

Christmas: **The Rest of the Story**

The year was 1999, and it was in the middle of December in Colonial Williamsburg. Lola and I had always wanted to be there to see what Christmas in the colonies might have been like, so we went. This trip back into the past for the holiday season was all we thought it might be, and then some.

The festive, authentic holiday decorations of that era, the 18th century-style feasts offered at Williamsburg Lodge, Christiana Campbell's Tavern and King's Arms Tavern (we had to try all three), and witnessing holiday songs and games from the Revolutionary period were delightful.

Historic buildings were lit with candles flickering in the windows, and holiday wreaths hung on the doors. Traditional entertainment included fifes and drums and costumed performers. Tours of Christmas homes were enlightening and thought-provoking.

The visit there was extremely enjoyable and worthwhile from a historical perspective. But as might be expected (and fitting to the script), Christmastime weather was cold and getting more so. As it was time to go, we headed south, perhaps to a Florida beach and some sunshine. En route, we stopped at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, for an early dinner and lodging. At a restaurant there, we were welcomed by some local patrons, and in the conversation, The Carolina Opry, a live variety show with its Christmas presentation, came up.

We checked it out, and it was an amazing entertainment event, featuring traditional and contemporary Christmas music. The latter part of the program focused on the coming of the Christ Child. For the final production number, the lead female vocalist began the song *He's Alive*, written and performed by Don Francisco and various artists. I said to Lola, "Interesting. This is an Easter song performed at Christmastime." Before the final notes sounded, the sell-out crowd was on its feet in thunderous applause.

Then it struck me. There was more to the story. Christ didn't stay in the manger. He grew into manhood, taught multitudes, healed the sick and the lame, performed all kinds of miracles, was falsely accused, died on a cruel cross... but was resurrected from the dead – all part of God's plan.

As we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth, Lauren Talley's rendition* of "He's Alive" is a great reminder for all of us of the *rest of the story*.

Yes, Christ *is* alive. He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, where He is seated at the right hand of the Father. And He wants to have a personal relationship with you and me. Jesus tells us how: *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life* (John 3:16 NKJV).

Trusting Him is the best way to celebrate Christmas!

– Beecher Hunter

**Please take a moment to watch and listen to Lauren Talley and the gospel-music Talley Family sing the rest of the story: [He's Alive](#).*