

3 Keys to Releasing the Supernatural Power of Christmas

The secret? It starts with **Christmas** carols. “Joy to the World.” “O Holy Night.” “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing.” The timeless truth captured in these familiar carols are keys that help you unlock the supernatural presence of God during the Christmas season.

I see two problems with how the church world currently handles the **Christmas** season—a time of great opportunity for spiritual harvest.

One, we have created a Christian culture where, more than usual, we adhere to an expected religious routine and refuse to deviate from standard church practice. During the **Christmas** season, we have three to four months that typically lead up to our big Dec. 24 church services. It is over this time period that we break out our “**Christmas** series.”

More and more leaders are actually borrowing their Christmas sermons from other people and churches. This has got to stop. No, the practice of using someone else’s material is not unbiblical or inherently wrong. However, when these resources replace our need to be synced up with the Holy Spirit’s agenda, they become powerless and void of effectiveness.

We have our Christmas musicals, caroling events, cantatas, parties and more. The protocol varies slightly from church to church and from denomination to denomination, but what we do has, in many places, become routine, traditional and expected. Now, there is nothing wrong with tradition—unless it nullifies the power of God.

I am afraid that in our modern-day approach to Christmas, we

have nullified the power of God by upholding standard practices over an openness to the unusual and supernatural. We need to break free from the trap of expectation and tradition and ask, "Holy Spirit, what's on Your agenda for this Christmas season?"

Two, we have become spectators, not participants, in the Christmas worship experience. In times past, I thought Christmas carols should actually be outlawed from our worship sets because people (including myself) immediately went into concert mode. For some reason, this shift happens. It is easy to sing "How Great Is Our God" with passionate zeal and outstretched arms while it is much easier to sing "Joy to the World" with hands in our pockets.

Reflect on the lyrics to some of these Christmas carols that we have become so familiar with:

- "Let earth receive her King." This is a prophetic statement of intercession.
- "In His name all oppression shall cease." This declares the chain-breaking power of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- "Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings." These lyrics herald the miraculous healing power of the Savior.

Let's start to really consider what we are singing, and let's sing like we believe these lyrics are true.

The enemy tries to keep us from participating in the power of the Christmas season for a good reason. He is well aware of the threat that we become to darkness during this time of year because of the global momentum that is released. There is an unusual agreement that takes place on the earth as voices come together and celebrate the Person of Jesus Christ in song. This does not take place at any other time of year (to this public extent), so the very fact that we have this level of global harmony about Jesus demands our focus.

Some look at Christmas and call it a magical time of year. I'm not fond of the word *magical*, but I will totally agree—it is an unusual, otherworldly season. Why? I don't think the reason is a mystery.

Consider for a moment:

- At what other time of the year does the world pause and reflect on Jesus?
- When else do radio stations and public venues broadcast Christ-exalting Christmas carols? (Basically, worship music is being played across the world's airways.)
- During what other holiday are people inclined to come to church and/or listen to you share about Jesus?

We catch a glimpse of why this season is so powerful in the prophetic anthem of praise that the angels sing before the onlooking shepherds: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” (Luke 2:14)

When glory goes up, something supernatural comes down. When we give praise to God in the highest, something happens on the earth. Glory in the highest—and on earth. In Psalm 22:3, we see that God inhabits the praises of His people. If there were no illustrations of this actually happening in the Bible, I would say this verse was a proof text. It is not!

Throughout the Old Testament, we see instances where the sound of praise ascends to heaven and releases breakthrough on the earth. The power of a prophetic shout level the walls of Jericho (Josh. 6:20). King Jehoshaphat strategically positioned the singers and worshippers on the front lines of battle, and as they worshipped, God sent ambushes against the enemy forces (2 Chr. 20:20-22). Even in the New Testament, as Paul and Silas start singing praises, God's power broke out and set them free from their chains—along with everyone else in the prison (Acts 16:25-26)!

If something going up to heaven in the form of praise causes

the supernatural to be released into the earth, it goes without saying, then, that Christmas is perhaps the most supernatural time of year. Praise is being offered up around the world. As glory goes up, the kingdom is surely coming down and breaking in. The Spirit of God is moving. Blinders that prevent people from beholding the light of the glorious gospel are being penetrated by the powerful presence of God.

How do we respond to this reality?

3 Keys to Releasing the Supernatural Power of Christmas—for Everybody:

1. Catch a vision of what your praise and worship releases—especially during the Christmas season. When your praise goes up to heaven, it joins in with all of the other worship being offered up across the earth.

2. Release your song. Don't let tradition restrain you from being an extravagant worshipper during Christmas. Participate in this incredible worldwide celebration of praise by not only lending your voice to the carols, but by joining in with passionate worship.

3. Take risks with the expectation that God is most likely moving. Understand that the atmosphere at Christmastime is not coincidental or magical; the global praise makes a way for the presence of God to so saturate the earth that when you reach out to people about Christ, there will often be an unusual openness. Whether you share your faith, pray for the sick or share a word of encouragement, do so knowing this season lends itself to people being open to the spiritual.

Of course, we are called to praise God and take risks every day of our lives. This is not a practice exclusive to the Christmas season. That said, we need to recognize the spiritual pregnancy in this season and respond accordingly.

3 Keys to Releasing the Supernatural Power of Christmas—for Leaders

1. Ask the Holy Spirit, “What do You want Your church to focus on this season?” Listen to what He says and follow His direction. He will not steer you wrong.

2. Don’t be afraid of the unconventional, especially if the Holy Spirit is leading you down that road. I know it may feel awkward and unusual, but if we want to see the power of God released and watch people be brought into the kingdom, we need to break free from religious tradition. If the Holy Spirit gives you peace to do a concert, do a concert. If He leads you to do a pageant, do a pageant. If the Holy Spirit, however, instructs you to do have a time of healing prayer during your Christmas Eve service, follow His voice. Great breakthrough is on the other side of radical obedience.

3. Encourage a culture of extravagant, participatory worship—and you lead the way. Don’t be the person with hands in his or her pockets as the worship team leads the congregation in Christmas carols. Worship the glorious Savior that these songs speak so beautifully about!

I pray that you would experience the most miraculous, supernatural and Christ-exalting Christmas of your lives this year.

Merry Christmas!

*This article is based on the Christmas devotional What Child Is This: 24 Reflections on Christ the Son. **Larry Sparks** is author of the books Breakthrough Faith and Breakthrough Healing. He also founded Equip Culture Media—a ministry that empowers believers with the tools and resources they need to live victoriously through the supernatural power of God. Larry serves as director of curriculum resources for Destiny Image Publishers and hosts Life Supernatural, a weekly radio program that features bestselling authors, emerging filmmakers and key*

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