

**'HIM (HYMN) FOR THE HOLIDAYS'**  
***(A Song of Our Savior – An Ancient Christmas Chorus)***  
**Studies in 1 Timothy 3:16**

**'The WAY in A Manger'**

Do you remember the humorous story about the naughty young boy who wanted a nice new bike for Christmas? Since he had been particularly bad all year his mother said, *"If you want God to bless you with a new bike, you need to convince Him that you are really sorry and will behave better from now on."* His mother sent him to his room to write a letter to God to prove his new attitude, so God might bless him with the bike. The boy wrote: *"Dear God, I haven't really been that bad, so give me a new bike"* signed Bobby. Well, he knew that was a lie, so he tore it up and wrote a second letter: *"Dear God, I promise to be a really good kid next year so please give me a new bike"* signed, *"Your friend, Bobby."* Well, he knew he couldn't live up to a promise like that, so he tore it up, ran downstairs, out of the house and down to the church at the end of his street. Looking all around, he quickly stepped into the church Christmas nativity scene, and threw his coat over the plastic statue of Mary. Sneaking back into his house, he went upstairs and threw the stolen Mary figurine under his bed. He then sat down and wrote: *"Dear God. I got your mother and if you ever want to see her again, GIVE ME THAT BIKE! Signed Bob."*

People often think they can get what they want from God by either flattering Him with good works and prayers, or by spiritual extortion trying to *'cut deals'* with the Almighty. Christmas is all about the one and only way to get right with God and receive from Him the gifts He wants us to have.

A Christmas carol goes *"Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head..."* It is a beautiful song, but the truth is: *"The Way's in a manger, His own King-sized bed, where cattle once fed, laid our Savior instead ..."* (**John 14:6**). You might say that God's Gift was on *lay away* at birth; *paid for* on the tree with His death; *taken home* when He ascended. And to possess God's precious Gift as your own, you must receive this Gift the same way – believe that the little Lord Jesus Who slept on the hay, grew up to be *payment in full* for all your sin on the cross and your only Way to heaven and eternal life with Him (**John 14:6, 20:30-31**).

God does everything *'decently and in order'* (**1 Corinthians 14:40**) and so, it comes as no surprise, the artistic parallel pictures between Jesus' birth and His death – born in a cave, wrapped in strips of cloth, laid in a manger (*a stone groove or ledge on the cave wall*); then buried in a cave, interred in strips of cloth, and laid on a ledge inside the grave. Departure from the manger to live a perfect, sinless life on earth, and in the end after the crucifixion, risen from the grave and ascended on high in order to mediate perfect salvation for sorry souls trusting in Him, *'The Way'* (**1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 7:25**).

If you come away from sin, the world, and false religion to follow *the way* of Jesus, you will soon discover *'the Way'* is not an isolated event of stepping up to the cross and repentantly taking the Gift of eternal life, wrapped up in the Person of Christ. To truly receive Jesus is to exchange your old way of life for His new way of living righteously and spiritually, the rest of your earthly days (**2 Corinthians 5:17-21**).

The first Christians were said to be of *'the Way'* because of their biblically different and changed lifestyle (**Acts 16:17, 18:26**). This new *'Way'*, after trusting Jesus, includes *believers' baptism*, joining a good Bible teaching church to become a disciplined follower of Christ (*disciple*), involvement in serving in a regular church ministry, faithfulness in personal Bible study and prayer, partaking of the Lord's Supper (*communion*) and frequent fellowship with other believers in the church. These are not hard or unpleasant things, but blessed benefits of being in *'the Way'* (**Acts 2:46-47, Ephesians 4:11-16**). These habits of sincere Christians also help maintain the original vibrancy and thrill of coming to Christ in the first place (**Hebrews 10:24-25, 2 Peter 3:17-18, Jude 20-21**).

The Christmas carol ends this way: *“Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay; close by me forever and love me I pray. Bless all of (God’s children) in Thy tender care and fit us for heaven to live with Thee there.”* Have you ever turned from sin, believed on Him and prayed something like that? If not, or you’re not sure you have, please do so today – it’s the only way! He was *the Way in the manger* and He still is *the Way only way into heaven*. Why not let Jesus enter, reside, and abide in your heart now and forever?  
**PtL**

### **The Immaculate Declaration**

**(“God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels”)**

**1 Timothy 3:16**

*“...behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to (Joseph) in a dream, saying “that which is conceived in (Mary) is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His Name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins” ... “Behold the virgin shall be with Child and bear a Son, and they shall call His Name Immanuel” which is translated, “God with us.”* *Matthew 1:20-23*

*“And (the archangel Gabriel) answered and said to (Mary) ‘the Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also the Holy One Who is to be born will be called the Son of God.”* *Luke 1:35*

#### **“Justified in the Spirit”**

**(Justified - declared to be perfectly righteous)**

*“...(the Holy Spirit will not speak of Himself... He will glorify Me (Jesus)” (John 16:13-14)*

*In the prophetic Scriptures:*

*In Jesus’ impeccable life:*

*In conviction of the spirit:*

*In a believer’s conversion:*

#### **“Seen by Angels”**

**(Angels, holy and fallen, acknowledge the Son as LORD)**

*“...bringing (the Son) into the world He says: “Let all of God’s angels worship Him” (Hebrews 1:6)*

*In the advent announcement:*

*In the message to shepherds:*

*In Jesus’ Messianic ministry:*

*In the resurrection & ascension:*