

# *The Pastor's Pen*

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Wallace Charles Smith, D.Min.  
Senior Minister



Traditional theology often promulgates two seemingly divergent schools of thought. The first is that salvation is often spoken of in other worldly terms. The other perspective is that justice ministry is purely political and, therefore, non-spiritual. With the birth of Jesus, the apparent polarities can be seen as two sides of the same coin. After the angel Gabriel announced that Mary would have a son who would be the Savior of the world, Mary sang a song that shows how both of these concepts are one. *"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden and from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed"* (Luke 1:46-48). Mary's song speaks to the mercy of God and how God has leveled the playing field and made rich and poor one. *"He hath shewed strength with his arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent away empty"* (Luke 1:51-53).

*The Magnificat*, is Mary's song of praise for God's acts of justice in human history. The night Jesus was born, the angels sang a song that announced the mission of Jesus to save the world. *"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord"* (Luke 2:8-11). The song of Mary and the song of the angels are about salvation, a promise of everlasting life, and the assurance that Jesus came to liberate us from the deathly forces of poverty, oppression, and injustice.

The end of Advent eventuating in the birth of our Lord is about a God who does not leave us with a Hobson's choice of eternal life and liberated life. As Jesus grows to maturity, His ministry will be filled with the teachings of smashing the realities of injustice and putting the last enemy death under His feet. It is the bringing of these twin ideas into one which makes us join with the angels and sing, *"...for He shall reign forever and ever and ever"* (Revelation 11:15). In this season of Christmas, let us remember that Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords because His ministry attends to our physical and our spiritual lives.