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***Christ Never Was in Christmas!***

As another year draws to a close, we face the holiday season known as Christmas. We all are affected in one way or another by the events surrounding this day. Since Christians want to serve the Lord to the best of their ability, naturally questions arise as to their relationship to this supposed birthday of Christ.

In this article we want to show that Christians should not observe this day as a religious holy day. In doing this, we reveal why there will be no special services before, during, or after this day at this building. In this article there will undoubtedly be things brought out concerning Christmas that would not be allowed in many of the denominational churches in our country.

False Concepts

Some folks believe we do not celebrate Christmas as Christ’s birthday for the wrong reasons. There are those who have accused us that the reason we do not celebrate Christmas as the birth of Christ is because we do not think the birth of Christ is important. Since His birth is recorded in the Bible, it is important. As result of his birth, the whole plan of God was unfolded, and the blessings to the whole world were provided. ***(Matthew 1:20-21) But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. {21} "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."*** That’s definitely important!

What’s in a Name? – Everything!

I have been falsely charged by those who hold Christmas as a holy day that we do not celebrate Christmas because we don't want to honor or remember Christ. How ridiculous! We wear His name and no other. The Bible tells us in ***(Acts 11:26) that the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.***  Would I honor my earthly father if I started calling myself Bill Smith? Does a woman honor her husband when she refuses to take on his name? In the realm of religion those who take on a denominational name cannot make the claim that they are honoring Christ. When I was calling myself a Catholic, I was not honoring Christ.

We honor and remember Christ by adhering to the only memorial that He left. The observance of the Lord's Supper upon the first day of the week is the only memorial that He left. ***(1 Corinthians 11:23-26) For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; {24} and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." {25} In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." {26} For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.***

We have proof in ***Acts 20:7*** that the early Christians honored His wish. ***Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them.*** If my father left me explicit instructions to carry out after he died, and I chose to do some of them and to add a few things of my own, did I honor his wishes? There are some people who do not remember the Lord every first day of the week as He directed them to do. Are they respecting His wishes? Then there are those who celebrate an occasion, namely Christmas, in which He did not command us to observe. How can we say that is honoring Christ?

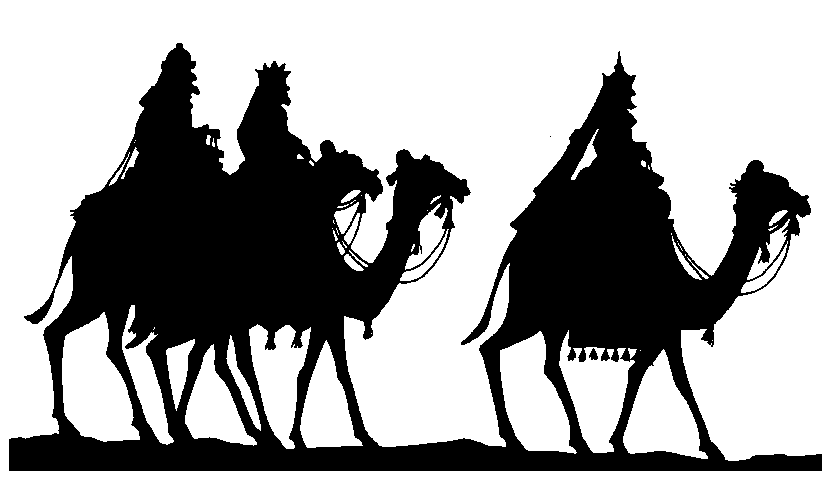
The Real Reasons Why We (or Anyone Else) Should Not Celebrate Christmas on Dec 25 as Christ’s Birthday.

The Bible does not give the actual date of Christ's birth. It only says that He was born in the days of Herod ***Matthew 2:1*.** Men through the years have suggested many different dates. The Eastern Orthodox Religion celebrates it on Jan. 6th, others on Jan. 19th, March 25th, etc.

Dec. 25th is not a logical date for the birth of Christ. In ***Luke 2:7-18*** we find Jesus being born in a time when shepherds were outside tending their flocks by night. According to the **World Atlas**, Bethlehem is approx.12 miles from Jerusalem. It is not unusual for Jerusalem to have 2-3 inches of snowfall during the winter months. The weather patterns have not changed since the birth of Christ. No shepherd in his right mind would expose himself or his flock to harsh elements on purpose. Those knowledgeable of the Bible lands tell us that shepherds brought their sheep into the sheepfolds in the winter. There is nothing in the Biblical account to suggest that these shepherds were mentally impaired, nor would they do anything out of the usual. The Bible is the proof that the birth of Christ was not in the winter

We Three Kings from Orient are…WRONG!

***(Matthew 2:1-11) Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, {2} saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him… {9} When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. {10} When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. {11} And when they had come into the HOUSE, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.***

The song, We Three Kings, has been around for as long as I can remember. Many assemblies perform this song as a part of their Christmas Pageants. Although the song has a catchy tune, the text is far from accurate. There’s no difference in propagating this error than to claim that we evolved from lower life forms.

The first error is found in verse 1. The text says ***wise men*** came from the east. That means it could have been 2 or 20. The number is not specified. We make an assumption that because there were three gifts that there were three men. It would be suicide for 2 or 3 men to travel such a distance with a treasure because of the danger from highwaymen. It would be more logical for 15-20 men to travel together for safety reasons alone.

******The second error is found in verses 9 & 11. In every manger scene I have witnessed, we have the Magi visiting the newborn child. The text says they visited a ***young child***. If Jesus weren’t about 2 years old, then why did Herod ***[Matthew 2:16]***have all children 2 or younger killed? He could have just ordered the deaths of all newborns.

The third overlooked fact [verse 11] says that Mary & Joseph were already away from the stable where Jesus was born. The wise men entered into the ***House*** where the young child was. Every nativity scene I have seen has the shepherds and the wise men together in the stable.

And Then There’s The Nativity Scenes…

It is my belief that those who have the nativity scene (the little statues or images) in their homes are practicing idolatry. ***(Exodus 20:4-5) "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; {5} you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me.*** I can recall the religious ceremonies of the Catholic priests in regard to blessing the manger scene [crèche] during the Advent Season. I can remember standing outside freezing as my mother and aunt would conduct a "holy vigil". I can remember how I was instructed to pray to Mary and the Baby Jesus.

We need to heed the admonitions of ***(1 Corinthians 10:14) Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.***

*Violation of Principles*

We do not celebrate Christmas as Christ's birthday because doing so violates many divine principles:

1. Since it is not in the Scriptures, it is not a good work. ***(2 Timothy 3:16-17) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, {17} that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.***
2. Those not acting according to the law of God will be told to depart. ***(Matthew 7:21-23) "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. {22} "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' {23} "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'***
3. To think that God will be pleased with observing something He has not commanded is presumption our part. As the Psalmist said, ***(Psalms 19:13) Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression.***
4. The main reason we should not or will not celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday because it is of human origin, namely the Roman Catholic Popes. ***(Matthew 15:9) And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'"***

*Any reliable encyclopedia will give the true origin of Christmas.*

* **The Encyclopedia of Religion by Fern: "According to authentic records, no church festival was held in celebration of Christ's birth, until the first half of the fourth century."**
* **The World Book Encyclopedia: "Bishop Liberius of Rome in 354 AD ordered that December 25th be adopted as the birth date of Christ."**
* **The Britannica Encyclopedia: "Liberius gave this reason for having Christmas: 'We have a Mass for every Saint, but there is no Mass for Christ'."** From the above came the name "Christmas" -- "Christ & Mass."

The Christmas celebration was essentially borrowed from paganism.

* **The Lincoln Library of Essential Information: "December 25th was already a festive day for the sun god Mithra and appealed to Christians as an appropriate date to commemorate the birth of Jesus, the 'Light of the World'."**
* **Time Magazine (An article on Christmas, Dec. 10, 1965): "Christmas never completely belonged to the church. It began as a pagan festival and it has slowly been changing back into one for the past half-century. Long before the birth of Christ, Dec. 25 was celebrated in pagan societies as the day on which the sun began its yearly rebirth (astronomically they were only three days off)... When the Christian missionaries began to comb the countryside for converts, they found that few were willing to give up their pagan rites. Figuring that pragmatism was called for, they combined the two holidays into the mixture of religious customs that remain today."**
* **The New Chaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (Vol. 3, p. 48): "The pagan festival (Brumalia or Saturnalia, Dec. 25) with it riot and merry making was so popular that Christians were glad of an excuse to continue its celebration with little change in spirit or in manner. Christian preachers of the West and the nearer East protested against the unseemly frivolity with which Christ's birthday was celebrated, while Christians of Mesopotamia accused their Western brethren of idolatry and sun worship for adopting as Christian this pagan festival. Yet the festival rapidly gained acceptance and became as last so firmly established that even the Protestant revolution of the sixteenth century was not able to dislodge it..."**

How many times have you heard someone say, with the best of intentions, "Let's put Christ back into Christmas?” They don’t know how erroneous that statement really is. They need to realize that ***Christ never was in Christmas***!

Since we are not told the day of the year when Christ was born, and not told how to celebrate His birth, we must conclude that Christ does not want us to commemorate His birth.

*What about the non-religious aspect of Christmas?*

Although Christmas has a religious connotation to it, it is also secular in nature. The same is true with Halloween and Valentine’s Day. Even our days of the week once had religious significance (Sun Day, Moon Day, Thor's Day, Saturn’s Day, and holiday = holy day). To anyone versed in the occult, a person’s birthday is the 2nd most powerful day in the year for him or her next to All Hallowed Eve. With those thoughts in mind then, we should never celebrate anyone’s birthday parties nor make mention of any of the days of the week. Can you see where this type of thinking can go to extremes?

In this regard, Christians can do certain things of a secular nature on Christmas day. It is a time when most have a day off and a good time to visit friends and relatives. For family enjoyment with the Children, Christians can put up tree and exchange gifts if they wish. None of that is sinful in and of itself. Those with knowledge who understand there is no religious significance to these secular things can do them if they want. This same principle was stated regarding meats sacrificed to idols ***1 Corinthians 8:4-8.*** Those with knowledge could eat meats that had been previously dedicated to an idol in the market places and not sin. Those who ate it as a thing offered to an idol sinned.

Christians must be careful not to attach any religious significance to Christmas. It isn't religious until made so by the participant. This is true of Easter, Thanksgiving, or St. Valentine's Day. We must be careful not to be part of any religious services in observances of it -- candlelight services or religious plays. We must be alert to school activities because they will have our children participating in erroneous religious things before we realize it.

We must be careful not to leave an impression of believing it to be Christ's birthday. In sending religious greeting cards, if you want to send cards, be sure to send the non-religious type. We should not sing the religious seasonal songs. Sing Jingle Bells instead of Silent Night. When you decorate stay away from having a star on top of the tree. And by all means refrain from putting up a manger scene.

I have some brethren who say they are not going to celebrate the Christmas holiday because they don’t want anyone to think they agree with their Catholic or Methodist friends. Well, by NOT celebrating Christmas does that mean that they agree with their Jehovah Witness and Jewish friends?

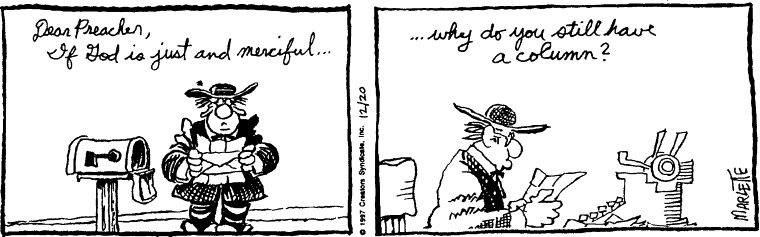
*You may or may not agree with me.*

I hope this article has given you something to seriously think about. I hope that you will read it again comparing it to what the Bible says. Even in the non-religious things, we need to be alert to wrong impressions, and walk wisely before God and man.

If we practice the things of Christmas to commemorate the birth of Christ, we do so without Bible authority. It is wrong to do even the non-religious things if we do them to commemorate Christ's birth. Let us be content to observe the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week as Christ ordained. Thereby, we demonstrate that we truly love and respect Him.

Jesus said in ***(John 14:15) "If you love Me, keep My commandments… {21} "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."***

**-- Special Thanks to David Riggs for providing much of the information for this article. Bill Mc**

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