

### Share your insight.

The Spirit of God is often symbolized by the oil of gladness. Read Psalm 45:7. The song Joy to the World encourages us to be expectant of the second coming and face it with joy not fear. The Holy Spirit is the oil of gladness that makes us joyfully expectant.

- Are you ready and excited for the return of Christ?
- Why would God's future judgment be a motivation of worship?
- Is your hope renewed when you consider this future judgment of God?
- What is the Holy Spirit teaching you in this season of your life?

### Spend time to pray.

- Take some time to pray for your Christmas celebration preparations—pray it will be a meaningful season for you.
- Pray for people who you want to invite to our Christmas Eve Service.



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### The Carol

#### JOY TO THE WORLD

*Joy to the world! the Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven, and heaven, and nature  
sing.*

*Joy to the world! the Saviour reigns;  
Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills,  
and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as, the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and  
grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders, wonders, of His love.*