



Christmas Bells

BY: Chris Harper

"I heard the bells on Christmas day...Their old familiar carols play...And mild and sweet their songs repeat...Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And the bells are ringing...Like a choir they're singing; In my heart I hear them, peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head, there is no peace on earth I said...For hate is strong and mocks the song...Of peace on earth, good will to men

Then ringing singing on its way...The world revolved from night to day...A voice, a chime, a chant sublime...Of peace on earth, good will to men

And the bells they're ringing... Like a choir they're singing; And with our hearts we'll hear them...Peace on earth, good will to men.

Do you hear the bells they're ringing? The life the angels singing? Open up your heart and hear them; Peace on earth, good

It seems that one person's holiday can often feel like another person's holocaust.

But the bells are ringing...Like a choir singing. Does anybody hear them? Peace on earth, good will to men.

Then rang the bells more loud and deep; God is not dead, nor doth He sleep. The wrong shall fail, the right prevail; with peace on earth, good will to men.

will to men.

Peace on earth, peace on earth, peace on earth, good will to men."

The song above, caroled many times over during the last 100 years, is both beautiful and tragic. *"I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"* originated from a poem written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Longfellow, whom earlier lost

Upcoming events



Friday 12/19

B and G JV/V @ South Central, 4:30 p.m.

Saturday 12/20

MS G vs. Holy Family, 2 p.m.

Tuesday 12/23

G JV/V vs. Scottsburg, 6 p.m.

Saturday 12/27

B JV/V vs. Jeffersonville, 6 p.m.

his wife to an unsuspecting fire, received word that his eldest son had been critically wounded in the civil war. Wrought with grief, Longfellow sat on Christmas Day in 1863 and wrote "*Christmas Bells.*"

For many the holidays shed light, happiness and joy as people gather with friends and loved ones to celebrate life's traditions. But for others, the holidays can be very painful. Memories of joy can quickly become vacant, replaced by thoughts of sadness, loneliness and heartache. That is certainly reflected in Longfellow's poem, as Christmas Bells and peace on earth contrast with life's iniquitousness. And it was very much the same during the first Christmas. We must remember, it was not long after the Angel appeared in the field heralding, "*Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all people: today a Savior, who is messiah the Lord, was born for you in the city of David*" (Lk 2:10-11) that the Angel appeared again with these words, "*Get up! Take the child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For Herod is about to search for the child to destroy.*" (Matt 2:13) And destroy Herod did, giving orders to "*massacre all the male children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under...*" (Matt 2:16)

It seems that one person's holiday can often feel like another person's holocaust.

What do we do with this? What do we do with the disparity between "Peace on earth" and the injustice throughout earth? What do we do when "good will towards man" is defeated by man's evil will? What if we can't hear the Christmas bells because we are deafened by the sound "*heard in Ramah, weeping, and great morning, Rachel weeping for her children...*" (Matt 2:18)

I tell you what we do... we sing louder: "*Then rang the bells more loud and deep; God is not dead, nor doth He sleep. The wrong shall fail, the right prevail; with peace on earth, good will to men.*"

We sing deeper: "*Then rang the bells more loud and deep; God is not dead, nor doth He sleep. The wrong shall fail, the right prevail; with peace on earth, good will to men.*"

And we sing with utter-conviction: "*Then rang the bells more loud and deep; God is not dead, nor doth He sleep. The wrong shall fail, the right prevail; with peace on earth, good will to men.*"

God is not dead. He does not sleep. Herod had his day. So goes sin, so will death. But, like Herod, sin and death will reign no longer

because He was born. And His name is Jesus and He promises to save people from their sins (Matt 1:21)... He saves from sin, from death and He saved people from Herod then as He saves people from Herod now. Jesus saves. Completely, wholly and forever; He saves.

So sing it loudly, sing it deeply and sing it with utter-conviction: "*Then rang the bells more loud and deep; God is not dead, nor doth He sleep. The wrong shall fail, the right prevail; with peace on earth, good will to men.*"

God's not dead... Jesus reigns... and those who turn from their sin and trust in Jesus are made alive with Him:

"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love that He had for us,⁵ made us alive with the Messiah even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace! ⁶Together with Christ Jesus He also raised us up and seated us in the heavens, ⁷so that in the coming ages He might display the immeasurable riches of His grace through His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

I pray you rest in this immeasurable truth this Christmas. Merry Christmas.

C. Harper