

THE WOODLAND HILLS PROCLAIMER

"how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you"

Acts 20:20

SERVICES

SUNDAY

9:30 AM – BIBLE STUDY
10:30 AM – A.M. ASSEMBLY
6:00 PM – P.M. ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY

7:00 PM – BIBLE STUDY

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ELDERS

WAYNE REED
HARROLD STARR

EVANGELIST

KURT G. JONES

DEACONS

JIM COOK
JAMES COST
VERNON RIEHL

VOLUME 2 WEEK 51

To our visitors – "WELCOME" - Thank you for choosing to visit with us

DEC 20, 2009

Taking the "Christ" out of Christmas

Kurt G. Jones

Christmas trees, Christmas cards, and Christmas carols, these things remind us that the season called Christmas is once again upon us. This season poses several questions for Christians. Is December 25 the birth date of Christ? Is the observance of Christmas found in the bible? Is it sinful for me as a Christian to observe Christmas? These are just a few of the questions that those professing Christ might have during this time.



Christmas and the Bible

There are some common misconceptions amongst the majority of people concerning Christmas. Think if you will, when most people are asked how many wise men there were the answer will almost always be three. The Bible however, never shows the number of wise men, only the number of gifts. (c.f. Matt.2:1) True, it very possibly could have been three, or it could have been a hundred, or it could have been as little as two, truthfully we cannot make that determination because the Bible never states the exact number. To be dogmatic about the particular number would go beyond what God has said.

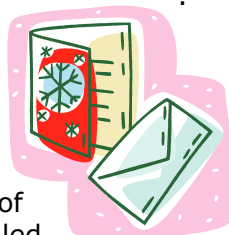
What about the star? What do the majority of people picture when they consider the star? Most will picture the star leading the wise men to the manger, but this is not correct when viewed in the light of scripture. In fact, it was not the star which led them to Bethlehem, but rather the scripture (c.f. Matt. 2:5, Micah. 5:2). The star did not tell them the whereabouts of Jesus' birth only that he was

born. It then led them to a house, not to the manger. (c.f. Matt. 2:9-11)

We also see that by the time that the wise men went to Jesus he was not a newborn infant, but rather a "small child" (c.f. Matt. 2:11). This is when the wise men offer the gold, frankincense, and myrrh, not when Christ was a newborn infant.

We see through study of God's divine word, that the word Christmas, the actual date of Christ's birth, and observance of this holiday are not found within the Word of God. This tradition was founded by the Catholic Church to coincide with the religious holidays of the pagans and other religious sects of the day.

These are just a few points that we could consider concerning the common religious view of Christmas and the Bible concerning the birth of Christ. We see that by men's traditions and customs it has changed what the Bible teaches. Jesus gives a stern warning concerning those that teach the commandments of men as doctrine. "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9).



The Christian and the observance of Christmas

The next question we should ask is, is it sinful for the Christian to celebrate Christmas? Things like Christmas trees, Santa clause, and little elves have no religious connotation. Therefore, I submit to you that we as Christians can celebrate Christmas as a national holiday much in the same way we might observe Halloween, Columbus Day,

or Independence Day. Christians are at liberty to observe these holidays as times to be with friends and family, and to enjoy themselves.

However, to observe such religiously is another matter indeed. Through careful study of the Bible, and by applying the rules of how scriptural authority is established, we cannot conclude that we are at liberty to observe Christmas as the majority of the religious world does. We are never in scripture directly commanded to celebrate the birth of Christ. Also, we do not have an approved example of early Christians in the Bible observing this holiday. Lastly, we cannot necessarily imply that the church of the first century took part in such activities. Therefore to observe Christmas as a Religious "holy day" is to do something that is not authorized by God.

As we have seen the Word of God never gives provision for the observance of Christ birth. It

does however stress remembrance of his death. (Luke 22:19, Acts 2:42 1 Corinthians 11:26) The Lord requires us to refrain from practices that are equated with false religion, and an unauthorized practice is that very thing (2 John 9-11). The truth of the matter is that if religious activity is not authorized in the Word of God (religious observance of Christmas being unauthorized in scripture), then it is sinful as a religious practice (Galatians 4:8-11)!

We see that within the holy word of God that there is no mention of Christmas, and that the common teachings concerning this holiday do not coincide with the Bible. Also, we noticed that it is not authorized for the Christian to observe this holiday religiously. However, the Christian is at liberty to observe this day as a national holiday. I say then let us observe this season for what it is, and let us "take the "Christ" out of Christmas.

WOODLAND HILLS NEWS AND NOTES

PRAYER LIST: Janice Billeri, Mindy Blackstone, Haskell & Doris Butler, Ruby Goad, Jerry Harrell, Bill & Jo Ellen McCarty, Leola Pence, Nelva Peyton, Jerri Scott, Bertie Strokos, James & Lou Ann Webb, Jennifer West, Jane Zeitz.

Area gospel meetings are posted in the foyer

