

(This message followed the FPCD children's Christmas musical called "Radio J-O-Y.")

"The best songs are songs about Christmas." Do you agree? We've been singing them all month. Thank you Steve, Grant, Josh, and everyone who participated.

Whoever has been a part of making this musical happen, please stand up. Let's thank them.

If you have brought a child or youth, a young friend or neighbor to church – please stand up. On behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ, thank you.

Those of you who teach children in Sunday School or Children's Church please stand up. Whoever has done nursery duty stand up. People who have told a child the story of Jesus' birth or sung a song about Jesus, please stand up. You are a witness to the next generation. Thank you. You have done God's will.

Turn and smile at someone who is standing and say, "Way to go!" Congratulate each other. Be joyful, because joy is what faith is all about. (You may be seated.)

That's what the kids just taught us. Radio J-O-Y. The best songs bring the good news of Christmas.

D J Grant just asked Pastor Steve, "Where does the Christmas story begin?" If someone asked you that, are you prepared to give an answer?

How do you learn how to do that? It should be simple enough.

A family named the Liddles gave me a children's Bible which her children have outgrown. I began to read it to my three-year-old grandchild just like my mother taught me. That's simple enough.

In addition, I have this Advent Calendar and each night this month I sit down with her and using the calendar, I read the story from a children's Bible, while she moves each character, placing them around the stable (show the calendar) wherever she wants.

Also, we have a little manger set in the family room which she is allowed to play with. So often I will find Mary and Joseph and the shepherd and animals all lined up in a row, and then there is Ken and Barbie and Snow White, along with the angels.

Whatever it take folks.

We sing "Away in a Manger" over and over. And it's beautiful.

Well, within a week of these activities she began to ask questions.

Where is Jesus now? Who is His father? Why does He have to stay in heaven? Why do people die?

See, the desire for God is in all of us. Now the challenge is to answer those questions! The challenge is to not brush them off with the thought that a child cannot understand things like sin and death and the need for a Savior. It's easier to answer the questions when you come here to learn yourself; when you get down on your own knees to pray; and when you read the Bible and learn from all those people within its pages.

So what have we learned this year, with the study of "good men" in God's eyes – Joseph and the wise men and all the other people who wanted to participate in this cosmic event that affects both heaven and earth?

- We've learned it's about ordinary people who seek God. Those are the ones God takes note of.
- We have learned that it's about responding in simple faith.
- We've learned that it means following God's greatest command, which is *go*.

Now you may not think you qualify, but if you are here, you qualify.

Hearing and following God's voice starts in the simplest of ways. When you notice the Christmas trees in peoples' front windows or the lights on the lawn, you are being drawn to faith. If you see a star and it brings to mind that ancient star that pointed to the Savior, then God wants you to know Him.

I would say, "Come on! Let's follow that star together!"

As you discover and get to know Jesus Christ it's catching. Your children will begin interpreting life with God in the picture. That's the best way to teach a child – even an adult child. As you approach life with faith, they'll see it. As you get down on your knees in prayer, it will make a positive impact. As you handle life's ups and downs by leaning on the Holy Spirit for comfort and hope, so will they. You will find you awaken faith in all kinds of children – little ones and grown ones. For we are all children of God.

The best song is about Christmas. The best message is about a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

AMEN