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Beauty at Christmas

For those nations of the earth which have known the story of Jesus, Christmas is undoubtedly the most beautiful time of the year.

Though the celebration of the Savior's birth occurs in the dead of winter, when in many parts of the world the streams are frozen and the landscapes cold and cheerless, still there is beauty at the Christmas season – not the tender beauty of spring flowers or the quiet loveliness of the full-blown summer, or yet the sad sweet graces of autumn colors. It is beauty of another kind, richer, deeper and more elevating, that beauty which considerations of love and mercy bring before the mind. Though we are keenly aware of the abuses that have grown up around the holiday season, we are still not willing to surrender this ancient and loved Christmas Day to the enemy. Though those purer emotions which everyone feels at

Christmas are in most hearts all too fleeting, yet it is *something* that a lost and fallen race should pay tribute, if only for a day, to those higher qualities of the mind – love and mercy and sacrifice and a life laid down for its enemies. While men are able to rise even temporarily to such heights, there is hope that they have not yet sinned away their day of grace. A heart capable of admiring and being touched by the story of the manger birth is not yet abandoned, however sinful it may be. There is yet hope in repentance. Christmas will come and go again this year as it has done through the lost centuries and, after a brief moment of kindness felt, they of the cold, hard world will go on killing and hating and contriving to outwit and outfight each other. Things are no better, the cynics will say, no better than they were before. The whole thing is a childish myth.

We know what they think, and we know what they will say. And God knows the facts seem to give

support to their ideas. But the end is not yet. The world has not seen the last of the Christ Child. That there is yet in fallen human hearts enough traces of spiritual desire to stir them to brief tribute when the chastely beautiful story of Christmas is told is sufficient answer to the cynic's charge. Men who can *want* to be good, if even for a day, can *become* good when their desire grows strong enough. And all this is not mere theory. Thousands each year find their desire for salvation and holiness becoming too acute to bear, and turn to the One who was born in a manger to die on a cross. Then the fleeting beauty that is Christmas enters their hearts to dwell there forever. For who is it that imparts such beauty to the Christmas story? It is none other than Jesus, the Altogether Lovely.

A.W. Tozer



"Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

II Corinthians 9:15

No merry bells pealed out on that silent, holy night in Bethlehem; nor on that first Christmas morning when the virgin mother pressed to her heart a tiny bundle of babyhood in which was wrapped Infinitude, "all the fullness of God." He was born to die, to die the death that would conquer and end all death. God's edict had gone forth: "It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul," and "without the shedding of blood there is no remission." But neither the "blood of bulls and goats," nor sin-tainted human blood could take away sin. Only holy blood could meet the need, and God could not die! O, the infinite wisdom that "drew salvation's plan." "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb," was Abraham's quiet answer to Isaac's query as the two journeyed up the slopes of Mr. Moriah. Deity, in union with humanity, in the Person of Mary's virgin-born son, provided the spotless "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

(See John 1:29)

"This man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God."

(Hebrew 10:12)

Yes, the great Creator became our Saviour because God, the Father, was willing to give His only begotten Son; and because the Son was willing to give Himself a ransom for all.

Z.E

The stars of morning that together sang
 Before the foundations of the earth were laid
 Were listening now; for skies a-sparkle rang
 With song of angels whose glad music made
 The drowsy world awake. That clear, sweet clang
 Of Heaven's opening door would never fade
 Upon earth's ear; and it had ne'er been heard
 Had not He come, God's own incarnate Word!

The glory with the Father, which was His
 Before the world was made, He laid aside;
 Thus gentle Mary to her heart in bliss
 Could press the Child and unto God confide
 Her wondering thoughts.
 She did not know her kiss
 Fell on soft hands that would be crucified-
 Small baby palms which held secure between
 The mystery of the seven stars, unseen!

E'en angels in high Heaven wished to know
 How bodily in Him - this tiny Child -
 The fullness of the Godhead dwelt. And lo!
 To trusting human hearts the Saviour mild
 Reveals Himself, as softly as the sifted snow
 Falls on tall mountaintops so bleak and wild;
 And Spirit-born His seeking ones from far
 Are guided home by Bethlehem's glowing star.

Grace W. Haight

