

What is your favorite Christmas song?

Which song brings you to a memory of a moment in time every time you hear it?

1. The Little Drummer Boy

Katherine K. Davis, Henry Onorati, and Harry Simeone composed the Christmas song Little Drummer Boy in 1958. Davis first composed the words in 1941, Onorati arranged the song for recording in 1957, and in 1958 Simeone re-arranged the song yet again for a hit single.

Based in Scripture? No

Interesting Fact: The lyrics consist of no less than 21 rum pum pum pums.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5l1CS0Jhk90>

1.1. Verse 1

This verse talks about surrender.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

Luke 9:23 (NIV)

²³ Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)

¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Question: What do I need to surrender to God today?

1.2. Verse 2

This verse talks about being poor.

Mark 12:41-44

⁴¹ Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. ⁴² But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents.

⁴³ Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴ They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.”

Matthew 19:16-24 NIV

¹⁶ Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?”

¹⁷ “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.”

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¹⁸ “Which ones?” he inquired.

Jesus replied, “‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, ¹⁹ honor your father and mother,’ and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’”

²⁰ “All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?”

²¹ Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

²² When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

²³ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

Question: Am I willing to give up everything to follow Christ?

1.3. Verse 3

This verse talks about giving our best to Christ.

Colossians 3:17 NIV

¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Proverbs 3:9 NIV

⁹ Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops;

Matthew 25:14-28 NIV

¹⁴ “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag,^[a] each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶ The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. ¹⁷ So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. ¹⁸ But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹ “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

²¹ “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

²² “The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’

²³ “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

²⁴ “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

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²⁶ “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷ Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

²⁸ ““So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. ²⁹ For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. ³⁰ And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Question: What am I playing on my drum? Does He get my very best, or my leftovers? What am I playing on my drum? Am I playing my best for Him? Well done thy good and faithful servant.

2. O Come, O come, Emmanuel

This song originates from medieval monastic chants ("O Antiphons") from the 8th/9th century, expressing Israel's longing for the Messiah, translated into English and popularized by Anglican priest John Mason Neale in the 1850s, combining the ancient Latin text with a 15th-century French funeral tune. The hymn expresses ancient Israel's deep longing for the Messiah's coming, drawing on Old Testament prophecies to anticipate Jesus as God's promised presence ("Emmanuel") who will liberate people from sin and darkness, notes Ligonier Ministries.

Based in Scripture? Yes

Interesting Fact: This song is not only about the first Advent, but also the second Advent (the return of Christ).

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zshzkkD-NYA>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiErbpZHfbk> (Much different rendition, but very powerful)

2.1. Consider the different messianic promises of the Old Testament that are alluded to in this hymn

2.1.1. Immanuel

Isaiah 7:14 NIV

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

2.1.2. Branch of Jesse

Isaiah 11:1 NIV

¹ A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

2.1.3. Dayspring

Luke 1:78 NIV

⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven

2.1.4. Key of David

Revelation 3:7-8

⁷ “To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. ⁸ I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

2.2. Consider this hymn looking forward to Christ’s return

While this hymn is traditionally sung from the perspective of the first Advent, consider the words as looking toward the second Advent.

Revelation 22:12-21

¹² “Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

¹⁴ “Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

¹⁶ “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you^[a] this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.”

¹⁷ The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.

¹⁸ I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.”

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen.

Question: Am I ready for Jesus to return? If not, what is my hold-up? What do I need to get busy doing?

3. O Come All Ye Faithful

This began as the Latin hymn "Adeste Fideles," likely penned by John Francis Wade around 1740-1743, a Catholic music copyist who fled England after the 1745 Jacobite rising. Published in Latin in the 1750s, it gained popularity, especially in Catholic circles, known as the "Portuguese Hymn" due to its use in the Portuguese Embassy Chapel in London, before Anglican priest Frederick Oakeley created the most famous English translation in 1841, adding stanzas and popularizing it for a wider audience.

Based in Scripture? Yes

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeBBYs108SA>

3.1. Verse 1

A call to worship the King born in Bethlehem, referencing the prophecy of the Ruler coming from Bethlehem, and the journey to Bethlehem and the birth.

Micah 5:2 NIV

² “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”

Luke 2:4-7 NIV

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

3.2. Verse 2

Explains Christ's divinity, echoing the Nicene Creed. "The Word was God," "the Word became flesh", and Christ's humility in becoming human.

John 1:1 NIV

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 NIV

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Philippians 2:6-7 NIV

⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing, by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

3.3. Verse 3

Echoes the angelic announcement of Angels glorifying God at Jesus' birth.

Luke 2:13-14 NIV

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

3.4. Verse 4

A greeting to Jesus, the Word made flesh, referencing His glory and incarnation, "the Word became flesh".

John 1:14 NIV

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

3.5. All Ye Faithful

Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Acts 16:31

³¹ They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

Romans 3:28

²⁸ For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.

Philippians 3:9

⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

Imagine hearing this hymn when you enter Heaven and finally meet Jesus face to face.

Question: Do I view these songs as simply “one month a year” songs, or should they be the anthem of my life?

The Little Drummer Boy

Come, they told me, pa rum pum pum pum.
A newborn King to see, pa rum pum pum pum.
Our finest gifts we bring, pa rum pum pum pum.
To lay before the King, pa rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum.
So to honor Him, pa rum pum pum pum.
When we come.
Surrender

Little Baby, pa rum pum pum pum.
I am a poor boy, too, pa rum pum pum pum.
I have no gift to bring, pa rum pum pum pum.
That's fit to give the King, pa rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum.
Shall I play for you, pa rum pum pum pum.
On my drum?
We bring nothing to the equation.

Mary nodded, pa rum pum pum pum
The ox and lamb kept time, pa rum pum pum pum
I played my drum for Him, pa rum pum pum pum
I played my best for Him, pa rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum,
Then He smiled at me, pa rum pum pum pum
Me and my drum.

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O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, O come, Thou Lord of might Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the law In cloud, and majesty and awe

Refrain

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of hell Thy people save And give them victory o'er the grave

Refrain

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night. And death's dark shadows put to flight

Refrain

O come, Thou Key of David, come And open wide our heavenly home
Make safe the way that leads on high And close the path to misery

Refrain

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high And order all things, far and nigh
To us the path of knowledge show And cause us in her ways to go

Refrain

O Come All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

God of God, Light of Light,
Lo! He comes forth from the Virgin's womb.
Son of the Father, begotten not created,
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!