

IN THE MARGINS: The weary world rejoices

By Tony Martin

Editor

As Christmas approaches, it's hard not to get swept up in the whirlwind of lights, carols, and the overall spirit of the holiday. One carol that always tugs at my heartstrings is "O Holy Night." Its lyrics carry a profound message of hope and joy, especially the line, "A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices."

In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. News headlines often paint a bleak picture, and personal challenges can sometimes seem insurmountable. Yet, in the midst of these trials, the message of "O Holy Night" resonates more deeply. It reminds us that no matter how weary the world may seem, there is always a glimmer of hope.

The carol speaks of a night that brought about a monumental shift in history. The birth of Jesus marked the beginning of a new era, one where light overcomes darkness. This isn't just a historical event; it's a continual promise. The lyric, "Long lay the world in sin and error pining, till He appeared and the soul felt its worth," beautifully captures this. It's an affirmation that in God's presence, we find our true worth and hope.

This hope isn't fleeting or baseless. It's grounded in the steadfast love and faithfulness of God. It's a hope that doesn't ignore the realities of pain, suffering, or injustice. Instead, it confronts these realities with the assurance that they do not have the final word. The line "Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother; and in His name, all oppression shall cease," speaks to this powerful truth. It's a

reminder that in God, there is liberation and a definitive end to all forms of oppression.

Hope in God is both a comfort and a call to action. It comforts us in our moments of weariness, assuring us that we are not alone in our struggles. At the same time, it calls us to be agents of hope in the world. As bearers of this hope, we're encouraged to reach out to those who are struggling, to show compassion, and to work towards making the world a more just and loving place.

As we sing "O Holy Night" this Christmas, let's embrace the thrill of hope it offers. Let's remember that during any darkness, the light of hope shines brightest. It's a hope that doesn't just belong to the Christmas season but is available every day. It's eternal, unchanging, and available to all.

In this weary world, let's hold onto this hope and share it generously. For in doing so, we not only find solace for ourselves but also become a source of joy and hope for others.

"O Holy Night" isn't just a carol; it's a reminder of the unshakeable hope we have in God. As we look forward to celebrating Christmas, let's carry this hope in our hearts, spreading its light wherever we go.

Merry Christmas from your *Baptist Record* team – Tony, Megan, and Lindsey!