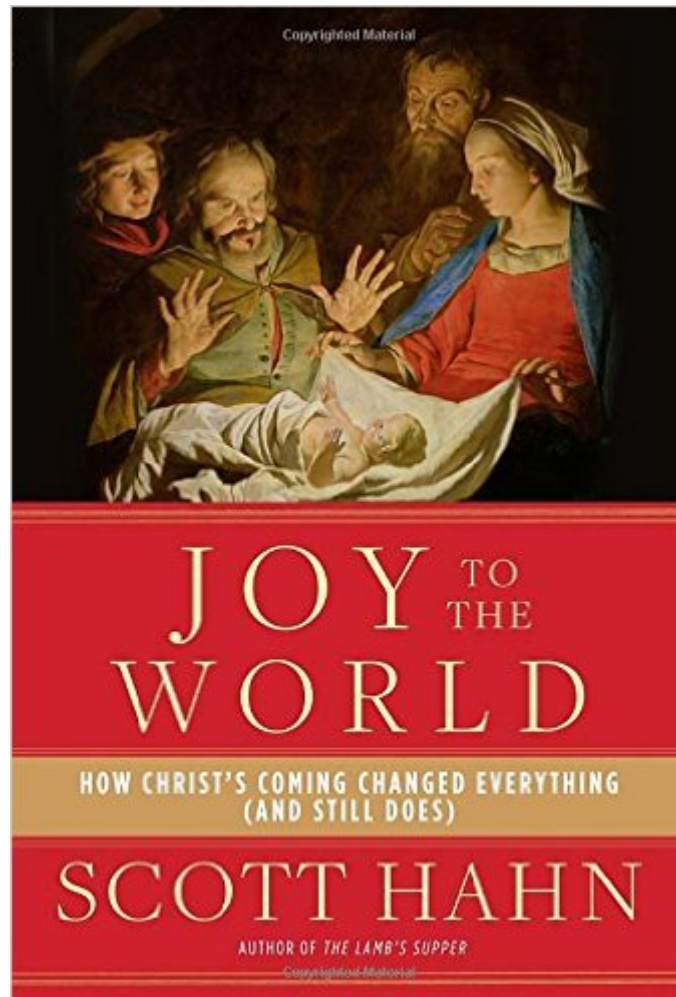


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Joy To The World: How Christ's Coming Changed Everything (and Still Does)



Synopsis

What could be more familiar than the Christmas story -- and yet what could be more extraordinary? The cast of characters is strange and exotic: shepherds and magicians, an emperor and a despot, angels, and a baby who is Almighty God. The strangeness calls for an explanation, and this book provides it by examining the characters and the story in light of the biblical and historical context. Bestselling author Scott Hahn who has written extensively on Scripture and the early Church, brings evidence to light, dispelling some of the mystery of the story. Yet Christmas is made familiar all over again by showing it to be a family story. Christmas, as it appears in the New Testament, is the story of a father, a mother, and a child -- their relationships, their interactions, their principles, their individual lives, and their common life. To see the life of this "earthly trinity" is to gaze into heaven.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Dr. Scott Hahn has written many books throughout his years as a convert. He has covered the Mass, Sacraments, and sometimes high theology. Joy to the World, however, is his first book dedicated solely to Christmas. Dr. Hahn begins with a personal tale of his family's time in Bethlehem and the impact it had on his daughter Hannah. He then explains that the city of Bethlehem isn't a place you just visit and forget, but changes your life. We then get to the heart of the book in which Dr. Hahn details and explains various aspects of the Christmas story. Dr. Hahn talks about the differences between St. Matthew and St. Luke and the way they presented the details in their respective Gospels. He talks about genealogies and the key figures listed. He discusses Herod and

the killing of the Holy Innocents. There's of course a chapter on Mary, and to my surprise even St. Joseph gets his own chapter. Much appreciated and deserved! There were shepherds and magi, and even focus on the star that led the Magi. He explains that St. John Chrysostom believed that it was actually an angel and not a star. There's even a chapter that talks about all the journeys the Holy Family went on, such as the flight into Egypt. However, my favorite chapter was the one on the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. I admit that I already knew most of the theology Dr. Hahn explained in this chapter, but I was thrilled that he took the time to explain it and tie it into the Christmas story. One interesting bit of theology is how Jesus' circumcision was foreshadowing to His crucifixion. My favorite mind-blowing theological point that Dr. Hahn made dealt with the lack of a ransom offered for Jesus THE firstborn son. Since no ransom was paid, Jesus belonged to God and was in service to God.

Joy to the World. That's an apt title, because Dr. Hahn makes the case that joy is at the core of Christmas. This is my second book by Scott Hahn. I appreciate his writing because he connects the historical facts of what it meant to "them" back then with the timeless truth of what it means for us right now. He takes his scholarly knowledge and pores over Scripture, then puts it all together amid conversational narration. Dr. Hahn comes to the conclusion of Christmas joy after closely examining the Gospel accounts of the Nativity, adding relevant details and broad context. And after reading through these fourteen chapters I think you'll be eager to receive that joy. He begins by reminding us that the Nativity was an intimate scene, protected within a tender trinity of family. At the same time, it was a conquest more decisive than any army could bring about. Dr. Hahn takes us through all the highlights of the story, encouraging us to slow down and look deeply. We ponder the Town of Bethlehem, the City of David and the "House of Bread." The Son of David and the Bread of Life was born here. He tells us about several theories that make sense of the census, including one suggesting that it wasn't a tax census but a public oath of allegiance to Caesar. We talk about the chorus of angels, heavenly messengers with proclamations of goodness. Dr. Hahn suggests that we can learn from the Holy Family that God's angels are watching over us too. He says it like this: "We live with the angels as friends." I really like that image. He tells us about the Magi, those foreign stargazers, mysterious men who worshipped the infant Jesus.

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