

Is He The Reason For The Season?

- Bill Brandstatter -

Many in the denominational world will be celebrating the 25th of December as the birthday of Jesus Christ. Manger scenes will abound around many church buildings. Songs about Jesus in the manger, the shepherds, and the wise men will be heard during the Christmas season. Signs outside some church buildings may be seen stating such as: "HE'S THE REASON FOR THE SEASON," or "LET'S KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS." Christ, however is not the reason for the season, man is. The Bible is void of references to any celebration of the birth of Christ. Man invented the holiday we know as Christmas, God didn't.

The term "Christmas" is not found in Holy Writ. There is no mention of even the principle found. There is no indication of setting a date for Christ's birth. To pick a date and celebrate it as Christ's birthday amounts to the same as trying to determine the date of Christ's second coming. Although man is fond of celebrating birthdays, such does not make the celebration of Christ's birthday as the right thing to do. Isaiah wrote in the long ago, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 55:8). Any date set by man is pure speculation. The term "Christmas" according to history was coined from the 12th century for Christes Masse or Mass of Christ. The earliest evidence for a celebration of Christ's birth comes from the time of the Roman emperor Commodus around A.D. 188.

The feast of Christ's birth was first found in Rome at the time of "bishop" Liberius. It was made official by decree of Liberius in A.D. 354. So, for many years the world had never heard of such a celebration. For over 200 years such was unknown to the church. Now such is almost commonplace among many in today's religious world.

If God wanted Jesus' birth celebrated he would have told us (Deut 29:29). To add a religious connotation to the birth of Christ is adding to God's word, and is therefore sinful (Rev. 22:18; Gal.1:6-9). We have all things that pertain to life and godliness, so we do not need any additions (2 Peter 1:3). Paul wrote, "Whatever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17). The phrase "in the name of" means by the authority of Jesus. We have no authority to celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday. Such a celebration is sinful and not in accordance with New Testament teaching.

- Beacon, Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL -

Faith doesn't get us out of trouble; faith gets us through it. - Unknown Author

News & Notes

UP FRONT: Tonight - Bible questions submitted by adults will be considered **each 3rd Sunday at 5:15 p.m.**

EVENTS SUSPENDED: The following are temporarily suspended until further notice during our building renovations:

- Ladies Bible Class (Room 206),
- Care and Share Bears (Tuesday mornings),
- Men's Enrichment Bible Class (Tuesday evenings),
- Membership Directory (pictures and updates).

PANTRY: Chicken noodle soup

NEW YEAR'S DAY SCHEDULE: Congregational fellowship breakfast (prepared and served by the men) **at 9:00 a.m.** at the Fellowship Building **followed immediately** by a Bible study/question & answer period (this will be in lieu of our regular Wednesday evening Bible study).

PIZZA PARTY: An after Christmas/New Year's pizza party will be held **Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.** at the Fellowship Building. All are invited. **R.S.V.P. Dean & Sandy Spencer by Dec. 29th.** Money donations accepted to help defray the cost.

SICK & SHUT-IN: ENCOMPASS REHAB: Carol Stillwell 351 Camp Meeting Rd., Room 119, Sewickley, PA 15143. **AT HOME:** Docie Moore, Mary Jane Bowers, Emma Rine, Russell Martin, Blondenia Orr, Joann Webb, Doris Dunham, Alex Harless, Chris Lamb (David Roach's sister). **FOX:** Tom Postlethwait. **CROSSROADS:** Sarah Miller. **VALLEY OAKS CARE CENTER:** Fred Larrimore, (Room 210). **IN FLORIDA:** Ilene Rayl.

Why Follow Jesus?

Why did people follow Jesus? What did they think of the Christ? (Matthew 16:13).

1. Some followed Him because of the miracles (John 6:2).
2. Some followed Him because they believed He was King (John 6:15).
3. Some followed Him because they believed they would receive something from Him (John 6:26).
4. Some followed Him because everyone else followed Him.
5. Some followed Him simply because of curiosity.
6. Some followed Him to entrap Him (Mark 3:2).
7. Some followed Him because they believed He was the Messiah (Matthew 16:16).

Why do we follow Him today? What think ye of the Christ?

- David Powell, Bulletin Digest -