

**Christmas Eve 7pm**

**12-24-09**

**“O Holy Night (Part 3) The Heart of God!”**

I. **INTRO:**

A. **Background:** Placide Cappeau - Adolphe Adam - John Sullivan Dwight.

Mical is my favorite child. Zach is the ugly one. Mother is special...have you met her? They got here 3 hours early to get the perfect seat- 10 rows back. I like Adam more than Caitlynn. Mical is the definition of perfection. I love her so much. Mical is pretty. O Holy Night is Mical's favorite song..speaking of Mical, have I told you about her? She is my favorite.... (feel free to expound)

II. **O HOLY NIGHT, THE HEART OF GOD!**

A. Truly He taught us to love one another,  
His law is love and His gospel is peace.

1. Love one another - (C.S.Lewis) Do not waste your time bothering whether you 'love' your neighbor; **act** as if you did.

2. Do you know God this way?

a) His Law is **Love**(not legalism) & His Gospel is **Peace**(not threats).

b) **Law** is something that “regulates the actions of its members.”

c) Peace in your life? (**Read** Phil.4:7) *“There is nothing **too great** for God's Power; & nothing **too small** for His Fatherly Care!”*

(1) See it's **His** peace.

(2) Allow God's silent sentry called Peace to protect your mind, emotions, & will.

d) Love & Peace **is** His message. [**Any other message is a counterfeit**]

B. Chains he shall break, for the slave is our brother.  
And in his name all oppression shall cease.

C. **French Translation:**

D. The Redeemer has overcome every obstacle:

The Earth is free, and Heaven is open.

He sees a brother where there was only a slave,

**Love** unites those that iron had chained.

Who will tell Him of our gratitude,

For **all of us** He is born, He suffers and dies.

People stand up! Sing of your deliverance,

Christmas, Christmas, sing of the Redeemer,

Christmas, Christmas, sing of the Redeemer.

- E. **Cappeau** inputed his passionate views into his 3rd verse, dealing with his opposition to **inequality, slavery, injustice**, & other kinds of **oppression**.
- F. So **Dwight** strongly identified with the lines of the 3rd verse.
1. Dwight's English translation of *O Holy Night* quickly found favor in America, especially in the North, during our **Civil War**.
  2. It became the anthem of abolitionists in America.
- G. **Social Justice or Practical Mercy!**
1. Its at the very **heart of God**. It was embedded throughout Jesus' own story:
  2. As soon as Jesus **starts** His ministry He explains why He came.  
**Read ->>> Lk.4:16-21.**
    - a) Jesus was **Homeless** as He didn't start His life in a home. **And** toward the end of His life He said, *Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.*
    - b) As a **Refugee** He had to flee with His family to Egypt.
    - c) There was **Social Injustice** shown to all the toddler boys that died.
    - d) He was an **Immigrant** (a person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country).  
*(i.e. Coming from His home country of Heaven, to Earth)*
    - e) Thus making Him an **alien**, an **outsider**, & living in **exile** for a time.
    - f) He **suffered abuse** at the hands of soldiers.
- H. What we need is **Modern Day Abolitionist!** [Awareness - Understanding - Empathy - Action]
1. An abolitionist means to **destroy** (i.e. destroy slavery, human trafficking, etc)
  2. Is.1:17 **Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.**
  3. **Why?** Because there are, "More slaves are in bondage today then were bartered in 4 centuries of the Trans Atlantic slave trade!" Gary Haugen
- I. Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,  
With all our hearts we praise His holy name.
1. "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"
  2. **With all our hearts** - not w/church attendance; not w/your religiosity; etc.

- J. **A frequently repeated story** regarding this carol said that on Christmas Eve 1870, a **French soldier** (during the Franco-Prussian War) jumped out of his trench & started singing this carol.
1. Moved by the song, the Germans did not fire upon the French soldier, & inspired by the sentiment, a **German soldier** emerged from his trench & sang Luther's *From Heaven Above to Earth I come* a popular Christmas hymn from his country.
  2. The story goes that the **fighting stopped** for the next 24 hours while the men on both sides observed a temporary peace in honor of Christmas Day.
- K. *Christ is the Lord! Then ever, ever praise we,  
His power and glory ever more proclaim!*
1. **Truth** - Christ is the Lord! So let's always praise Him for who He is.
  2. His power & glory we need to always be telling people about.
- L. Let's bring the worship team up & do exactly what it says.