

Verse 1 of Hymn 140 “Silent Night” (First in German then in English)

Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Dear Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb,

This evening as we gather about the Word made
flesh and the Word as it is recorded for us in the
Bible, let us turn our focus and attention to that
little manger.

***And so it was, that, while they were there, the
days were accomplished that she should be
delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her
firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling
clothes, and laid him in a manger; because
there was no room for them in the inn.***

The mean birth of our Savior Jesus Christ is a
birth to which we have all come to love and
long for. As we spend our days on this earth
just clomping through, meandering and
constantly losing our way... God saw our

misery and our utter failures. Even during this
time of Christmas, instead of rushing to the
stable to see the birth of His Son, so many
people, instead, are rushing to the stores to
make sure that all the gifts are purchased.
Instead of flocking to see the Savior, we turn
our attention to a man in a red suit. Instead of
focusing our hearts and our minds and finding
peace, we are so disheveled and unkempt that
peace is the last thing we expect to find...
sadly, even at church.

And the really interesting thing is that though
we have so much: a house, a home, family,
friends, toys, cars, trucks, phones, computers...
peace almost always seems to elude us.
However, Jesus was born in a stable, placed in
a manger, born to humble parents who had little
to nothing. Jesus gave up the riches of heaven,
to come to this world to be our Savior. Christ
and His birth is indeed the reason for this
season.

***We will continue with the second verse of
Hymn 140.***

Once our Savior was born, then shepherds in the fields nearby were the first to hear about this wonderful and fantastic event. As Luke records, ***“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.”*** It is interesting though... why did an angel have to come and tell people about this birth? Weren't they paying attention? And we all know the answer, sadly they were not. The people were so wrapped up in their own lives and focusing on themselves that they were not looking for a Savior. They were looking to satisfy the devices and desires of their hearts... they were not looking for God. As Johann Gerhard says, “Because on earth there was no one who took note of this birth, God the Lord sent a teacher from heaven.”

Our Savior had come to earth and people were oblivious. God's Word is preached faithfully and steadfastly to this day and still so many are oblivious. Now I am not saying that we are angels, but we can see a great connection here.

Instead of people being solely focused on their Savior and on His coming they tune out the church. They make their country club their church... or they start new “churches” which have no Scripture, no sacraments and focus solely on man anyhow great he is. This is what people, even to this day are doing. And yet despite our awful estate, God sent His Son into this world. God sent His Son to be born of a woman, to be born under the law, so that He might fulfill the Law for each and every one of us. Jesus Christ, from the moment of His birth (and really His conception), has been on the job... the job of redeeming our lost souls. And thanks be to God, that He sent His Son to redeem us, because we could not do it.

We continue with verse 3 of Hymn 140.

God's Son, our Redeemer! And not only ours but the Redeemer, the Savior of the entire world. Jesus Christ was born to redeem all mankind from their sin. Though we steadily plod away from our God... He is constantly chasing after us. God is sending His angels, His

prophets, and finally His own Son to share the Good News of great joy that only He can bring.

As Luke records, ***“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”***

The child, lying in a manger, and yet redeeming all of mankind through His perfect life. The child, who would grow up to hang from a cross for all of our sins. The child, who would die so that the sins of all mankind are paid for. The child, who is Christ the Lord... He is our Savior. He is the only one who could live a perfect life, die an innocent death, and be raised again for our salvation. And though this child was born many years ago... He is still redeeming and saving all of His children to this very day. He is not being born anymore and He is not dying anymore, both of those He did once for all. However He is still coming to each

and every one of us through His Word, through baptism and through the Lord’s Supper. It is through the holy sacraments that Jesus Christ still comes to us spiritually and bodily... and it is through faith that we receive Him. It is through faith which he has given to us. It is through faith which He strengthens as only He can. It is through faith in all that Jesus Christ has done and continues to do that we know heaven is waiting for us.

Just as Johann Gerhard says, “This also calls for faith, just as the angel already urgently calls for faith. First he says, ‘I proclaim great joy to you.’ Secondly, ‘Which all people shall experience.’ Thirdly, ‘For you today is born a Savior.’ All these words press for faith, for only through faith is Christ born in a spiritual manner within our hearts; without this spiritual birth the physical birth of Christ benefits us nothing.”

We continue with verse 4 of Hymn 140.

Yes, Christ the Savior is born! He was born for you. He was born for me. he was born for all

mankind and this is the very special message that we have been privileged with. As Gerhard reminds us, ‘ Out of this shines forth the friendliness of God. His Word is the eternal truth. That’s why we should rightly also believe it without a second thought. But since we cling to our reason, God not only lets the word into our ears, but also fills our eyes with external signs so that He might bring us to faith. We should not view such divine signs for how insignificant they are; rather, we are to ponder by whom they have been given.’”

The sign that God has given us, that is the greatest sign... His Son was born for us. His Son was born for all the times that we are not perfect children. His Son was born for all the times that we turn away from God. His Son was born... so that He might die for all of our sins. God sent His Son to save us... and God now allows us to take this message, His message about His Son, to the world.

So on this Silent Night, as we begin to get nestled into our own beds and dream about what great things await us tomorrow and even

into the future let us always remember that for us and for everyone, today in the town of David, our Savior was born. Our Savior who would make us right with God and who would bring us to His heavenly home.

Just as Luke records, “***And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.***”

Dear friends, peace to all of you as you go forth. As you leave this church and go out into the world... peace to you, because today in the town of David, your Savior was born... and He is Christ the Lord.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

We continue with Hymn 129 - I Stand Beside Thy Manger Here