

Should Christians celebrate Christmas?

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: QA74

Scripture doesn't specifically command believers to celebrate Christmas--there are no prescribed "Holy Days" the church must observe. In fact, Christmas was not observed as a holiday until well after the biblical era. It wasn't until the mid-fifth century that Christmas received any official recognition.

We believe celebrating Christmas is not a question of right or wrong since Romans 14:5-6 provides us with the liberty to decide whether or not to observe special days:

One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks (Rom. 14: 5-6).

According to these verses, a Christian can rightfully set aside any day--including Christmas--as a day for the Lord. We believe Christmas affords believers with a great opportunity to exalt Jesus Christ.

First, the Christmas season reminds us of the great truths of the Incarnation. Remembering important truths about Christ and the gospel is a prevalent New Testament theme (1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Peter 1:12-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:5). Truth needs repetition because we so easily forget it. So we should celebrate Christmas to *remember* the birth of Christ and to marvel over the mystery of the Incarnation.

Christmas can also be a time for reverent *worship*. The shepherds glorified and praised God for the birth of Jesus the Messiah. They rejoiced when the angels proclaimed that in Bethlehem was born a Savior, Christ the Lord (Luke 2:11). The babe laid in the manger that day is our Savior, the "Lord of lords and King of kings" (Matthew 1:21; Revelation 17:14).

Finally, people tend to be more open to the gospel during the Christmas holidays. We should take advantage of that openness to *witness* to them of the saving grace of God through Jesus Christ. Christmas is chiefly about the promised Messiah who came to save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). The holiday provides us with a wonderful opportunity to share this truth.

Although our society has muddled the message of Christmas through consumerism, myths and empty traditions, we should not let these distract us from appreciating the real meaning of Christmas. Let us take advantage of this opportunity to *remember* Him, *worship* Him and faithfully *witness* of Him.

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