

Christmas

Text: Galatians 4:10-11

Introduction:

- A. I was asked by a little girl, "Is it wrong for me to sing 'Silent Night' and other religious Christmas carols in our school's Christmas pageant?"
 - B. The popular plea is "Put Christ back into Christmas," but we ask, "Was He ever there to begin with?"
 - C. Should we observe Christmas?
- I. Should we observe Christmas as a religious holy day?
- A. some Bible principles:
 1. We must have scriptural authority for all that we do. - Colossians 3:17; John 4:23-24; 17:17
 2. We dare not allow human tradition to be our spiritual guide.- Matthew 15:1-9
 - B. the origin of Christmas:
 1. The time of Christ's birth is unknown.- Luke 2:8; "... the Jews sent out their flocks into the mountainous and desert regions during the summer months, and took them up in the latter part of October or the first of November, when the cold weather commenced. While away in these deserts and mountainous regions, it was proper that there should be some one to attend them to keep them from staying, and from the ravages of wolves and other wild beasts. It is probable from this that our Savior was born before the 25th of December, or before what we call Christmas. At that time it is cold, and especially in the high and mountainous regions about Bethlehem., But the exact time of his birth is unknown; there is no way to ascertain it. By different learned men it has been fixed at each month of the year. Nor is it of any consequence to know the time; if it were, God would have preserved the record of it. Matters of moment are clearly revealed; those which he regards as of no importance are concealed" (Albert Barnes, **Notes On The New Testament**. 2:18-19).
 2. Christmas is of pagan and Catholic origin.- e.g. librarian in El Dorado; "Scholars do not know the exact date of Christ's birth. For more than 300 years, people observed His birthday on various dates. In AD 354, Bishop Liberius of Rome ordered the people to celebrate on December 25. He probably chose this date because the people of Rome already observed it as the Feast of Saturn, celebrating the birthday of the sun. Christians honored Christ instead of Saturn, as the Light of the World. The Christians of Egypt celebrated Christmas on January 6, and many members of the Eastern Orthodox Church still observe this date"(**The World Book Encyclopedia**. 3:416).
 - C. Therefore, Christians should NOT observe Christmas as a religious holy day because:
 1. It is unauthorized. - 2 John 9
 2. We are forbidden to remember special holy days. - Colossians 2:14-17; Galatians 4:10-11
 3. The only day spiritually special to Christians is the first day of the week.- Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2
 4. We are to remember the death of Christ, not His birthday. - I Corinthians 11:26
- II. Should we observe Christmas socially as a national holiday?
- A. Paul's teaching on matters of liberty:

1. A Christian may socially observe customs that some view as religious. - 1 Corinthians 8:4;10:25-27
 2. However, three important principles must be observed.
 - a. We must not cause an unbeliever to think we are worshipping. - 1 Corinthians 10:27-29
 - b. We must not cause a weak brother to stumble. - 1 Corinthians 8: 9
 - c. We must seek the spiritual good of others in all that we do. - 1 Corinthians 10:31-33
 3. These principles specifically apply to the remembering of days. - Romans 14:5-6
 - a. A social practice is not sinful simply because it has a religious background. - e.g. names of days of the week; "Sunday-Sun's day, Monday-Moon's day, Tuesday-Tiw's day, Wednesday-Woden's day, Thursday-Thor's day, Friday-Frigg's day, Saturday-Seterne's day, these being the god of the sun, moon, sky and war, war, thunder, goddess of the sky, and god of seed sowing, respectively. Ency. Britannica"(Dave Bradford, **Provoker** [Dec. 11, 1975]. 3).
 - b. Binding the non-observance of matters of liberty s just as wrong as binding their observance. - e.g., Is it wrong to do on December 25 what may be done on July 29?
- B. Paul's example on a matter of liberty- Acts 21:18-26
- Conclusion:
- A. The religious observance of Christmas as the birthday of Christ is wrong and sinful.- Galatians 4:10-11
 - B. The social observance of Christmas as a national holiday is a matter of liberty.- Romans 14:5