

Christmas

A Biblical Perspective



Like a cage is full of birds (Jeremiah 5:27), so the ["Christian" community is full of deceit](#) (2 Timothy 3:1-5; 2 Peter 2:1-3), and the Christmas celebration is just one small sampling of the deception of this age (2 Timothy 4:3).

I. Its History

The history of Christmas is helpful in our understanding. It helps us to look at and examine what the "Church" did in the past, and what we should do today.

According to history, the [Catholic Church](#) in the 4th century adapted (Christianized) the evil idolatry of its day. In the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Macropaedia, 1978 edition, Vol. 15, p.1062-1063) under Roman Religion, the following is written:

The survival of Roman religion. For a time, coins and other monuments continued to link Christian doctrines with the worship of the sun, to which Constantine had been addicted previously. But even when this phase came to an end, Roman paganism continued to exert other, permanent influences, . . . [then speaking of the ecclesiastical calendar] notably Christmas, which blends elements including both the feast of Saturnalia and the birthday of Mithra.

In *Christmas Traditions* by William Muir Auld, he states:

This strange Eastern faith, whose god Mithra was identified with the Unconquered Sun, long proved the most formidable rival of Christianity. (p. 29)

The birthday of Mithra (the sun god) was December 25. Instead of opposing this idolatry, the Catholic Church literally made up the idea that December 25 was Christ's birthday, and celebrated the pagan holiday with a new name, "Christmas." In a children's book entitled *Christmas* (by Jane Duden), the following is said:

At first, only a small number of people in the Roman Empire were Christians. All the non-Christians were called pagans. The pagans had festivals of their own on or near December 25. For example, Romans held year-end celebrations to honor Mithra, their god of light.

One of the most popular pagan festivals was Saturnalia People gave gifts to each other and prepared special foods. They decorated their homes with green branches. Everywhere, people stopped work to join in the celebration.

Christian leaders did not have an easy time converting non-Christians (or pagans) to the Christian religion. Pagans liked their harvest and winter festivities. They did not want to give them up. That is why, over the years, popes (the spiritual rulers of the Roman Catholic Church) and Church leaders allowed many favorite ancient customs to become part of Christmas celebrations. (p. 8-9)

Furthermore, in *The Solstice Evergreen, The History, Folklore and Origins of the Christmas Tree*, Sheryl Ann Karas notes:

Converting the Pagans. During its first 300 years, the Church in Rome maintained a staunch position against all pagan beliefs and practices; however, many new and potential converts were reluctant to give up their familiar celebrations. One of the most popular holidays in the Roman year was the Saturnalia. It was a week-making, culminating in a winter solstice feast on December 25, called Natilis Solis Invictior the birthday of the Unconquerable Sun. The holiday honored the strength of the sun and the fertility it would soon bring to the earth.

In 375 A.D., the [Catholic] Church announced that the birth date of Christ had been discovered to be December 25, and allowed some of the light-hearted customs of the older celebration, such as feasting, dancing and the exchange of gifts, to be incorporated into the reverent observance of Christmas. The use of greenery, however, popularly used to decorate homes and holy places during Saturnalia, was still prohibited as pagan idolatry. (p.88)

And,

Certain popular holidays, such as Yule, and customs such as lighting candles and offering small sacrifices under certain holy trees could not be easily suppressed, so they were given new meanings. Yuletide rituals were incorporated into Christmas. The candles were lit to remember Christ as light of the world. The holy offerings came to symbolize the gifts the wise men brought. (p. 91)

She also most interestingly says:

Many people like to de-emphasize our pagan heritage. We have been taught to associate paganism with violent practices and, therefore, find it threatening to see pagan aspects in our modern 'civilized' religions. Yet paganism is much more than human sacrifice. It is part of our spiritual past. In the case of the Christmas Tree, this knowledge can enrich the celebration of the ritual for even the most fundamental Christian and revitalize the winter holidays for those who are not. (p. 5)

Additionally, *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Vol. A-C, p. 804) states:

Gradually a number of the prevailing practices of the nations into which Christianity came were assimilated and were combined with the religious ceremonies surrounding

Christmas. The assimilation of such practices generally represented efforts by Christians to transform or absorb otherwise pagan practices.

In *The Glory and Pageantry of Christmas* by the editors of Time-Life Books, the following is acknowledged:

Christians began absorbing these old customs and infusing them with Christian meaning in order to help spread the faith. Many Church fathers considered the method dangerous . . .

But most of the Christian missionaries who moved into Central and Western Europe as the Roman Empire crumbled, followed the advice of Gregory the Great. He wrote, in 597, that they should not try to put down pagan customs "upon the sudden," but adapt them "to the praise of God." (p. 114)

Was this godly advice? Not at all! In *Christmas Traditions* by William Muir Auld, he states:

. . . St. Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople (398-403) . . . makes reference to the heathen festival of the sun-god and says, "On this day also the Birthday of Christ was lately fixed at Rome in order that while the heathen were busy with their profane ceremonies the Christians might perform their sacred rites undisturbed. They call this (Dec.25, . . .), the Birthday of the Invincible One (Mithra); but who so invincible as the Lord? They call it the Birthday of the Solar Disc; but Christ is the Sun of Righteousness." (p. 31-32)

This is very deceptive, and is not what God has called saints to do (Romans 12:9, "**Abhor what is evil.**").

During the Middle Ages, Christmas was linked up to something very wicked. Notice what Frank Muir says in his book *Christmas Customs and Traditions*:

All Hallows Eve, 31 October, was traditionally the day on which the Lord of Misrule was appointed for the Christmas to come. He would then reign through till Candlemas, 2 February. Known by other names, "The Master of Merry Disport", "The Abbot of Unreason", "Christmas King", . . . The Lord of Misrule was the personification of the spirit of disorder, fun and merrymaking which made the Christmas holidays something to look forward to in the Middle Ages; (p. 13)

The Lord of Misrule was a principal ingredient in the medieval celebration of Christmas. However, his revelries were far too pagan for the Puritans of the seventeenth century who violently attacked him and eventually banned his election altogether. (p. 14)

What does this "Lord of Misrule" remind you of? The god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:19)? Satan?

Was the Catholic Church right in assimilating (Christianizing) the evil idol worship of their day? No way! In I Thessalonians 1:8-10, Paul comments that they turned from idols, to the living God. In other words, they turned away from idols. They had nothing to do with them any more. See also 1 Thessalonians 5:22 where Paul exhorts them to "**abstain from every form of evil**", or Acts 14:8-15 where Paul and Barnabas tell the men in Lystra, ". . . **you should turn from these useless things to the living God.**" Their message was not one of assimilation!

II. Christmas Today:

Most of the meaning (at least understood by the masses) of the god "Mithra" (idolatry), the festival of Saturn (idolatry), and the other pagan practices are all but forgotten. Yet, at what point in time did this paganism become holy? It never became holy.

Some look to Romans 14:5-6 in regards to Christmas. But, Romans 14 (notice verse one) speaks of doubtful things. As we will see, this is not a doubtful thing. It is a matter of a false Christ and the worship of God in falsehood, rather than in truth (John 4:24).

Christmas in America today is celebrated basically in four ways:

1. Celebration of the coming of Santa Claus
2. Celebration of the coming of Christ and the coming of Santa Claus
3. Celebration of a secular nature (no Christ, no Santa Claus)
4. Celebration of Christ's birth

How about those who celebrate the coming of Santa Claus? Santa Claus: "He knows when you are sleeping. He knows when you're awake. He knows if you've been bad or good, so be good for goodness sake." These words describe a god (only a god could do such things worldwide). Santa Claus is a false god (an idol, 1 John 5:21). Even though it's all "make-believe", it still is evil. He looks good and clean. 2 Corinthians 11:14 warns us of the schemes of the Devil and his crafty ways. Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. The whole Santa Claus concept is evil to the core (a false god), yet sugar coated to deceive the unsuspecting.

How about those who celebrate the coming of Christ and the coming of Santa Claus? In our culture, it is not unlikely to see a nativity scene along with Santa Claus and his reindeer (some even have Santa Claus in the nativity scene). Is such a thing pleasing in the sight of God, mixing a false god with Christ? No way (e.g. Zephaniah 1:4-5-)!

How about those who celebrate Xmas secularly (no Christ, no Santa Claus)? These folks usually just have a feast, Christmas tree, exchange gifts, etc.. Have you ever pondered the "ghost of Christmas past" in the story of Ebenezer Scrooge? In this story there is no Santa Claus. This "ghost of Christmas past" teaches Mr. Scrooge to "keep

Christmas in his heart." (p. 43 in *Christmas*, by Jane Duden). From a Biblical perspective, it's the demon of Christmas past. Knowing the whole world lies in the sway of the wicked one (1 John 5:19), this is an interesting well-known and common tale. The story may be fictional, but there is an agenda nevertheless (1 John 5:19; Revelation 12:9).

Something else that we should take note of is a comment made in the *Solstice Evergreen*, by Sheryl Ann Karas. She was raised in a Jewish family and she says this about Christmas:

What I yearned for was the magic, the specialness of the day. And the most magical thing of all for me was the Christmas Tree. (p. 3)

And,

Throughout the Christmas season celebrations include the tree as a centerpiece. Carols are sung around it. Gifts are exchanged beneath it. Christmas dinner guests take special care to compliment the hosts on its beauty. Nobody claims to worship the tree, but if a visitor from another planet interpreted these rituals in such a way it would hardly be surprising.

And,

Why else would anyone do something so strange, so whimsical, and so special? (p. 8)

And,

The Christmas Tree is not just a pretty thing to look at. It has a special place in the spiritual history of us all and, since its ancient symbolism is embedded in our familiar modern religions, it still has the power to stir us deep in our primal souls. (p. 106)

Granted, people don't claim to "worship" their Christmas tree. But, are they? Remember the song, "Oh Christmas tree, oh Christmas tree . . ." If you compare the Christmas tree with Jeremiah 10:1-4, there are some striking similarities.

How about those who simply celebrate Xmas as a celebration of Christ's birth? First of all, the Christ of "Christmas" is not the Christ of the Bible. Here are three sound reasons why we should come to such a conclusion:

I. It is not Biblical (i.e., not from Christ).

None of the practices associated with Christmas are Biblical. December 25, for a date of the Lord's birth, is a one out of 365 chance to be true (which was actually the birthday of the false god, Mithra). This whole "Christmas" idea didn't come along until 300 years after Christ was born. When was the first "Christmas" (the first Noel)? It was

not in the year of our Lord's birth. The first "Christmas" was not until sometime in the 4th century when the Catholic Church, instead of opposing evil, adopted it.

II. Christ is Holy (i.e., separate, Hebrews 7:26).

A. The term "Christmas" is blasphemous. Its etymology (word history) is from "Christ-mass", "mass" being the [Catholic](#) Church's Communion (the Eucharist) where they claim the bread and juice turn into the actual body and blood of Jesus (called "transubstantiation"). Christ is sacrificed at each mass. This goes directly against Hebrews 9:27-28; 10:11-18.

B. From the first Christmas to the present day, Christmas has always been associated with idolatry and wicked superstitious customs (in the past, Mithra, the sun god; today, Santa Claus, magic, sorcery, the god of materialism). The Holy Christ of the Bible calls people to repent from their paganism (Acts 17:16-31), not to "Christianize" it.

III. It's a false christ.

The world (overall, especially here in America) adores (loves, worships) the Christ of Christmas. The world abhors (hates, rejects) the true Christ (John 1:11; 7:7). [Mormons](#) have their Christ. [Jehovah Witnesses](#) have their Christ. Unitarians have their Christ. [Catholics](#) have their Christ. Christmas has its Christ (which is basically a Catholic Christ).

When Jesus Christ returns, do you think He will return as the Christ of Christmas (Revelation 19:11-16)? Certainly not! Even when He came as a babe, this prophecy was made concerning Him, "...a sign which will be spoken against..." (Luke 2:34). The world hates the true Christ.

Someone might say, "Well, when we celebrate Christmas, we are celebrating the birth of the Christ of the Bible." That's a lie! The Christ of Christmas is not the Christ of the Bible. The Israelites were told the same kind of lie in Exodus 32:4-5 with the golden calf. They were told,

This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!

And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord." (Hebrew "to Yahweh").

Jesus said in John 4:24,

God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

What is to be our perspective towards evil and a false "Christ"? It is to be this:

Little children, keep yourselves from idols. (1 John 5:21)

We are to flee idolatry (1 Corinthians 10:14), "**Abhor what is evil.**" (Romans 12:9), "**And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.**" (Ephesians 5:8-11). We are to turn away from evil (1 Peter 3:11) and "**not imitate evil**" (3 John 11).

When we think about worshiping Christ and celebrating His birth, we should also consider what the Lord told the Israelites in Deuteronomy 12:30-32:

take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, . . . and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, "How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise." You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way. (i.e., in the same way or manner that the pagans worship their gods).

It is a serious error to worship God in the wrong way. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, found this out the hard way when they offered up the wrong kind of incense to the Lord in Leviticus 10. The Lord killed them with fire! Should we not take heed to the words of Moses as he exhorted Aaron in regards to this event?

This is what the Lord spoke, saying, "By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified." (Leviticus 10:3)

[John MacArthur](#) wrote in his booklet, *Six Ways Satan Is Stealing Christmas*,

"If you've been missing the reality of Christmas in your life, know that if you receive the Lord Jesus Christ and believe in His name, Christmas will become real to you". (p. 20)

Is this what we want - Christmas to "become real" to people? A true Christian would not want a false christ to "become real" to people.

Consider a few questions: What kind of message are we sending the world in celebrating Christmas? That God is ecumenical, or eclectic? Or, that He is Holy? Is Christmas a clear picture of the gospel? Hardly! What is core to the gospel? Repentance! Repentance from what? All your wicked ways (Isaiah 55:6-7). Christmas is a billboard of a blend of wickedness and Christianity; thus not constituting a complete repentance from all wickedness. What are we trying to avoid by "Christianizing" Christmas? Persecution (being an outcast)! The fear of man brings a snare (Proverbs 29:25). People resist this, because they have their hearts (minds) on this world (earth), not on the things above (Colossians 3:2).

What's the problem with celebrating Jesus' birth on December 25? The problem is that it is a lie. It is not the birth of the true Christ that is being celebrated. It is the birth of a false Christ - which is idolatry - which is demonic (Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17; 2 Chronicles 11:15; Psalm 106:37; I Corinthians 10:20-21). The Christ of Christmas, who is loved by the world, was never conceived in Mary's womb. This false Christ is either a demon (or demons) or Satan himself, and neither have been born into the human race for the propitiation of the sins of mankind.

In and of themselves, there is nothing wrong with giving gifts or having a feast, but when it is done in the name of a false christ (idolatry), it is to be opposed (Romans 12:9). As the true Christ condemned the "Christians" of Pergamos and Thyatira for eating things in the name of an idol (Revelation 2:14, 20), so should we oppose that which is done in the name of this modern, yet deceptive, practice of idolatry called Christmas.

We should also note that Jesus refused to line Himself up with the practices of the religion of His day (the "right one", Judaism and their practices, and the Pharisees). How much more would He refuse to line Himself up with Santa Claus and all the trappings of this "Christ-mass"?

What has God called us to? A holy life!

But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15-16; see also Hebrews 12:14)

The Psalmist calls out in Psalm 94:16,

Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? Who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

Believers are called to call the world to repentance. That's what Jesus' message was (Matthew 4:17), not to make them feel good or assimilate their ways into ours (when it is evil), or our ways into theirs. As Romans 12:1 says, "**Do not be conformed to this world.**" [By the way, if family problems are encountered because of a refusal to celebrate Christmas, see Luke 12:49-53.]

[John MacArthur](#) wrote,

Christians today are generally not opposed to celebrating Christmas. The holiday itself is nothing, and observing it is not a question of right or wrong. (*God With Us*, copyright 1989, p. 25)

Is that our standard? If Christians today aren't opposed to it then neither should we? Or, is it true that "the holiday itself is nothing" (Santa Claus -- a make-believe false god, a false christ, and the "spirit of Christmas" - a demon or demons, or Satan himself)? Let us not be persuaded by what others are doing around us (Paul had Demas leave him, 2 Timothy 4:10; and all forsook him, 2 Timothy 1:13-15), but let us be persuaded by the Scriptures and apply them with zeal (Psalm 119:60).

When was the last time you heard someone preach on 1 Corinthians 16:22, "**If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed**"? Some things are not popular, thus you don't hear them very often (if ever). Speaking against Christmas is certainly not popular, but let's face the facts and ask God to deliver us from the brainwashing of the society in which we live. May He grant to us lives that fully please

Him (holy, separate from all evil) and that are ever increasing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:10).

What's Wrong With Christmas?

(A synopsis of the Christmas issue)

Go to any public library and obtain any book that covers the history of Christmas and you will quickly find the following:

The first Christmas was not celebrated until the 4th century A. D. when the Catholic Church of that time accommodated the pagan practices of their day. The merrymaking, exchanging of gifts, etc. came from the festival of Saturnalia (a festival to the god, Saturn) and the date, December 25, was an adaptation of the birthday of Mithra (the sun god). Therefore, instead of calling these practices evil and opposing them (idolatry, false religion, and worship of false gods), the Catholic Church fabricated and proclaimed that Jesus was born on December 25 (there is absolutely no known truth in this), and the festival of Saturnalia and the birthday of Mithra were now going to be celebrated as the birthday of Christ.

So what! Who cares if this is the background of Christmas? What difference does it make? When we celebrate Christmas, we don't even think of such things. True, but understanding its history can help us understand our present situation.

Did the Catholic Church of the 4th century, in adapting ("Christianizing") the pagan practices of their day, obey the following commands of God? No, they did not.

1 Corinthians 10:14 & 19-20: ". . . flee from idolatry." "What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons."

1 Thessalonians 1:8-10 (they turned from idols); 5:22: "Abstain from every form of evil." See also Acts 14:8-15.

1 John 5:21: ". . . keep yourselves from idols."

Romans 12:9: "Abhor what is evil."

Ephesians 5:8-11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.";

1 Peter 3:11: (Turn away from evil.)

3 John 11: ". . . do not imitate what is evil,"

The Catholic Church of the 4th century did not oppose the evil idolatry of its day, but they actually participated in it by giving them new names. Was this pleasing in the sight of God? Not at all! What about today? Should Christians participate in Christmas? Should they do as the 4th century Catholic Church did (take a pagan holiday and "Christianize" it)?

As we face this issue, it must be understood that we have inherited 1600 years of deceit. The idea that Jesus was born on December 25 is made up (no man on earth knows when He was born). All the practices that surround it (giving gifts, Christmas trees, etc.) are all rooted in pagan practices of the past and have absolutely no Biblical foundation whatsoever. Therefore, the celebration of Christ's birth (Christmas) and the way it is celebrated are not found anywhere in the Bible, and everything about it (the date and manner of celebration) is not from God. What is not from God, and is of a spiritual nature, is from the domain of the Devil (Ephesians 6:12; Revelation 12:9; John 8:44).

From the first Christmas to the present day, Christmas has *always* been associated with idolatry and wicked superstitious customs (in the past, Mithra, the sun god; today, Santa Claus, magic, sorcery, the god of materialism). Is this something the Christ of Scripture would associate Himself with? Certainly not!

Christ is Holy. What does it mean to be holy? Literally, it means to be "set apart", or "separate". Jesus Christ refused to line Himself up with the religion of His day ("the right one", Judaism and their practices, the Pharisees, etc.). How much more would He refuse to line Himself up with Santa Claus (a make-believe false god, "He knows when you've been bad or good."), and all the trappings of this "Christ-mass".

In fact, the word "Christmas" comes from the blasphemous term "Christ" and "mass". The mass comes from the Catholic Church where they teach that the bread and juice of Communion (the Eucharist) actually turns into the literal body and blood of Jesus (transubstantiation), and Christ is sacrificed (offered up) again at each mass (this goes directly against Hebrews 9:27-28 and 10:1 1-18). The very term itself "Christmas" actually **degrades our Lord**.

Furthermore, the Christ portrayed in Christmas is not the Christ described in the Bible. This "Christ-child" of Christmas is adored (loved, worshiped) by the world. Most everybody loves this "Christ-child". The Christ of holy writ is hated by the world. They crucified Him, often opposed Him, and Jesus said Himself that they hated Him (John 15:18, 24-25); and they still hate Him today. Nothing has changed.

There are many false Christs in the world today. Mormons have their definition of who Christ is. The Jehovah Witnesses have their Christ. The Unitarians have their Christ. The Catholics have their Christ. And, Christmas (which traditionally is a Catholic Christ) has its Christ. Even when Christ was a babe, this prophecy was made concerning Him, ". . . a sign which will be spoken against . . ." (Luke 2:34). Do people speak against this Christ of Christmas? For the most part, no.

What's wrong with celebrating Christmas just simply and solely as a celebration of Christ's birth? The error comes to light and is seen when we realize that a celebration of Christ's birth is a form of worship. Everything surrounding Christmas is not from God's Word. And when it comes to worship, God has said, "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:24)

For the Christian who wants to serve God and please Him in every way (Colossians 1:10; Ephesians 5:10), what has God called us to? He has called us to live holy lives, separate and distinct from this present evil age (see 1 Peter 1:13-16; 2 Corinthians 6:14, 7:1; Psalm 94:16; Romans 12:1-2). As He exhorts us to "Abhor what is evil" (Romans 12:9), as we endeavor to be unstained from the world (James 1:27), and as we pursue holiness ("without which no one will see the Lord", Hebrews 12:14), we are not only to refuse to celebrate Christmas, but we are actually to hate it (Psalm 119:104, 128), expose it for what it really is (a pagan holiday, Ephesians 5:11), and oppose it altogether, calling out to this lost world that God is Holy! That they had better repent from their wicked ways (Isaiah 55:6-7), for judgment is surely coming. The wrath of God does not slumber (Luke 3:7, Romans 1:18, 2 Peter 2:3), and the fire of His fury is on its way (Isaiah 66:15-16, 2 Thessalonians 1 :7-9). This was and is the message of the true Christ, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17).

In this study on **CHRISTMAS, A Biblical Perspective**, it covers much about this pagan holiday. Even Christians today, still participate in these heathen holidays as well as Easter, Halloween, etc. Are we following the Roman Catholic Church? One needs to read The Two Babylon's by Alexander Hislop, by Chick Publication. It is not an easy book to read; therefore I would recommend taking your time.

I have also attached with this study, **WHAT'S WRONG WITH CHRISTMAS?** The truth about these heathen holidays.

Your Bible researcher,

Richard Beaulac