



## **Friday's Formation Note by Jamie Hall**

Why Me Lord Story - Told and Sung By kris kristofferson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tA7E7pbUws>

“He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness' ;Prepare the way of the Lord,”

Advent is the season in which we prepare for the birth of our Lord Jesus. I used to wonder a little why it is also – like Lent – a season which, for the church, is a season of repentance. Shouldn't it be all about joy? Gay songs? Brightly lit festivals? Whoopee!

And isn't repentance all about moping around, contemplating the many times we have disappointed our Lord, even if we recognized Him? There is plenty to repent – certainly our present society is no less sinful than the one John was preaching to! Different, perhaps, but no less. Weeping and gnashing of teeth, as it is said? “Bewailing our manifold sins and wickedness”? Ashes and hair shirts? I certainly did think so at one time, and I wanted none of it. But I was wrong – frighteningly wrong.

This is a season for repentance – but what is that really? In fact isn't it acknowledging that we have fallen short (Make a little list... you don't have to put it out on social media (in fact, better not!), while at the same time realizing that, even so – even though we have done little that can ever repay the kindness and grace of our Lord, that He does forgive us, that He does cherish us and support us even while perhaps chastising us, and He will guide us, if only we acknowledge Him and allow Him into our lives, one day at a time. And this brings great joy. Not just the joy of presents or parties or festivals, or even beautiful music and services. Nor even having cherished family and friends. Oh yes, it does bring that, but it also brings the greater joy of knowing that one can be forgiven, that one can look up again at God's marvelous creation without regret, without feeling that one doesn't deserve all this.

This joy does mirror that of a young girl getting a stuffed pony for Christmas that she wanted but didn't know she could have – or rather that joy, of getting a gift which seemed unreachable, perhaps impossible – mirrors the joy one can feel if one does truly repent, and accepts our Lord. He truly does grant us peace and serenity, secure in the knowledge of His everlasting love. So take joy in this season, for the gift we have been given. We have only to accept Him, “For unto us a Child is born”, and He shall be our

fortress, our guardian, our guide, our rock – our sure refuge in time of trouble, and our companion when we regard the glory of His creation.

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