

F3C CHRISTMAS CAROLLING SERVICE 2011

THE REALITY OF CHRISTMAS

My children often ask me one of the most important questions in life:

“Is it real?”

They ask me if TV Shows or Movies are real.

They ask me if books they read are real.

They ask me is God is real.

I know why they ask.

It is because we live in a culture of illusions.

Being bombarded by commercials, billboards and banners

By glitz and glamour and lights

Promises of happiness, wealth and success

We must ask the most important of questions.

“Is it real?”

Is Christmas real?

Beyond the story of Santa, Rudolph and Frosty

Under the mountain of wrapping paper and tinsel

Even beyond the religious traditions we grow up with or without

Is Christmas real?

But what is the real Christmas Story?

Inasmuch as we have very lively and charming pageants

Beneath it all lies a very difficult reality.

A girl who is told that she will have a miracle baby agrees to it.

A man who thinks his fiancée is unfaithful must believe an Angel

And swallow his pride to love her and take her nonetheless.

A difficult journey by foot for the two of them.

And where is the son of God, the messiah, the saviour of the world born

In a stinking barn full of animals.

The angels cannot contain their amazement and explode in song

But not to princes and kings in the courts of power.

No, the angels appear in the lonely hills to the lowest of the low.

And so the first to attend the birth

are unwashed and uneducated shepherds.

The wise men of the east actually don't arrive until much later.

And they wise men who let the cat out of the bag

that a great king is born to the cruel and insecure King Herod

Who learns of the prophecies of the messiah from the OT

And he plots to kill this newborn king of heaven

And so after the visit of the wise men and Angel warns them

And they flee for their lives

while Herod disposes of every baby boy under three in

Bethlehem.

This is the reality of the Christmas story.

We have done much to pretty it up.

But the first Christmas was a hard one.

But beyond the question of reality lies one more.

Why?

Why, if God is to save the world does he choose such a difficult way?

Why through a pious young girl, why a carpenter who believes dreams,

Why a barn? Why shepherds?

Why not through a princess and a prince in a great court attended by
celebrities and powerful people?

Why not Disney it all up?

When Jesus grows older, these are his words:

It is not the healthy who need a doctor but the sick.

I have some to seek and save the lost.

Unless a seed falls to the ground and dies, it bears no fruit.

The one who would be greatest must be the servant of all.

Christmas is a reminder to us all that we celebrate a humble King.

That the salvation of the world is not through politics and power,

Through celebrity and popularity.

It is not by force or manipulation that the world is saved.

It is by the changing of our hearts through God's love and sacrifice.

Can love really change the world?

Can Love change you?