

Grace, Mercy, and Peace be unto you from God our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

**[Introduction]**

**[1]** A broken organ...

that is what has arguably led to the most popular Christmas carol of all time.

Its origins go back to a small Alpine village  
in the Austrian countryside –

It was Christmas Eve of 1818 – 202 years ago.

That year the town river overflowed its banks.

It had caused havoc and destruction.

It had flooded the church, and the organ wasn't working.

And that year, the crops failed and there was widespread famine.

The church people were poverty-stricken, hungry and traumatized.

**[2]** So Joseph Mohr, a young priest, crafted a poem.

He wanted to convey hope

that there was still a God who cared.

Then he brought the lyrics to his friend.

**[3]** He asked Franz Gruber, a local schoolteacher and organist,  
to write the music.

**[4]** That Christmas Eve, the two friends sang “Silent Night”

Together – for the first time

in front of Mohr's congregation, with Mohr playing his guitar.

Today, each Christmas Eve,

thousands upon thousands of Christians,  
framed in candlelight sing ...

*Silent night! Holy night!*

*All is calm, all is bright*

Each Christmas Eve

people around the world are comforted that “all is bright.”  
In other words, there is no reason to be down cast.  
Your future is bright!  
Because Jesus is born, everything will be all right!

There is another poem I know, with words so similar.  
It goes...

[5] *Silent, holy, calm, and bright,  
Jesus came to pierce the night.  
Jesus came to make things right.  
So be... Silent, holy, calm, and bright, ... tonight.*

This poem – It comes from a story about a little boy named Ollie and his parents.  
One special Christmas Eve  
they spend the night with a lonely, older lady, Frau Reinhart.  
And she recalls this poem from her childhood.

Lifting up a snow globe with a manger scene,  
Frau Reinhart recalled...  
*Silent, holy, calm, and bright,  
Jesus came to pierce the night.  
Jesus came to make things right.  
So be... Silent, holy, calm, and bright, ... tonight.*

The message is very much the same.  
The lyrics of Silent Night aim to make it clear  
That Jesus came to make things right.  
Right between God and His people  
Right between you and God.

[**God Looks**]

[6] You see... God looked into our globe, and saw our grief.

Very much like he did when the Israelites were in Egypt.  
Exodus 3:7 says:

[7] *Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings,”*  
Seeing, God has seen!  
Hearing, God has heard!

And as true as that is for the Israelites in Egypt,  
it is equally true for us in the United States.  
Seeing, God has seen!  
Hearing, God has heard!

[*So we...*]  
You see..

[8] God looked into our globe, and saw our grief.

[9] BUT we... We look into his manger and see His answer.

Scripture tells us...

[10] "*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,*" (Galatians 4:4)

The prophets tell us...

[11] *For unto us a Child is born,  
Unto us a Son is given;  
And the government will be upon His shoulder.  
And His name will be called  
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Of the increase of His government and peace (Isaiah 9:6-7)*

And Jesus tells us...

[12] *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,  
that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.  
(John 3:16)*

[13] In the manger – that animal feeding trough, we see the promise of God.

[*Conclusion*]

A broken organ...

that is what has arguably led to the most popular Christmas carol of all time.

A broken world...

That is what has arguably led to the most important event of all time.

In Christmas, this First Advent,

We celebrate that God became man. The Word became flesh. God incarnate.

And we know that was not enough. Christmas alone isn't enough.

But with Good Friday and Easter morn,

It is more than enough.

More than enough to over come sin, death, and the Devil.

And knowing that truth,

Let us do as the poem suggests.

*So be... Silent, holy, calm, and bright, ... tonight.*

[14] Be silent – Be still and know that I am God. God will take care of you.

[15] Be holy – Hear God's Word and receive His gifts of grace, mercy, and peace.

[16] Be calm – Trusting His promises, you can be calm.

[17] Be bright – And you can be bright, all will be alright,  
because you have the forgiveness of sins, salvation, and life everlasting.

*So be... Silent, holy, calm, and bright, ... tonight.*

[18] You know... At Easter if I say:

Christ has risen!

You respond:

He has risen, indeed! Alleluia.

[19] So, this Christmas, when I say:

Jesus was born!

You respond:

Let us rejoice. Amen!

Let's try that again!

Jesus was born!

Let us rejoice. Amen!

To that I say – Amen!

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So we... Declare his glory among the nations,

his marvelous deeds among the people. AMEN! (Psalm 96:3)

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