

# Should Christians Celebrate Christmas?

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Up until 25 years ago, I used to celebrate Christmas as much as - or even more than - any Gentile. You might think that is strange since I was born and raised in a Jewish home. But my family always had a Christmas tree every year because it was the popular thing to do. We had ornaments, mistletoe, holly wreaths, presents and everything else that goes along with the Christmas celebration.

You see, Jewish people celebrate Christmas today, not because of Christ's birthday, but because it is popular tradition and part of our present-day culture. It's as American as apple pie and hamburgers. And I observed Christmas for nearly 22 years of my life, until God opened my eyes to see the falseness of this pagan holiday.

It's not because I'm a Jew that I don't celebrate Christmas now. That has nothing to do with it. Let me tell you the real reasons why I no longer observe this pagan holiday.

## **Christmas Not a Bible Doctrine**

In the first place, Christmas is not a Bible Doctrine. If our blessed Lord had wanted us to celebrate His birthday, He would have told us when to celebrate it and how to celebrate it. But Christ never told anyone to celebrate His birthday. Furthermore, we know from the Bible and from church history that the apostles and the early church never celebrated Christ's birthday.

The Bible is God's complete and final revelation to man, and it tells us everything we need to know for our spiritual lives (II Timothy 3:16). We don't have to go outside the Bible for anything. God's Word tells us how we're to worship, how we're to give money for the support of the Lord's work, how to evangelize the lost, how to observe the Lord's Supper and everything else pertaining to the Christian life. But not once in the Bible does God tell us to celebrate Christmas! We're told to remember the Lord's death, but nowhere are we told to celebrate His birth.



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God's people are supposed to be Bible people. We are supposed to live by the teaching of the God's holy Word. So the very fact that Christmas is never mentioned in the Bible is sufficient reason for us not to have anything to do with it. But that's not all.

### **Christ Not born on December 25**

The second reason I don't celebrate Christmas is that Christ was not born on December 25<sup>th</sup>. Notice:

*"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." Luke 2:8*

Don't miss the point: the shepherds WERE IN THE FIELDS taking care of their flocks on the night Jesus was born. As the shepherds were watching their sheep, the message came to them of the birth of Jesus.

It's a well known fact that December falls in the middle of the rainy season in Palestine, and the sheep were kept in the fold at that time of the year. The shepherds always corralled their flocks from October to April. They brought their sheep from the mountainsides and the fields no later than October 15<sup>th</sup> to protect them from the cold, rainy seasons that followed that date. So the birth of Christ could not have taken place at the end of December.

Secondly, Luke 2:1, 3 tells us that at the time of the birth of Jesus it was decreed that, "all the world would be taxed...And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city." This couldn't have taken place in the winter. Caesar Augustus, the ruler of Rome, would certainly not call for such a taxing in the depth of winter. Travel at this time of the year is extremely difficult; hence, it would be virtually impossible for everyone to comply with the decree if it had been given then. The Lord Himself testified to the rigors of traveling in winter, for He told the people to pray that their flight at the end of this age would not be in winter (Matthew 24:20).

No one knows the exact day when Jesus was born, but in all the probability He was born sometime during the first part of October. We can be reasonably sure of this because His earthly ministry lasted 3 1/2 years, and He was crucified on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Nisan, which corresponds to our April (John 19:31, Leviticus 23:5). If we go back 3 1/2 years to the time when Jesus was 30 years old - when He began His public ministry - we come to the month of October. This was probably the month when our blessed Lord was born into the world.

However, let's remember that it's not the date of Jesus' birth that's important. The important thing is that He was born and that He died for our sins. We're not worshipping a helpless infant lying in a manger. We are worshipping a risen and exalted Christ who has all power in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18).

## Origin of Christmas



Where do you suppose Christmas originated? Certainly not with God! Christmas started with the sun worshipers in the time of Nimrod, the man who supervised the building of the tower of Babel. And that's another reason why I don't celebrate Christmas.

Thousands of years before Jesus was born, heathens in every country observed December 25<sup>th</sup> as the birthday of a god who was called the sun-god. Semiramis, the widow of Nimrod, was his mother. She claimed to be the queen of heaven. And she had a son who was supposed to have been born on December 25<sup>th</sup>; his name was Tammuz.

According to all the heathen religions of that time, Tammuz had a miraculous birth; and for centuries his birthday was celebrated with feasts, revelry and drunken orgies. The heathen celebrated Tammuz' birthday according to the very example he set for them. He was the world's greatest lover of women, strong drink, dirty jokes and other sensual fun. It is said that he loved everybody and that everybody loved him. And it was on December 25<sup>th</sup> that all the pagan religions celebrated the birthday of Tammuz, the son-god.

This is all clearly brought out in Alexander Hislop's great book, "*The Two Babylon's*." Any reputable encyclopedia will also verify these facts.

It's plain to see, isn't it, that Christmas is a pagan holiday that came out of old pagan Babylon. As born-again believers, let's have nothing to do with it.

## Christmas: A Catholic Holiday

The fourth reason I don't celebrate Christmas is because Christmas is a Catholic holiday. Why should I steal Christmas from the Catholics? They got it from the pagans, and I'm happy to let them keep it.

Notice what Encyclopedia Americana has to say about Christmas and Catholicism.

*"Christmas – it was according to many authorities NOT celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian churches as the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth. A feast was established in memory of the birth of the Saviour in the FOURTH CENTURY. In the Fifth Century the Western Church (Roman Catholic) ordered it to be celebrated forever on the day of the old Roman feast of the birth of Sol. The holly, mistletoe,*



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*the yule log and the wassail bowl are of pre-Christian times. The Christmas tree has been traced back to the Romans. It went from Germany to Great Britain."*

Encyclopedia Britannica has this to say about Christmas:

*"Christmas (i.e., the Mass of Christ) was not among the earliest festivals of the church."*

After Constantine became the Emperor of Rome, he forced all the pagans of his empire to be baptized into the Christian Church. Thus pagans far outnumbered true Christians.

Since the church worshiped the Lord Jesus as the Son of God, when the 25<sup>th</sup> of December rolled around and the pagans wanted to worship Tammuz, their sun-god, Constantine knew that he would have to do something. So he had the church combine the worship of Tammuz with the birthday of Christ, and a special mass was declared to keep everyone happy. Thus pagan worship was brought into the Christian church and called "Christ-mass."

Every time we say "Merry Christmas," we're actually mixing the precious and holy name of Christ with paganism. This is not right. God says in Ezekiel 20:39, *"Pollute ye my holy name no more."*

### **The World and Christmas**

That brings me to the next reason why I don't celebrate Christmas. Christmas is of the world, and we're commanded, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."* 1 John 2:15 The very fact that the world which hates Christ and His blood atonement for sin makes more fuss about Christmas than any other holiday proves to me that Christmas is not of God. If December 25<sup>th</sup> were truly the birthday of the blessed Son of God, the world would have nothing to do with it!

You don't have to be a Christian to celebrate Christmas. Even in non-Christian countries like Japan, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Russia the people celebrate Christmas.

People throughout the world, who for the most part have no awareness of the Bible or Jesus Christ, eat up the Christmas celebration. To take Christmas from the world would be harder than taking candy from a child.

Let's face it, the world is married to the idol of Christmas. In fact, more people get drunk at Christmas than any other time of the year. There are more big parties and more selfish spending than any other season. Doesn't that prove that it's not of God?

The world loves Christmas, but it hates Christ.



## Unscriptural Traditions

Another reason why I don't celebrate Christmas is that it's filled with unscriptural tradition. The exchanging of gifts, the Christmas tree, the singing of carols and Santa Claus are all pagan origin. These all crept into the church during or after the Fourth Century.

There are many unscriptural traditions that have cluttered up the story of the birth of our wonderful Saviour. For instance, many people believe that the wise men of East and the shepherds were together in Bethlehem at the time our Lord was born. But nothing could be further from the truth. The shepherds came to Bethlehem to see Jesus at His birth. The wise men came to Nazareth to see Jesus when He was almost two years old (Matthew 2:16).

Furthermore, the Bible says nothing about three wise men, nor does it say that they were kings. The fact is the Bible does not give their number at all but merely states that they were wise men.

Perhaps the worst part of the Christmas celebration is thousands of parents will teach their children the falsehood of Santa Claus. Children are taught that Santa Claus makes his home at the North Pole, and once each year he fills his sled with toys for the boys and girls who have been good throughout the year. If they are good, he brings them toys on Christmas Eve, and if they are bad, he passes them by.

Is it any wonder that many times when children grow up and learn the truth, they question whether Christ is also a myth?

The Bible says in Colossians 3:9, "*Lie not one to another,*". We are commanded in Ephesians 4:25 to put "*away lying,*" and to "*speak every truth with his neighbor.*"

Now I know that some of you loving mothers are saying, "*Don't you think we should give the children a good time? They don't understand all the paganism behind Christmas.*"

Let me ask you a question, mother. Is it necessary to drag the holy name of our blessed Lord down to the low level of fleshly gratification and drunkenness to show the kiddies a good time? A thousand times, no! Let's teach our children the truth about Christmas. God's Word says that we should bring up children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). Why should we dishonor the name of Christ in such a manner under the pretense of showing the children a good time? There are 364 more days in the year during which we can give gifts to our children.

## Merrymaking and Exchanging Gifts

Without question, the most important part of Christmas for most people is buying and exchanging gifts. I don't celebrate Christmas because exchanging gifts has nothing to do with Christ's birthday.



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Perhaps some of you are asking, *"Didn't the wise men give gifts to Jesus?"* They certainly did, but they didn't give them to one another. And their gifts were not birthday gifts because the wise men did not come to visit Jesus until He was nearly two years old (Matthew 2:16). The shepherds came to visit Jesus as His birth, but the wise men came to see Him nearly two years later.

Did you know that giving gifts to a king was common custom in the Far East? That's the reason why the wise men brought gifts to Jesus – because He was born to be King of the Jews. But they were not birthday gifts. So there is no connection between Christmas and the birthday of Jesus in this respect.

One final word before leaving the matter of exchanging gifts. Let me point out that even this is a part of Satan's antichrist program. The greatest Christmas celebration yet to come will be during the awful days of the tribulation. During the antichrist's reign all hell will be loose. The two witnesses who God shall send to the people of the earth will be killed when God is finished with them. Can you guess who will kill them? The antichrist will put them to death. Listen to God's Word:

*"And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them."*  
Revelation 11:7

It is under antichrist's reign that the last and greatest Christmas celebration shall take place. As a result of the death of these prophets of God, the world will be so delighted and thrilled that they will exchange gifts with one another. Here is what the Bible says,

*"And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in the graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth."* Revelation 11:9-10

What further proof do we need that Christmas celebration is not of God? Truly the Lord's people should not celebrate Christmas. It is anti-God, anti-Christ, Satanic, and unscriptural. The call of God is, *"Come out from among them, and be ye separate...and touch not the unclean thing."* II Corinthians 6:17. God's command to all His people is, *"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."* Ephesians 5:11

### **Christmas Condemned by the Puritans**

The pagan history of Christmas has been well known throughout history. In fact, at one time the celebration of this pagan custom was forbidden by law in England. In 1644, Parliament declared Christmas to be unlawful; and, consequently, it was abolished. The English Puritans looked upon the celebration of Christmas as the work of Satan



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At one time in early American history, the observance of Christmas was illegal. A law was adopted in the general court of Massachusetts about 1650, which required that those who celebrated Christmas were to be punished. The statute read, *"Whosoever shall be found observing any such day as Christmas, or in any other way...shall be subject to fine of 5 shillings."* The law's preamble explained its purpose was *"for preventing disorders...(by) observing such festivals as were superstitiously kept in other countries to the great dishonor of God and the offense of others."* After the Mayflower pilgrims landed in 1620, the first December 25<sup>th</sup> was spent in labor and cutting down trees *"in order to avoid any frivolity on the day sometimes called Christmas."*

Opposition to the observance of Christmas continued just past the second half of the Nineteenth Century. An article in the December 26, 1855 edition of the *New York Daily Times* stated,

*"The churches of the Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists were not open on December 25 except where some mission schools had a celebration. They do not accept the day as a holy one, but the Episcopalian, Catholic and German churches were all open. Inside they were decked with evergreens."*

The Puritans knew the truth about Christmas and regarded it as a pagan holiday. It would be good if all believers followed their example.

### **What About the Christmas Tree?**

Another reason why I don't observe Christmas is because the Christmas tree is condemned by the Bible. Notice: *"Learn not the way of the heathen...For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it may not move. But they are altogether brutish and foolish: the stock is a doctrine of vanities."*  
Jeremiah 10:2-4, 9

Here you have a perfect description of the Christmas tree, called by God *"the way of the heathen."* We are commanded not to learn that way or follow it! The Christmas tree is also viewed in this passage as idolatry. The fifth verse says that these trees cannot speak-cannot walk-must be carried. Some people misread this to make it say that there is no harm in having a Christmas tree, but that is not what it says at all. Rather, the Prophet Jeremiah tells us that it is vanity and foolishness and says, *"Learn not the way of the heathen."*

Some people will be up all night to work on an old dead tree. They'll trim it all up and stand off a little ways and admire their handiwork. Then many of them will sit up all night and look at that old Christmas tree.

I hope some of you preachers will get up in the middle of the night and throw out that old tree out of your house and out of your church right at Satan's head. I realize that some of you will



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just gnash your teeth and call me "narrow minded." Well, you can call me anything you want, but I'm just giving you the Word of God.

Did you know that the green tree is mentioned 14 times in the Bible, and in every instance it is likened with idolatry? There isn't one place in the Bible where God commends the use of the "green tree" in connection with true worship.

Perhaps you're wondering why people have a Christmas tree during the Christmas celebration. You can search the Bible through and through, but you won't find a reason for it there. The first decorating of any evergreen tree began with the heathen Greeks and their worship of their god Adonis, who allegedly was brought back to life by the serpent Aesculapius after having been slain. And each Christmas multitudes of people will secure an evergreen tree and dress it up with bright glitter, lights and tinsel, not realizing that they are following the tradition of a pagan festival in honor of a false god!

No doubt there are many sincere Christians who think that they are honoring Christ by having their Christmas tree when, in reality, they are dishonoring Him by having anything to do with a heathen festival that God hates.

As you read these lines perhaps you say, *"I have my Christmas tree but I don't worship it, and consequently, I see nothing wrong with it."* Let me remind you, however, that you don't determine what is right and what is wrong. God determines what's right and wrong. If the Christmas tree is not an idol to you, why are you so reluctant to give it up? What are you doing down on your knees when you place your gifts under it?

### **Observing Days Forbidden**

Finally I don't celebrate Christmas because God's Word forbids the observance of any holy days in this dispensation of grace. Listen:

*"Ye observe days, and month, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Galations 4:10-11*

This tells us that the observance of days is a sign of weakness, childishness and lack of development. There are no special holy days for members of the body of Christ. The Lord wants us to worship Him the same 365 days a year.

We're not worshiping a dead Christ or a helpless infant lying in a manger, but we're worshiping a real living Christ who lives all year round.

Sometimes well-meaning people will make the statement, *"Let's put the Christ back into Christmas."* This sounds very good on the surface...but beloved, how can you put Christ back into something when He was never there?





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Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the famous English preacher of the last century, said,

*"We have no superstitious regard for times and seasons. Certainly we do not believe in the present ecclesiastical arrangement called Christmas...we find no scriptural word whatever for observing any day as the birthday of the Saviour; and consequently, it's observance is a superstition, because (it's) not of divine authority...probably the fact is that the 'holy days' (were) arranged to fit in with the heathen festivals...how absurd to think we could do it in the spirit of the world, with a Jack Frost clown, a deceptive worldly Santa Claus, and a mixed program of sacred truth with fun, deception, and faction."*

While the world celebrates Christmas with its gift swapping and wild parties, what should be our attitude? God's Word makes it plain that we should have nothing to do with this pagan holiday. Let's not associate the birth of the holy Son of God with the pagan traditions of men. Let us heed God's command; *"Be ye separate, O my people."* II Corinthians 6:17

Taken from: [http://www.eaec.org/bibleanswers/christmas/christians\\_and\\_christmas.htm](http://www.eaec.org/bibleanswers/christmas/christians_and_christmas.htm)

Fredrickson has heard all the objections and says, "Essentially, they are true. We adopted a Roman holiday, which was Dec. 25, and made that the celebration day for the birth of Jesus." He says we know from the New Testament that Jesus probably wasn't born in December. The phrase "the shepherds were out in the fields watching over their flocks by night" is not a wintertime experience, according to Fredrickson.

"We don't know the date," he says. "We don't have any birth records but I think we are fairly certain that it was most likely springtime. The fact that we don't know the exact date of [Jesus' birth](#), and kind of tied into this other holiday, for me doesn't lessen the celebration of Christmas because what we are really doing at Christmas time is celebrating the fact that God stepped into our world in the person of Jesus."

There is an underlying value to Christmas, Fredrickson adds, "which is this amazing sense of gift giving. God is a giving God and I think we get in trouble when we only emphasize that at Christmas time. You know, 'It's a season of giving so let's be nice to people.' That should be a value that people have throughout the year. If Christmas reminds us we are supposed to be like that all year long, great. But sometimes, people are nice only in December and can't wait for January to hit so they can get back to their own selves."

Greg Peters, an assistant professor at Biola University, says he too knows all the objections, but chooses to celebrate. An expert in early church history, Peters told Crosswalk.com that there are at least two theories about the way that Dec. 25 was decided on as the observation date of Christ's birth. "One is that Dec. 25 was this pagan feast. There is also a theory that Dec. 25 was picked based on some early Christian sources that say that Jesus' death would have been on March 25, based on the year and when the Passover happened."



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Peters explains that according to ancient rabbinic practice, one's death date was one's birth date. In case of Jesus, it was March 25. Also in rabbinic tradition, birth is the same as conception. Therefore, if Jesus was "conceived" on March 25th, you add nine months and get Dec. 25.

"Some scholars believe this and say you don't have to see Christmas just as a Pagan feast day," says Peters. "It's also possible to read early Christian authors and see that early Christians appropriated pagan holidays for themselves. The fact that Dec. 25 was a pagan holiday and they could usurp a pagan holiday- I'm sure it wasn't far from their minds either."

As for rejecting Christmas because of materialism, "Well," says Peters, "that is like rejecting Christmas because we are all sinners. It seems to me it's more a critique of churches than a critique of our culture, because Biblical teaching and example should be strong enough to counter the trend toward materialism."

The issue isn't whether to boycott or observe Christmas, Peters adds, "but to observe it properly, maybe recovering Advent or some sense of anticipation of the arrival of our Savior. Liturgically, Christmas is a season, not a day. It's important to keep in mind although Christmas Day or Dec. 25 may seem very materialistic, that the season itself doesn't have to be."

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