

**General Topics :: Christmas****Christmas - posted by Totality (), on: 2008/12/6 22:55**

What is the importance of Christmas and is there much of a point in celebrating it?

I am not asking because I don't, i just want to know because of the many stories I've heard of many in history refusing to celebrate it.

Re: Christmas - posted by White_Stone (), on: 2008/12/6 23:07

Hello,

Glad you brought it up. We do not celebrate it, it is not Scriptural and is too closely connected to the Roman Catholic Church and Paganism.

Santa is detestable to me, along with the sentimentalization that goes with that worldly holiday.

Here's hoping someone who is more articulate than myself will speak forth on the subject. I have researched it and read some very clarifying pieces.

Kind regards,
white stone

Re: - posted by Totality (), on: 2008/12/6 23:14

So, what does it have to do with Roman Catholicism?

ps. Santa is also detestable to me; an omniscient being other than Him? yea...

Thank you for your reply.

Re: Cristes Maesse - posted by savannah, on: 2008/12/7 0:53

"The word Christmas comes from "Cristes Maesse", an early English phrase that means "Mass of Christ." (World Book Encyclopedia)

"On Dec. 25, 274, Aurelian had proclaimed the sun-god principal patron of the empire and dedicated a temple to him in the Campus Martius. Christmas originated at a time when the cult of the sun was particularly strong in Rome." (New Catholic Encyclopedia)

The "Mass" in Roman Catholicism is 'the supreme act of worship'. "In the Christian law, the supreme sacrifice is that of the Mass...The supreme act of worship consists essentially in an offering of a worthy victim to God, the offering made by a proper person, as a priest, the destruction of the victim." (Catholic Encyclopedia)

"The myth of Mithra formed the origin of the cult of Mithraism, which flourished in the Roman Empire and was for a time the chief rival of Christianity.... One of the most well known festivals of ancient Rome was the saturnalia, a winter festival celebrated from December 17-24. Because it was a time of wild merry making and domestic celebrations, businesses, schools, and law courts were closed so that the public could feast, dance, gamble, and generally enjoy itself to the fullest. December 25, the birthday of Mithra, the Iranian god of light and the contract and the day devoted to the invincible sun, as well as the day after the Saturnalia, was adopted by the church as Christmas, the nativity of Christ, to counteract the effects of these festivals." (Encyclopedia Britannica)

Elves, mistletoe, ivy, yule are all associated with the occultic practices of the Nordic and Druid pagans. The pagan winter equinox festival of Saturnalia, characterized by merriment, evergreen trees, and exchanges of gifts, were all incorporated into the Christ-Mass celebration of Roman Catholicism.

This Mass-acre of Christ on the altars of Rome and around the world by their priests is where this abomination began to be adopted by the professing church and those religious men plagued by so many superstitious practices.

And so this ceremony of the marriage of paganism with Romanism has borne its bad fruit to this present day among so many.

Sadly, many of God's own have fallen for this lie that God is neutral insofar as their participation in heathen holi-days.

As the world demands, "I want my MTV", so others who ought to know better demand, "I want my christmas".

Just another commonality between the world and the professing church not being discerned in the Light of His Holiness which we are also called to.

2 Cor. 6:14-18 And be ye not yoke-fellows with them that believe not: for what fellowship hath righteousness with iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? or what concord hath the Messiah with Satan? or what part hath a believer with an unbeliever? or what agreement hath the temple of God with that of demons? For ye are the temple of the living God; as it is said, I will dwell among them, and walk among them, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come ye out from among them, and be ye separate from them, saith the Lord; and come not near the unclean thing, and I will receive you; and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be sons and daughters to me, saith the Lord Almighty.

"On a high and lofty mountain you have set your bed, and there you went up to offer sacrifice.

Behind the door and the doorpost you have set up your memorial; for, deserting me, you have uncovered your bed, you have gone up to it, you have made it wide; and you have made a covenant for yourself with them, you have loved their bed, you have looked on nakedness." (Isa. 57:7-8)

One commentator writes,

Superstitious persons commit fornication with their idols, because, by forsaking the simplicity of the word, they violate the bond of that holy marriage into which God has entered with them, and prostitute themselves to Satan. But now Isaiah intended to express something more; for, when he says that they set up their bed on a lofty place, he means that they are not at all ashamed of their shameful conduct. As a harlot, who has lost all shame, dreads not the sight of men, and cares not about her reputation, so they openly and shamefully committed fornication in a lofty and conspicuous place. He compares altars and groves to "beds" on which that accursed crime is committed, and he compares men who sacrifice on them to impudent and abandoned harlots...They imagined, indeed, that in doing so they were rendering obedience to God; but the Lord rejects all that men contrive according to their own pleasure, and abhors that licentiousness."

Re: Christmas - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/12/7 1:33

If you are new to SermonIndex this has become something of annual rite of it's own ...

That is, that a whole range of opinion is expressed and too often it is that which constitutes strife.

(http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id8498&forum35) ~ Christmas Links at SermonIndex
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This is a somewhat older post with what was up to that point current. If you do a search of this site you will find a great deal more.

For what it's worth, many of us here recognize the correlations, understand the issues and still choose to celebrate this special time of the year. For many it is very fond memories of childhood and love of family, for others it is that very lack. Others are convinced of the origins and any observance whatsoever is _____.

There is really no getting around the fact that it means completely different things to different people, even many of the men of God who are appealed to on this site, long since gone from this earth celebrated Christmas, recognized the error and extravagances but either had a fondness of - or at least a tolerance of those who differed.

I anticipated this and have given some thought to it as usual. One of the things that jumped up in my thoughts in this anti

cipation was the focus on *Pagan*. What it means, what it meant then and what it is understood to be now. My thoughts were that it seems it is Christmas that gets this lofty title\aberration practically alone. All throughout the year hardly a notice of a mention. The strange thing about it, taken to it's excess is that it could be applied to just about everything. You drive a Pagan car on Pagan roads. Fill it up at a Pagan gas station, drive to the Pagan grocery store and load it with food. You stop at a Pagan stop light, past all the pagan stores and come Monday morning you will drive your Pagan car to your Pagan place of employment ...

Trust that we have heard every conceivable argument and then some, weighed every practical concern, understood the Catholic Church history and nasuem

I am midstream reading a very good article from Lampert Dolphin talking about the times we are living in and with out saying so much in the same words, the very destruction of the family in our time. Here is bit;

Sex, Marriage, Family

Back in the '40s divorce in America was very rare�about 8% as I recall. Now it is 50% even among Christians (http://www.divorcereform.org/rates.html). As a boy I took it for granted that one simply did not divorce for any reason, even if one had to live with a difficult marriage. Parents had to stick it out for the duration, if only for the well-being of the kids. I remember when divorced men were shunned by prospective employers!�

Marriage vows are covenants (solemn promises by the parties involved), and God takes covenants very seriously. Where would we be, or instance, if Jesus Christ annulled his marriage plans with us, His church�for good cause?�

But ours is no longer a covenant keeping society. We have been unfaithful in our vows to God and so we also do not keep our promises and commitments. �

One of the rationalizations for easy divorce in recent decades has been the claim that our children would be better off if their unhappy parents parted company. Now, however, it's clear that divorce is very damaging, and permanently so, to children of any age.�

No one of us has a God-given right to pursue his or her personal dreams and ambitions at the expense of home and family. But our life-style norms in this country are now quite the opposite of what God asks of us. The model Jesus gave us is one of integrity and faithfulness in all we do, of self-giving love, dying to our own selfishness, and sacrificially giving ourselves to the well-being of others.�

Consequences? Countless men and women in the younger generation are growing up now with no positive examples of a good marriage for them to imitate. (Most animals throw their offspring out of the nest a short season after birth, but human boys and girls need nearly two decades of nurturing and training). Children need role models of how a man or a woman is supposed to live in a world under God. Functioning parents and quality family life forms the fabric of society.

In the '40s sexual immorality was very rare, gays were still in the closet. Adultery was scandalous, sex before marriage was unthinkable. Now? Starting in Middle School, children are taught that they need to find their own personal sexual preferences. They should begin to be exploring their sexuality as soon as possible, says the teacher. Sexually abstinent virgins of either sex are now ridiculed as weird and dysfunctional--from junior high school and up.

A slick magazine from Stanford, which came to me this summer, contained an article by one of the deans at the University who noted that Stanford students were cohabitating regularly. She said that "hook ups" were now common on campus. I had to ask someone. Hook Ups, I learned, are brief sexual encounters arranged on the spot--one-time-only sexual encounters with a partial stranger of either sex. Then I learned that there was now a whole new generation of younger homosexuals (aged 16-25) who find it emotionally "safer" and easier to go for same sex partnerships rather than trying for a more demanding marriage relationship, especially when there is not much support coming from parents on both sides. �

Without good role models for manhood and womanhood, and with generally poor models of what marriage is supposed to look like, living temporarily with a girl friend (or a boyfriend) seems the best way to live for many in the younger set today. Like marriage, "the church" is also widely believed to be an archaic, irrelevant institution having nothing important to say to the next generation.

I think we have far more serious problems facing us and if Christmas is that which means drawing a family together in spite of, in contradiction to where society is heading - If it is *at the least* a consideration of any of what it all means at it's core ...

If you are one who has strong convictions otherwise, it is understood. I just do not know that there is much necessity in trying to convince anyone else here, I would not attempt the conversion either.

Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. Rom 14:4-6

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/7 1:52

It was November 26th, two years ago, that the Lord got a hold of me. I remember, that first Christmas, being horrified by the holiday and the things that surrounded me.

The frazzled insanity of the people, the foolish and wicked music, the silly lights and the endless advertising.

Just the previous year, I had put up at least eight christmas trees and had decorated every window on three floors of my house - and just to top it all off, I had found a way to attach a large bright star to the peak of the roof by reaching out of the attic window. My house is on a hill and the star could be seen from a great distance. I also had a large collection of christmas music, as I had been adding to it for many years.

But suddenly, all of it made no sense - and had become an offense.

I tried listening to the music, but found myself skipping from one song to the next as the meaning behind the lyrics became clear. On the classic songs, the background music and noise drowned out the meaning of the words. By the third album I quit trying to find anything acceptable.

I tried to send out christmas cards, but could not even get past the thought of it.

Everywhere I looked there were lights - all of that effort, and for what? It was as if they were mocking God - I tried to look away, but couldn't, because they were everywhere.

I remember being very miserable because no one could figure out what was "wrong" with me - and I was at a loss as to how to explain it.

How do you tell others that they are mocking the very Person that they are supposedly celebrating?

EDIT: After reading the post by crsschk, I would like to state that each man must do as the Lord directs. What I have written is what He has put upon my heart. Last year I sent out cards that I made myself after praying for direction as to what they would contain. This year I plan to do the same.

2nd EDIT: After reading what MrBillPro said, I would also like to state that it was not another Christian making me feel guilty that changed my view on Christmas - it was the Lord - and He did not change my view - He changed my heart.

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Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/12/7 2:28

My best advise is just enjoy it as you feel lead and please don't let others influence you one way or the other. We enjoy it just as the many generations of my family have, we exchange gifts and have all the family over for food and fellowship, some watch football games and some set at the dining table and drink coffee and chat and the children either play games or go outdoors and have fun, this is what were going to do. We all also as we always do thank God for the many Blessings he has provided us and the Blessing of having us all still here for another Christmas together. I don't mean to sound harsh, but personally I really don't care how others feel about how we personally celebrate our family Christmas together and never have, but I also do respect others and the way they celebrate or don't celebrate. I have finally overcome one of the toughest things I have ever overcome in my life in the past few years, and that is not to let Christians or anyone else make me feel guilty about the way my family celebrates Holidays. Great lyrics to a song I heard once.

I wanna live, live and let live

I want all the love this life has to give

I wanna smile and be friendly with you

I wanna live and let you live some too

Re: - posted by Totality (), on: 2008/12/7 6:45

thank you all for your replies. I have read each of them carefully. I only made this thread to see what the Scriptures said about it, and after posting it I realized that I have never read anything about it. I'll pray about it and see what He will have me do.

Thank you all for your replies,

Toality

Re: - posted by KathleenP (), on: 2008/12/7 9:21

HeartSong, I use this holiday as you do, one to freely express the salvation of the Lord through homemade cards.

I have long been grieved by the christian embracing of a holiday that makes many despondant and suicidal. I buried my own brother on Christmas Eve. Something doesn't quite make sense if a supposedly godly holiday causes these sorts of reactions. Brother Paul West already stated that he and his wife don't look forward to this time of year because of the phone calls he receives.(he is a mortician)

I have not sternly walked away from all aspects of this holiday. I join my unsaved family and saved as well in whatever their convictions are. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

I just attempt to utilize the gospel of Jesus wherever and whenever the doors are open.

Hope this helps.

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/12/7 9:40

Quote:
----- Brother Paul West already stated that he and his wife don't look forward to this time of year because of the phone calls he receives.
(he is a mortician)

Although this can be a depressing time for many...and a time where certain believers begin to come out of the woodwork and decry the alleged paganism and wicked inception of Christmas, there are those who are not effected by all the hooplah, just like there were those believers that Paul wrote about in 1 Corinthians 8 who could eat meat sacrificed to idols and not freak out (Paul was one of them); eating meat or not eating meat doesn't bring you any closer to God, and choosing to celebrate Christmas and exchanging gifts or choosing not to celebrate the holiday commends us not in any way either. There are those who esteem all days to be the same, and if I and my family choose to acknowledge one day as the notional birth of the Messiah and give thanks to God by song and felicity in heart, we do it as unto the Lord, and it should be of no judgmental concern to anyone - except, of course, to those who are weak.

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Whether we eat or drink or sing or celebrate Christmas or Easter we do all things to the Lord - and not to man - and we are not to judge the other's weaker or stronger conviction, for God is able to make both the weaker *and* the stronger stand. The weaker brother or sister will cry: "Pagan custom! Abomination!"; the more mature will with a clear conscience sing "Silent Night and Hark! the Harold Angels Sing" and thank God in his heart that Jesus Christ was sent into the world to reconcile sinful man to God - regardless if that day was on Dec. 25, or April 16 or July 4.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/12/7 9:56

Amen, Paul. Same to you Mike.

I love this time of the year...

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by KathleenP (), on: 2008/12/7 10:47

Paul,

I hope I didn't appear as "anti" Christmas in my comment. As I stated in my earlier post, I celebrate with both my saved and unsaved family and use the opportunities presented to share the gospel.

It is one of the few times of year where I can take the initiative and freely speak to many about Jesus.

I pray I did not sound judgemental concerning this issue.

I feel overall, for the unsaved, this holiday is almost always a great let down. It encourages increased debt, loneliness to those who have no family, and a false sense of everything being fine in the world.

Lord bless, Kathleen

Re: Christmas - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/12/7 10:59

Kathleen,

My heart goes out to you, just had a very close call little over a week ago with a relative ...

Quote:
-----What is the importance of Christmas and is there much of a point in celebrating it?

Wanted to come back to the original question, the *importance* have something in mind from Spurgeon, it is something of a read, ties in with one of the links noted earlier (In audio form), perhaps later - It was actually preached on Christmas day ...

I guess the older you get the more your reflections draw back - back to seemingly better times. For myself there is some very deep marrow to draw from. It is likely contained in any number of posts but my parents, my upbringing as a "Catholic" ... I am thankful for it. Mode and manner, all the things realized now, it's really just pressing beyond that to those things instilled, 'caught rather than taught'. One of those is just a very simple, innocent thing - It's rather strange how it has stuck all these long years and as a contrast to today, something that would have the lawsuits flying, the ACLU calling ...

Came across this interesting piece, strange that it is also from my local paper -

(http://www.mercurynews.com/tv/ci_11116554) TV classics of Christmas past still exert a powerful spell

If you read this with an eye towards the little things, it is telling. It is telling in more ways than we might even care to acknowledge. *Why* the timelessness of something so seemingly innocuous? What of *the story*?

What of the difference - today and yet that which still grips children ...

With all the preface here, what I wanted to share was from one of my great heroes of the faith;

Linus.

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?vDKk9rv2hUfA>) Charlie Brown Christmas

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/12/7 11:16

Quote:

-----I pray I did not sound judgemental concerning this issue.

Not at all, dear sister. I agree 100% with your post and can fully sympathize with you.

Quote:

-----I feel overall, for the unsaved, this holiday is almost always are great let down. It encourages increased debt, loneliness to those who have no family, and a false sense of everything being fine in the world.

Absolutely agree. I always approach this time of the year with a sense of both awe and dread. Awe from knowing what this precious season represents (if symbolically), and dread knowing all the worldly things that go along with it, unfortunately. The depression, the debt, etc.

If you chose to celebrate the season, that is wonderful; if not, it is still wonderful. Either way, I realize that I too am a servant of God and I have no inclination to stumble the convictions of this holiday between another servant and the Lord on account of my own beliefs. Let everything be done through a clear conscience and faith, this is what is important to God, for whatever is not of faith is sin.

Re: - posted by KathleenP (), on: 2008/12/7 11:39

Thanks dear saints for your responses. Whatever this season brings our way, or how we view it, I pray we all have opportunities to give an answer to every man of the reason of hope that is within us.

Kathleen

Re: Christmas Mourning - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/12/7 11:51

[Image: <http://www.lastdaysministries.org/Images/content/1000000028/1000030375.jpg>]

Dear saints, I thought I would share this tract by Keith Green that I read years ago and never forgot. He is able to get the point across clearly, and without swerving and stumbling off the side of the road into a wreck.

"I'll never forget the incredible joy and expectation of Christmas. Our house smelled like a Douglas fir. The tinsel and ornaments sparkled in the colored lights. Friends and relatives came to visit... all with smiles and laughter... and all with presents!! The season was full of life, warmth, and giving. They are the very best memories of my childhood. The air outside was cold and crisp. And inside, always the smell of something baking. If anyone asked me to describe "joy" in one word, it would have been Christmas.

I remember taking a drive to an area of town where a whole street prided itself on their Christmas displays and lights. The whole neighborhood spent thousands of dollars to light up their front lawns with scenes of snow, Santas, reindeer, and manger. I always used to wonder what the manger had to do with Santa, candy canes, and jingle bells, but it didn't bother me enough to ask.

When I was about 10 or 11, I noticed the word "Xmas." I wondered what the "X" was for. I concluded it meant "criss," as in "crisscross." It never even entered my mind that it replaced "Christ"! Yes, there were school Christmas plays and other things that talked about the birth of Jesus having something to do with Christmas, but it never really was the main emphasis in my young mind. I only wished that it would be Christmas all year, and Jesus had nothing to do with it! But when I was 21, I met Jesus, and since then it has been Christmas all year... and Jesus has had everything to do with it!

The Origin Of Christmas

In the third century A.D., a wonderful thing happened. Constantine, the Roman emperor, became a Christian. For almost 300 years the Christians had been praying for their emperor's salvation. Nobody believed it was true! But then came the royal decree... Christianity was made the religion of the state. Everyone was strongly urged to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and only deity. At the risk of seeming uncooperative (and believing that it would be safest politically and socially), almost everyone in the empire made "professions of faith" in the new religion. This, of course, delighted Constantine.

After a while there arose a great problem. What were they to do with all their other gods? And what about all the great feasts and celebrations, especially the winter solstice and the spring equinox? Before Constantine's conversion, the whole empire would lustily celebrate these festivals to their gods and goddesses. What would they do now? Constantine knew that, although almost everyone had outwardly confessed Christianity, they were in no way prepared to give up their cherished celebrations. What he had on his hands was a kingdom full of "unconverted converts"!

As the restlessness and dissatisfaction of his people grew, the emperor knew something had to be done. So, in desperation, he declared two major "religious" holidays. They would correspond exactly to the times of the old great celebrations. He declared December 25 (for centuries celebrated as Saturnalia, the birthday of the sun) as the celebration of the birth day of Christ. (Although historians say that Jesus was probably born sometime in October.) A great mass or religious service would be held in honor of Jesus' birth on that day (hence, Christ-mas). He also declared the old holiday of the spring equinox to be the celebration of Christ's resurrection. (The old emphasis of the festival was the worship of the goddess of fertility-which is where we get the Easter Bunny.) The grumbling masses were thus quieted when they realized that they could once again celebrate their great holidays. Oh yes, the festivals might be called something different, and they might have to go to some "religious ceremonies," but for the most part, things could get back to normal, and their old festivities could again be heartily resumed.

St. Nick

The history of the man Nicholas (who was later made a saint by the Roman Church) is vague and sketchy. But one thing stands out about his character - he loved the poor and needy, and at every Christmas he used to give gifts to the widows and orphans. He was loved by all, especially children. This is how the tradition and practice of gift-giving was started. The folklore fantasy called Santa Claus grew over the centuries and now is the central image of a secular Christmas, where an average of over \$150 each is spent on gifts for every man, woman, and child in the United States alone!

The True Meaning Of Christmas

I've heard a lot of talk (especially by Christians) about the true meaning of Christmas. I've seen Christians go in for all the trappings and trimmings. They spend hours, even days, in department stores trying to figure out what to buy for friends and relatives who already have everything they need ... sitting around the tree and watching nervously while someone opens up the present you got them, as they try to look surprised and squeal with delight... parents teaching their young what they call "a harmless fairy tale" - the story of Santa and how "he's gonna bring you lots of presents, so you better be good." And all the while, a world full of starving, deprived people are silently, invisibly looking in through your living room window begging for a scrap of food, a rag to keep them from shivering to death, and an answer to their misery, suffering, and oppression.

When we consider all the money spent by all of us, during a season that's real meaning is the Father giving us His only Son to come live and die for us, we must cry out against the injustice of an American, Christian people, who have so much and do so little. The true meaning of this season should be to give ourselves to the work of spreading the Gospel. Proclaiming freedom to the captives! Giving them bread to eat, then pointing them to the Bread of Life, to fill their hungry souls.

Some Suggestions

As a part of your Christmas celebration this year, we suggest taking your children to a ghetto, to a hospital, to an orphanage, to an old-age home. Teach them the meaning of giving. Teach them it is foolish for us to spend money on things we don't need, and on things that others don't need. Let them spread joy to those who are miserable! Let them give a smile to an old woman's face, whose own children have forgotten and abandoned her in a convalescent hospital. Let them empty their piggy banks and send the money to missions and the poor. Let there be giving! Costly giving! Let us give our Lord Jesus the whole world for His birthday! The world and the Lord await our response..."

- Keith Green

Re: - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2008/12/7 11:55

"One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God." (Romans 14:5-6)

If you can celebrate it to the glory of the Lord, then do so. If you can't, don't celebrate Christmas.

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/7 12:09

Quote:
-----But when I was 21, I met Jesus, and since then it has been Christmas all year... and Jesus has had everything to do with it! - Keith Green

:-D

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2008/12/7 12:21

What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice. Phil 1:18

Re: - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2008/12/7 12:29

Quote:
-----Glad you brought it up. We do not celebrate it, it is not Scriptural and is too closely connected to the Roman Catholic Church and Paganism.

This isn't only addressed to White Stone, but to all of those who don't celebrate Christmas because of its origins.

I have a question then, if you're not going to celebrate Christmas because of the pagan origins, do you wear a wedding ring, call the days of the week by their common names, etc? The wedding ring and names of the days have pagan origins.

The Quakers wouldn't call the days by the common names because of their connections with different gods. They would call them 1st day, 2nd day, etc.

I don't really care if someone does or doesn't celebrate Christmas, but I think to be totally consistent we need to consider these questions.

No, I do not wear a wedding ring, thank you - posted by White_Stone (), on: 2008/12/7 13:33

The days of the week and the origin of their names was never brought to my attention - there are so many things. . .

I don't wear a wedding ring, not for custom but so as not to give anyone the opinion that I am wealthy enough to afford gold and diamonds. How can I talk with a homeless person or someone who is suffering poverty and not feel hypocritical. My husband and I are not rich. We are not even above poverty level. Why would I want to appear to be something I am not? I do have some rings with precious stones left over from better financial times but I do not wear them any longer. I keep them on a shelf by my kitchen sink and can look at them while washing dishes (yes, we have no dish washer - I am the dishwasher). They remind me of when my husband bought them for me. Those are nice memories tied to the tender care Jesus exercises over us. I see women wearing rings and it no longer seems the thing I should be doing. Too many people are suffering to be flaunting excess on my hands. In the coming hard times, I will may turn the rings into food, for

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that reason I save them.

I don't think I will change the way I name the days of the week at this time. I will pray about it though. I don't want to change to doing it for 'works' sake, however. If I see it as a tool to promote Jesus, then I may do that. Thank you for bringing that up.

Regards,
white stone

Re:, on: 2008/12/7 18:02

Quote:

HomeFree89 wrote:

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I don't really care if someone does or doesn't celebrate Christmas, but I think to be totally consistent we need to consider these questions.

We still use the names of the week just as we still use the term Christmas, but you can be sure that we don't participate in any Thor's Day celebrations, nor do we consider them Christian.

Christmas is the greatest ecumenical tool ever invented, and the more ecumenically minded one is, the more likely they are to participate in Christmas and its trappings. Partake in Christmas if you must and your conscience allows, but please don't refer to it as a Christian Holyday.

One of the better articles I have read on the topic.
http://www.theinvisiblechurch.ca/miscellany/Is_Christmas_Christian.html

"What I'm really questioning is whether you can have a Christian Christmas. The religious aspects are the worst part of Christmas. There is no more pointed illustration of the contrast between cultural religion and biblical faith than Christmas. Christmas promotes an imitation gospel that actually keeps the world from understanding the true gospel. Christmas presents a substitute gospel that the world can easily live with. To the world, the Christian message is simply "love, peace, the spirit of giving, the feeling of good will." That stripped-down "gospel" gives men just enough inoculation to keep them from understanding the true gospel.

The world loves Christmas because Christmas promotes a sentimental picture of a baby in a manger. Christmas keeps Jesus a baby in the manger. Jesus is misrepresented by Christmas. The gospel is misrepresented by Christmas. Christmas is the one time an ungodly person can be religious safely. Most people like to do something religious every once in a while to ease their conscience and convince themselves that they are really a pretty good person after all; and Christmas affords them the perfect opportunity to do that. It's perfectly safe for the most pagan person to join in the Christmas spirit. You can have the Christmas spirit without having the Holy Spirit, without having the mind of Christ.

The very popularity of Christmas should cause the Christians to question it. Anyone and everyone can celebrate Christmas

as without question! Outright pagans, nominal Christians, even Buddhists join in the celebration. If, in reality, December 25 was a date set by God to remember the birth of Jesus, you can be very sure that the world would have nothing to do with it. After all, God has commanded the observance of one day in seven, a day when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Christ, the first day of the week, the Lord's day _ but does the world observe it? Of course not. The world totally disregards it. Shouldn't the Christian be suspicious of a celebration in which the whole sinful world can join without qualms ? There are multitudes of people who continually desecrate the Lord's Day, but somehow have great zeal about being in church at Christmas."

Old Joe

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/12/7 18:56

"Scroogeless" Christmas

By A.W. Tozer

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. —Luke 2:11

In these latter-years of the 20th century, no other season of the year reveals so much religion and so little godliness as the Christmas season.

Now, Dickens to the contrary notwithstanding, I do not believe that we are compelled to choose between old Scrooge and Tiny Tim. Surely there is a middle ground where mature, love-inspired, Spirit-illuminated adults can locate themselves and make up their own minds about that most beautiful but most abused and abased holiday we call Christmas. I for one want to do just that and love everybody in the process.

I never knew an Ebenezer Scrooge. My own childhood was brightened by the annual return of Christmas. My sweet-faced mother struggled to provide a few extras for her family on Christmas morning and somehow she always succeeded. If there was no more than an orange, a popcorn ball and a cheap toy for each of us, it was yet a memorable time for all. Even the old yellow mongrel that lay on the homemade braided rug was on that happy morning treated to a handful of hard candy which he crunched loudly and solemnly to the squealing of delight of the younger children.

The children that later came to my own home could, and I am sure would, testify to the almost unbearable delight Christmas morning brought to them. Their near delirium as they tumbled out of bed and gathered around the tree to unwrap their gifts amid shouts of surprise and delight will never be forgotten by them or by their parents while life and memory endure. No, whoever else might drop in during the day, Scrooge was never there; he—d have died of apoplexy if he had come near the place.

Prayer

You, O Lord, are the Christ of Christmas!

Thought

For most of us Christmas memories of the past are joyous and somewhat nostalgic. No Scrooge characters intruded. But for some, Christmas seasons were not so joyous. It's recognition of the person of Christ that makes Christmas.

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/12/7 18:59

Concentrating on Christ at Christmas

By A.W. Tozer

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.' —Luke 2:13-14

Christmas as it is celebrated today is badly in need of a radical reformation. What was at first a spontaneous expression of an innocent pleasure has been carried to inordinate excess. In one section of Chicago, for instance, the excited citizenry vie with each other each year for the biggest, gaudiest and most vulgar Christmas tree, on the porch, on the lawn, al

ong the street; and one gigantic, flashily dressed and cold but determinedly smiling Santa Claus drives a fully lighted herd of reindeer across the yard and over the house!

How far have we come in the corruption of our tastes from the reverence of the simple shepherds, the chant of the angels and the beauty of the heavenly host! The Star of Bethlehem could not lead a wise man to Christ today; it could not be distinguished amid the millions of artificial lights hung aloft on Main Street by the Merchants Association. No angels could sing loudly enough to make themselves heard above the raucous, earsplitting rendition of "Silent Night" meant to draw customers to the neighborhood stores.

In our mad materialism we have turned beauty into ashes, prostituted every normal emotion and made merchandise of the holiest gift the world ever knew. Christ came to bring peace and we celebrate His coming by making peace impossible for six weeks of each year. Not peace but tension, fatigue and irritation rule the Christmas season. He came to free us of debt and many respond by going deep into debt each year to buy enervating luxuries for people who do not appreciate them. He came to help the poor and we heap gifts upon those who do not need them. The simple token given out of love has been displaced by expensive presents given because we have been caught in a squeeze and don't know how to back out of it. Not the beauty of the Lord our God is found in such a situation, but the ugliness and deformity of human sin.

Prayer

Father, thank You for the Christ of Christmas.

Thought

Making Christ the center of Christmas relieves the tension of shopping and delivers us from the cesspool of commercialism into which we can become submerged. Let's take time to join the angel hosts in praising God and singing "Glory to God in the highest."

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/12/7 19:03

Quote:

Old_Joe wrote:

The very popularity of Christmas should cause the Christians to question it.

Old Joe

Yea Jesus was a pretty popular person guess we should question him also. :-(

We all have our own opinions and I totally respect both sides, but I do not think linking or copying and pasting the Grinch's opinions are fair in a discussion like this, your thoughts should come from your own heart. I could go out on the internet and find literally millions of folks opinions that are pro and con Christmas. :-)

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/7 21:51

This summer I was out walking one night, and came upon an area filled with fireflies. They were twinkling and dancing like nothing I have ever seen before. As I stood there spell bound, it occurred to me that this was God's version of "Christmas lights" - or rather "Christmas lights" are man's version of God's fireflies. However, unlike "Christmas lights" which twinkle in a mechanical way, fireflies are poetry in motion - darting up to the sky as if they are worshipping the Lord.

Oh, the awesome wonder of all that He has created. Why do we think that we need these other things to be complete? All we need is Him.

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2008/12/7 22:04

Quote:
-----The weaker brother or sister will cry: "Pagan custom! Abomination!"; the more mature will with a clear conscience sing "Silent Night and Hark! the Harold Angels Sing" and thank God in his heart that Jesus Christ was sent into the world to reconcile sinful man to God - regardless if th at day was on Dec. 25, or April 16 or July 4.

Why was it necessary, as a moderator, to call those who do not observe Christmas "weaker"? Or more explicitly, to call those who observe Christmas "mature"? I would think as a moderator and therefore a spokesman for SermonIndex, you would guide this discussion with less personal bias, unless it is being indicated that SermonIndex is becoming a pro-Christmas site. I would rather see this not made an issue by the moderators. I think you owe a Scripture-based explanation of why those who prefer not to observe Christmas are less mature than those who do.

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/7 22:23

I contemplated this myself, and as I thought about it, realized that it is true.

Personally I feel so very blessed to have been pulled from the sea of iniquity, that there is no way that I want to find myself back in it. And as I peer into the river that is rushing by, I hesitate to even stick my big toe in for fear that I will be pulled back in.

I assume that a "mature" Christian has learned to be in the river without getting sucked back in.

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2008/12/7 22:35

Quote:
-----HeartSong wrote:
I contemplated this myself, and as I thought about it, realized that it is true.

You did not indicate which post or thought you were referring to.

Quote:
-----I assume that a "mature" Christian has learned to be in the river without getting sucked back in.

What are you calling the river? Based on your post, it is what is filling up the sea of iniquity.

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/12/7 22:45

Quote:

Koheleth wrote:
Why was it necessary, as a moderator, to call those who do not observe Christmas "weaker"? Or more explicitly, to call those who observe Christmas "mature"? I would think as a moderator and therefore a spokesman for SermonIndex, you would guide this discussion with less personal bias,

I have never personally belonged to any forums where the mods. were not allowed to voice their personal opinions. They are human also, maybe they should have a clause "no pun intended" in their sig. line that their comments do not reflect the opinions of Sermon Index in general. In my personal opinion, if we were not able to consider Mike or Paul's opinions here, we would be losing out on a lot of great personal opinions and wisdom here. I would hope they would always continue to voice their personal opinions and feelings here regardless if folks agreed or disagreed with them. Trust me we have had our differences, but I would never want to shut them out even if I did not agree with them on something.

General Topics :: Christmas

Re:, on: 2008/12/7 22:51

Quote:

HeartSong wrote:

I contemplated this myself, and as I thought about it, realized that it is true.

Personally I feel so very blessed to have been pulled from the sea of iniquity, that there is no way that I want to find myself back in it. And as I peer into the river that is rushing by, I hesitate to even stick my big toe in for fear that I will be pulled back in.

I assume that a "mature" Christian has learned to be in the river without getting sucked back in.

Amen and Amen!

That river of sin is strong and mighty with many an undercurrent, and has captured more than its share of those who venture near it. The fear of it is more to be desired than any maturity which allows one to venture near it.

Old Joe

Re: - posted by White_Stone (), on: 2008/12/7 23:03

Perhaps those of you who are supporting Christmas would like to say how far they go in the celebration of it. Do you hang wreaths on the door? Do you have a red nosed reindeer on the roof? How about Santa (satan clause) do your children watch for him to come? Do you strictly sing the old Christmas hymns, or do you hum along with 'White Christmas?' I am very curious to know if you put gifts under the tree in the middle of the night on Christmas Eve? Just how far do you allow yourselves to go?

That was a very good read about Christmas that Old Joe posted. The writer seemed a sincerely Godly man not at all a Grinch - that seemed an unkind snipe, I hope it was not intended in that manner.

Regards,
white stone

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/7 23:13

Koheleth wrote:

Quote:

----- You did not indicate which post or thought you were referring to.

I'm sorry, I was referring to your previous post.

Quote:

----- What are you calling the river? Based on your post, it is what is filling up the sea of iniquity.

Yes, the rivers run down to the sea. The rain comes down and cleanses the land and the waters flow down to the sea, carrying with it all of the pollutants . . .

Re: Dec. 25, on: 2008/12/7 23:27

I recommend "Two Babylons", by Alexander Hislop. This is a scholarly work, meticulously written, that traces the organized worship of Satan, and his host of comrade angels.....from Babel, to Rome, and their melding into the Roman Catholic Church veiled as "Christian" holidays.

Each of the holidays occur exactly on the days that they were worshipped by Pagans, and predates Rome, and the Catholic church by millenia. Christmas symbols used today are exact or nearly the same as then...the yule log, the "gree n tree" and others that point to the worship of Nimrod and and his wife, who he "reincarnated" through.

I like the family connections that Christmas gives us. It's a good time for the kids too. It institutes giving also, which is a solid deal for folks.

I don't celebrate it , as worship, but enjoy it. I also try to give to the needy.

Jesus was probably born in September...but that is not a holy time for me either. I try to walk with Him. I am born agai n from above, and every day is the same to me. Covered by the BLOOD.

I hope this helps someone.

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/12/8 2:07

Quote:

White_Stone wrote:

That was a very good read about Christmas that Old Joe posted. The writer seemed a sincerely Godly man not at all a Grinch - that seemed an unkind snipe, I hope it was not intended in that manner.

Regards,
white stone

Unkind snipe? no it was just an opinion,and I totally respect your opinion of the read I am very happy you enjoyed it and it Blessed you. We must all remember if we are going to participate in these online forums it really helps to develop a littl e thicker skin, because a thin skinned person can really get their feelings hurt and also sometimes take things personally or wrong by reading more into someones post. I am a very fair and open minded person and I can take just as much as I dish out, if not I would never post. I for one respect ever living souls opinion here regardless of if I feel there opinion is ri ght or wrong it's very easy for me to do maybe it's a gift I have and if so I thank God for that gift.

We put up lights and we place gifts under the tree, we don't have a reindeer on the roof but I would sure put one up ther

General Topics :: Christmas

e if I had one, no my children are to old to watch for Santa,and yes we actually drive around the neighborhood pulling my trailer behind my truck full of hay and sing Christmas carols, now see I don't personally see any problem with that at all , why? because that is the way we personally like enjoy our family Christmas.

If I were to listen to man and mans opinions on everything I should do to enjoy life period that would be wrong in my opinion and there would be no need for God in my life. See it's very simple, you enjoy your Holidays as you wish and you will not hear one bad remark from me on how you like to enjoy your Holidays or your life period, and all I ask is the same respect and see with this sort of agreement it keeps down the strife level between folks, and lets folks live life as they feel Gods personally leads them.

There is no one that can tell anyone how God speaks to another person personally, if so God would not speak to us at all, he would just tell that person and they could just relay the message to us and it would save him a lot of time, but the God I serve comes directly to me and that is what makes him so special.It's very simple we all should just learn to live and let live, we should not be going around our whole life worrying about how folks live, don't we all have enough on our own plates to be concerned about? hey I know I do, I sure don't have the time to be concerned about how others live if so my life sure would be boring. Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. :-)

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2008/12/8 2:43

Quote:

MrBillPro wrote:
I have never personally belonged to any forums were the the Mods. were not allowed to voice there personal opinions they are human also, maybe they should have a clause "no pun intended" in there sig. line that there comments do not reflect the opinions of Sermon Index in general. In my personal opinion, if we we not able to consider Mike or Paul's opinions here, we would be losing out on a lot of great personal opinions and wisdom here. I would hope they would always continue to voice their personal opinions and feelings here regardless if folks agreed or disagreed with them. Trust me we have had our differences, but I would never want to shut them out even if I did not agree with them on something.

I made no attempt to shut down. I come here primarily for revival and all that goes with it. I think the mods can be asked to justify why they distinctions or divisions based on maturity, especially when the given litmus test is Christmas. Paul is free to share his opinion. It will be a bad one, however, if it has no basis in the word of God and is being aired on a revival forum. I have only given him the opportunity to show me it is instead a good one. :-)

I will air my opinion, too. I have neither condemned nor recommended Christmas in this or any public forum. Nor will you find me doing so. It is such a divisive issue, and one that will probably have such little bearing on the day of judgment. I think it is one of the enemies of revival to throw opinions about such things around at each other. These things are better left in the closet, so let's bring revival out of the closet and keep our eyes on Christ.

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2008/12/8 2:46

Quote:

HeartSong wrote:
Koheleth wrote:

Quote:
----- You did not indicate which post or thought you were referring to.

I'm sorry, I was referring to your previous post.

Quote:
----- What are you calling the river? Based on your post, it is what is filling up the sea of iniquity.

Yes, the rivers run down to the sea. The rain comes down and cleanses the land and the waters flow down to the sea, carrying with it all of the pollutants . . .

General Topics :: Christmas

I would not call it maturity to be in the river that fills the sea of iniquity. James says that pure religion is to keep oneself unspotted from the world. We all know this doesn't mean to retreat from the world, but it doesn't mean to be enmeshed with the world either.

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/12/8 2:49

Quote:

Kohleth wrote:

I think it is one of the enemies of revival to throw opinions about such things around at each other. These things are better left in the closet, so let's bring revival out of the closet and keep our eyes on Christ.

Amen! Brother I totally agree.

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/8 7:27

Quote:

-----Kohleth said:

I have neither condemned nor recommended Christmas in this or any public forum. Nor will you find me doing so. It is such a divisive issue, and one that will probably have such little bearing on the day of judgment.

The question will be:

"What have you done with My Son?"

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/12/8 8:24

Quote:

-----Why was it necessary, as a moderator, to call those who do not observe Christmas "weaker"-----

You're twisting my words. I didn't call those who choose not to celebrate Christmas "weaker"; in fact, I mentioned elsewhere that it's wonderful to celebrate Christmas, and it's wonderful *not* to celebrate Christmas. It's up to you what you do, and where your convictions lead. You become weak when you begin pressing your insults and pagan indictments on others who choose to celebrate. One celebrates Christmas to the glory of God, the other doesn't celebrate Christmas - to the glory of God. The weak, however, will cut and paste anti-christmas propaganda to stumble those who do choose to celebrate, just like if those who celebrate were to post propaganda condemning the actions of those who choose *not* to celebrate. Either way, celebrating or not celebrating Christmas does not commend one to God. This is all I'm saying.

Quote:

-----I would think as a moderator and therefore a spokesman for SermonIndex, you would guide this discussion with less personal bias, unless it is being indicated that SermonIndex is becoming a pro-Christmas site.-----

I think I am fair in my postings, and quite unbiased. Like I said earlier, I think it is wonderful if one celebrates Christmas, and equally wonderful if one chooses not to. Where is your argument now? Also, I am permitted to voice my opinion without speaking for all of SermonIndex. This is not a Toyota or Honda corporation where we all need to wear the same uniform.

Quote:

-----I think you owe a Scripture-based explanation of why those who prefer not to observe Christmas are less mature than those who do.-----

Since this statement is built on an erroneous assumption, and clarified above (hopefully), I see no need to give further explanation.

General Topics :: Christmas

Have a great day!

Brother Paul

Re:, on: 2008/12/8 8:36

Ahhh... it just wouldnt be Christmas without our annual Christmas debate.

Because of the economy many people are scaling back Christmas this year. I believe I will do the same... this is going to be one of the Christmas traditions that I choose not to partake in this year.

Y'all have fun... I'll be over in the corner trimming the tree and listening to Bing Crosby on the iPod.

:~)

Krispy

PS: I love my brother Paul... He's doing a great job moderating, and we are blessed to have him.

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2008/12/8 9:08

Quote:

Quote:
-----Why was it necessary, as a moderator, to call those who do not observe Christmas "weaker"

PaulWest wrote:
You're twisting my words. I didn't call those who choose not to celebrate Christmas "weaker"

Quote:
-----PaulWest wrote:
the more mature will with a clear conscience sing "Silent Night and Hark! the Harold Angels Sing"

Quote:
-----PaulWest wrote:
I think I am fair in my postings, and quite unbiased.

We all do. It's human nature.

Quote:
-----Where is your argument now?

I didn't have one. I had a request for an explanation.

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2008/12/8 9:17

Quote:

KrispyKrittr wrote:
Ahhh... it just wouldnt be Christmas without our annual Christmas debate.

I don't think there needs to be, or even should be, a debate. I am not interested in one. I hope you are not equating asking for an explanation with having a debate.

Re:, on: 2008/12/8 9:46

No, in fact I was going to mention in my post (but thought it unnecessary) that simply asking a question about why some folks have a problem with Christmas is certainly fine.

It's the ensuing debate and arguing that I find absurd. The tit-for-tat that you're involved in right now is example of that. :-)

Krispy

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2008/12/8 10:44

I have come to believe that the scripture reveals how we as Christians are to be in the world but not of the world.

Now we all realize that we must associate with the people of this world and have dealings with many people who are not believers in Christ. We are to be a witness of Christ to them.

I realize that Christmas means different things to different people. The Christmas season comes once every year and we can't change this fact of Life. I know of organizations like the Jehovah Witnesses's who do not allow their children to participate in Christmas, not even at school with the other children. I also believe that they are a cult and not teaching the true gospel of Christ.

I have never liked the paganism part of Christmas but because Christ is in the word Christmas and many do celebrate the birth of Christ and get together with their families, I use this as an opportunity to witness the Love of Christ to a lost and dying world. I have always told my children the truth and never once told them to believe in Santa but only in Jesus.

I remember when my children were younger and how some in our family didn't like it that we told them that Santa was only make believe. We didn't want to put anything before nor take the place of our worship to the Lord Jesus Christ. We always told them the truth that we knew and didn't try to deceive them about anything. We told them Jesus is real and he was not make believe. We bear with others but we don't participate in make believe or anything that is pagan.

I have been very strong in my beliefs over the years and have prayed concerning how best to be a witness to my family and others at Christmas. I take the opportunity to lift up Christ during the Christmas season without tearing down Christmas when so many wouldn't understand, because it would be like sending a mixed message. I feel instead of trying to tear down Christmas use this time as an opportunity for Christ.

Many today are trying to make Christmas completely pagan and remove Christ completely out. Some might think, that would be good, just call it happy holidays for those who are heathens and paganism anyway because I don't celebrate Christmas. But this has also caused others to think about Christ more and do not want Christ to be taken out of Christmas. I don't want to send a mixed message.

I am for Christ, I am in this world but not to be of it and I will witness Christ everyday and at Christmas in doing the good that God would have me doing. I tell people to have a blessed Christmas. I don't throw out the baby with the bath water. I will not bash Christmas. I believe in seizing the occasion and taking the opportunity at Christmas for the Glory of Christ.

General Topics :: Christmas

Re:, on: 2008/12/8 11:16

rbanks.... that was very well thought out, and your opinions on this are quite well balanced. It almost causes me to think that you must be from North Carolina. Oh, wait... you are! No wonder!

All joking aside, I couldn't agree with you more. To the heathen mind, Christians against Christmas is like dogs against roadkill. It doesn't make sense in their mind, and it is confusion.

I'm not suggesting we pattern our behavior or practices according to what heathen people expect of us. No, we are to follow our Lord's example.

But what a wonderful time to be a witness when the minds of all are on Christ... whether correctly or incorrectly.

Witness to your family at the get togethers. Volunteer at the soup kitchen (especially this year!). Help the Marines by donating to Toys For Tots. Give give give!

Ooops... said I wouldn't partake of the debate!

Over and out.

Krispy

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/12/8 11:20

Quote:

KrispyKrittr wrote:
Ahhh... it just wouldn't be Christmas without our annual Christmas debate.

You know I don't have any problem with a good debate, but what I do have a problem with is "Christians" trying to make "Christians" feel guilty. I've never witnessed so many dysfunctional, obsessed, fantasy driven people in my life (myself included). There is a manner of "psychosis" going on, guilt about sin, insecurity with God, fear of hell, obsession for details, over-analysis of everything, hypocrisy, paranoia that Satan has deceived them, messiah/prophet complexes, obsession about rituals and ways of doing things, dread of being tainted by sin, shame of failing spiritually, secret knowledge that only they have been anointed with, fear of losing their salvation, self-righteousness, self-justification and denial, Christians trying to control and manipulate other Christians by making them feel bad, sinful, guilty...the list goes on and on.

Well it is understandable, our fear and respect for God makes us nervous about serving Him the wrong way. And how many Christians do you know that find something wrong with other Christians? Well...that would be ALL of us! We all think others are not "true" Christians because they do this or don't do that or believe this or don't believe that...basically they don't follow God like we follow God...and that should be the first tip off that we are ALL wrong. :-o

Re: - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2008/12/8 12:03

Quote:

-----The very popularity of Christmas should cause the Christians to question it.

Before I go on with this I would like to say that I respect those who don't do Christmas and I respect those who do celebrate Christmas.

Quote:

-----Shouldn't the Christian be suspicious of a celebration in which the whole sinful world can join without qualms?

Well, if we're going to use this way of thinking then we shouldn't be going to church too. However, I do understand the point you're making.

I know many non-Christians that go to church and love it.

"One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God." (Romans 14:5-6)

The above Scripture speak well to this situation. Do it unto the Lord or don't do it at all. Don't judge those who do it and don't judge those who don't do it.

Re: - posted by JoanM, on: 2008/12/8 12:36

Crsschk: "If you are new to SermonIndex this has become something of annual rite of it's own ..." This being my first Christmas on Sermonindex, it seems fitting that I post something on this thread, if only as a rite of passage. I will take courage and speak personally. For years and years, around this time of year, I receive a gift, something like a Christmas card, from my Father. Calling it a Christmas card in no way diminishes it in my heart. The subject is always the birth of Jesus.

Three years ago, HeartSong, I noticed an up-tic in the world's disregard/mockng of Christ and it hurt my heart. That was the year that stores first made a big deal about saying "Happy Holidays" and not saying "Merry Christmas". That hurt found its way into my prayer life. It seemed that the everyone/the world wanted to smother the birth of Jesus and had found another way to do that. Plus, I had not heard from God that year yet. I felt rather alone in remembering His birth. I went to sleep with the heart-cry, "Doesn't anyone remember His birth?" I woke with: "I remember the birth of my Son. Oh Joy!" and of course! There was much fruit in that. It was a blessing to remember the birth of Jesus with our Father. (I don't think there is a father anywhere who does not remember the birth of his son.)

That said, I am reminded:

Scripture contains many advents.
Revival is one of them.

Have a mighty merry Christmas dear Sermonindex family
Made for His pleasure
Joan

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/8 12:40

Thank you Joan.

merry Christmas to you also.

Re:, on: 2008/12/8 12:43

Quote:

-----Shouldn't the Christian be suspicious of a celebration in which the whole sinful world can join without qualms?

I don't know about y'all, but since we are believers and born again... I find that in my house we celebrate Christmas completely different than the unsaved folks we know. It's all in how you keep it.

Krispy

General Topics :: Christmas

Re:, on: 2008/12/8 12:44

Quote:
-----You know I don't have any problem with a good debate, but what I do have a problem with is "Christians" trying to make "Christians" feel guilty. IÃve never witnessed so many dysfunctional, obsessed, fantasy driven people in my life (myself included). There is a manner of "psychosis" going on, guilt about sin, insecurity with God, fear of hell, obsession for details, over-analysis of everything, hypocrisy, paranoia that Satan has deceived them, messiah/prophet complexes, obsession about rituals and ways of doing things, dread of being tainted by sin, shame of failing spiritually, secret knowledge that only they have been anointed with, fear of losing their salvation, self-righteousness, self-justification and denial, Christians trying to control and manipulate other Christians by making them feel bad, sinful, guiltyÃ...the list goes on and on.

This is all because we believe in God's wrath... but we struggle with believing in His grace and mercy.

Krispy

Re: - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2008/12/8 13:25

Quote:
-----Perhaps those of you who are supporting Christmas would like to say how far they go in the celebration of it.

Fair enough.

Quote:
-----Do you hang wreaths on the door?

Just a plain one made of sticks woven together, but it's more of a winter wreath because we leave it up all winter. We do put another wreath out on the house that has lights on it though.

Quote:
-----Do you have a red nosed reindeer on the roof?

No.

Quote:
-----How about Santa (satan clause) do your children watch for him to come?

Don't have kids, but if I did, they wouldn't be watching for him to come. :-)

Quote:
-----Do you strictly sing the old Christmas hymns, or do you hum along with 'White Christmas?'

I mostly keep to the sacred music of Christmas (not hymns-only, I like some of the new sacred Christmas songs. Songs I

General Topics :: Christmas

ike "In the First Light", "Ring the Bells", and "Jesus Saves" off of Travis Cottrell's new Christmas CD.), but I also listen to White Christmas and Winter Wonderland when they're on the CDs I have.

Quote:

-----I am very curious to know if you put gifts under the tree in the middle of the night on Christmas Eve?

Nope, I put them under it when I get around to wrapping them. Besides, I would rather sleep. ;-)

Re: - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2008/12/8 13:29

Quote:

-----I dont know about y'all, but since we are believers and born again... I find that in my house we celebrate Christmas completely differ ent than the unsaved folks we know. It's all in how you keep it.

Totally agree!

Re:, on: 2008/12/8 13:51

Quote:

-----Do you hang wreaths on the door?

Yep... I like the way they look. They're 'purdy. Didn't realize they were satanic until a believer told me and ruined it for me. Since then we just put lamb's blood on the sides of the door and on the lintel in the hope that St. Nick will soon pass over us.

Quote:

-----Do you have a red nosed reindeer on the roof?

Nope, but I have 2 whitetails in the freezer. Does that count?

Quote:

-----How about Santa (satan clause) do your children watch for him to come?

Nope.

Quote:

-----Do you strictly sing the old Christmas hymns, or do you hum along with 'White Christmas?'

I love "White Christmas"... of course, I'm southern so what would you expect, right?

Quote:

-----I am very curious to know if you put gifts under the tree in the middle of the night on Christmas Eve?

Nope... Santa does. I'm usually asleep by then, or I would do it myself.

Krispy

Re: - posted by White_Stone (), on: 2008/12/8 17:49

"I am very curious to know if you put gifts under the tree in the middle of the night on Christmas Eve?"

"Nope... Santa does. I'm usually asleep by then, or I would do it myself.

Krispy"

SIGH!

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2008/12/8 20:35

Quote:

-----Have a mighty merry Christmas dear Sermonindex family

Thank you Joan and a very Merry Christmas to you also!

Quote:

-----If you are new to SermonIndex this has become something of annual rite of it's own ...

This time of year just wouldn't be complete on this forum without these threads. Whatever side you fall on, let each one be fully persuaded in his own mind and not trample a brother or stumble him.

One thing I really like about Christmas is singing the old hymns, here's a couple of tidbits you might not know about a couple of my favorites...

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley of England was without doubt one of the most productive hymn writers and preachers of all time. Yet, strangely enough, Wesley was able to get only one hymn poem into the Church of England's Book of Common Prayer, and that one by error!

An eighteenth century printer didn't know that the "established Church" of England frowned with disapproval upon Wesley's hymns. Since he needed material to fill an empty space in the new hymnal, he took it upon himself to insert a Christmas poem called, "Hark, How All the Welkins Rings!" by an Anglican clergyman named Charles Wesley. When the error was discovered attempts were made to have it removed, but it proved so popular that it was allowed to remain.

It was written in 1738, but is still very moving today.

"Hark the herald angels sing.

Glory to the new born King.

Peace on earth, and mercy mild:

God and sinners reconciled."

The Silent Authors of "Silent Night"

Only by happy coincidence did the names of the true authors of the song "Silent Night" come to light thirty-six years after they wrote it.

The story begins in 1818 in a church in the little Austrian town of Oberndorf. Shortly before Christmas Eve, a mouse ate a hole in the leather bellows of the church organ, effectively silencing it. The itinerant organ mender was not due in town for months, and music was needed for the Christmas Eve service. In three and one-half hours, Franz Gruber, the organist, composed music for a poem written by Josef Mohr, a priest. It began "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht" ("Silent Night, Holy Night"). On Christmas Eve, the two men sang their composition accompanied by a guitar and children's chorus. They we

re a great success.

The following May, when the organ mender turned up, Gruber gave him a copy of the song, which the man then circulated in his travels. By 1831, thirteen years later, the Strasser family quartet was billing "Silent Night" one of their numbers, as a Tyrolean folk song by "authors unknown."

Time went by, and soon the now-popular song was being attributed to several famous composers. In 1854, the leader of the king's orchestra in Berlin wrote to the choir director of the Benedictine school in Salzburg, asking for a copy of "Silent Night" by Michael Haydn, brother of the more famous composer Franz Joseph Haydn. The choir director asked a student who just happened to be Felix Gruber, Franz Gruber's son to find a copy. And you can guess the rest.

Silent night, holy night,
all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin
mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night,
wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/12/8 20:54

Christmas Morning

Glory's kiss awoke the morning,
Which beheld the Savior's birth,
And with nature's rosy dawning,
Peace, good-will, was born on earth.
Heaven's door rolled wide asunder,
Through the gate of pearl and gem,
Angels thronged to see this wonder,
Earth held Heaven's diadem.

Refrain

Ring, O bells, your loudest, sweetest,
And ye children, shout with glee;

Love the greatest, the completest,
Christmas gave to you and me.
Ring, O bells, ring, O bells,
Ring your loudest, ring your sweetest,
Ring, O bells, ring, O bells,
Ring your sweetest Christmas bells!

Olive, myrtle, pine and laurel,
Weave in beauteous garlands fair;
While our voices raise a choral,
Him our love and thanks to bear.
But how poor the gifts we offer,
Have we aught to give but them?
Yea, our hearts we humbly proffer,
Make them now a Bethlehem.

- M. Froelich, 1881

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/8 20:59

What a wonderful song. Thank you!

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/12/8 21:04

Quote:

-----What a wonderful song. Thank you!

Absolutely gorgeous, isn't it?

This is how the saved celebrate this wonderful time of the year. Lord, make our hearts a Bethlehem.

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/8 21:17

Quote:

-----Lord, make our hearts a Bethlehem.

Amen.

Re:, on: 2008/12/9 8:31

Bro Paul, thanx for sharing that! Wonderful!

Whitestone... don't sigh, laugh! I was being humorous. Have a little Christmas cheer, my friend.

(How about the Carolina Panthers on Monday Night Football last night??)

Krispy

General Topics :: Christmas

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/12/9 10:41

Quote:

KrispyKrittr wrote:
Whitestone... don't sigh, laugh! I was being humorous. Have a little Christmas cheer, my friend.
Krispy

I guess we might need set up a special page to categorize folks here for the new folks, because Whitestone jumped me one day also because she or he did not understand me or know me well enough to understand my post, and thought I was out of line. I know you and I probably stick out as the two most humorous guys here, that are not timid Christians and say what's on their minds, but we do try our best to use our unique God-given humor in a Godly way, and never have us use it to intentionally hurt anyone.

We just have to remember there are just some folks out there that truly believe humor and God don't mix, I know I see them every Sunday at Church. It's funny I have about 20 people that surround me right before the service on Sunday, that walk away smiling and lifted up when they go to their seats, go figure.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/12/9 11:08

Quote:
-----Do you hang wreaths on the door?

No, because I am too tight to invest the money! :-?

Quote:
-----Do you have a red-nosed reindeer on the roof?

No. Not on my roof or anywhere in the house! Have had a few in the freezer in the past, like Krispy does.

Quote:
-----Do you strictly sing the old Christmas hymns, or do you hum along with 'White Christmas?'

Most of the time. No Santa Claus songs. I refuse to buy Christmas music with SC songs. I also listen to "Handel's Messiah" - the entire thing - many times until I tire of it. We go Christmas Caroling in our town and love it as do the recipients.

Quote:
-----I am very curious to know if you put gifts under the tree in the middle of the night on Christmas Eve?

No Christmas tree. I was taught when a child this is worldly and have never put one up. I think they are pretty, but cannot get myself to buy one - I do wonder whether the HS will allow me to. Besides, they are expensive. There are other things I would rather buy with my money that is more useful. In the meantime, I will enjoy the ones at Lowes, et al. Oh, I do string up a lighted garland on my open stairway and fireplace. But no stockings - nothing to make people think of Santa Claus.

General Topics :: Christmas

I do set up several nativity scenes. I love them as do our grandchildren. I always loved this scene. When I was a small child I would draw pictures of how I perceived this event. They were primitive, to be sure, but this was something special and I never outgrew this appreciation of this event.

ginnyrose

Re:, on: 2008/12/9 11:18

Quote:
-----We just have to remember there are just some folks out there that truly believe humor and God don't mix, I know I see them every Sunday at Church. It's funny I have about 20 people that surround me right before the service on Sunday, that walk away smiling and lifted up when they go to their seats, go figure.

There was a thread about Christians and humor not long ago. Probably well buried by now.

Fact is, all of us have a sense of humor to some extent or another. We were created in His image, so I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that God has a sense of humor.

For instance, it *seems* like anytime Al Gore goes somewhere to give a lecture about his groovy theory about Global Warming... even if it's in San Antonio, TX in July... it snows! You gotta love that about God. I can just see Him trying to suppress a laugh as He sends a few snow flakes Gore's way.

Krispy

Re: - posted by hulse () , on: 2008/12/9 11:29

One thing I love about Christmas is the music. Working at Wal Mart, the music on the speaker system is horrible, except around Christmas time. When can you walk into a secular and very worldly place and hear Oh Holy Night. It's the one time of the year that my ears can relax at work :-D.

Re:, on: 2008/12/9 12:36

Quote:
-----One thing I love about Christmas is the music. Working at Wal Mart, the music on the speaker system is horrible, **except around Christmas time.**

At Walmart doesn't Christmas time start on July 5th? ...lol

Krispy

Re: - posted by HomeFree89 () , on: 2008/12/9 16:02

Quote:

hulse wrote:
One thing I love about Christmas is the music. Working at Wal Mart, the music on the speaker system is horrible, except around Christmas time. When can you walk into a secular and very worldly place and hear Oh Holy Night. It's the one time of the year that my ears can relax at work :-D.

It's amazing that Wal-Mart allows Christmas music. The messages in some of the carols are so powerful. Just think of the words to songs like, "O Holy Night" and "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing", they have stuff that wouldn't be allowed other times of the year.

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2008/12/9 20:00

My daughter played violin in a Christmas recital at a local Jr. High School last night. My children are home-schooled but are able to participate in certain school activities such as orchestra or sports. Anyway, a choir of young boys and girls performed also and in one of the numbers they were singing "Hallelujah" over and over again. Although many of them may not even know what that word means I rejoiced in this simple song as God was praised. Only at Christmas!

In Christ,

Ron

Re:, on: 2008/12/10 7:54

Tell ya whats a blessing... my youngest, who is 3, has learned this song called "Christmas Is Coming"... and he is so dog gone cute singing it...

"Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat.
Please do put a penny in the old man's hat.
If you haven't got a penny then a hey-penny will do.
If you haven't got a hey-penny then God bless you!"

You gotta hear him sing it. It warms the heart and makes me laugh a bit.

Krispy

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/12/10 10:05

Krispy, A lot has been said on this thread since your comment on having deer in the freezer....I just thought of something ...If anyone complains that Santa may not be bringing the desired gifts at Christmas, one could tell them that you have a friend in NC who loves to hunt and he just may have killed some of Santa reindeer, so now Santa is lacking reindeer to get the delivery done....

On a serious note....I got this email yesterday and am copying/pasting it here.

Pelosi Confirms War on Christmas

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9 /Christian Newswire/ -- Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi recently confirmed to Capitol Hill missionary Rev. Rob Schenck (pronounced SHANK) of Faith and Action that the war against Christmas is real.

Schenck is a missionary to elected and appointed officials on Capitol Hill and was a VIP guest at the recent US Capitol Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony held on the Capitol's West Lawn, near the presidential inaugural platform that is under construction.

Following the ceremony that included traditional Christmas carols played by a US Air Force band, Rev. Schenck thanked Speaker Pelosi for keeping, as he said it, "Christ-mas" at the US Capitol, emphasizing "Christ." Speaker Pelosi politely acknowledged the remark, then pursued Rev. Schenck to tell him she had been "mugged" for doing so.

Rev. Schenck commented, "At first I didn't understand what Mrs. Pelosi was saying, so I simply nodded and thanked her again, but she repeated it emphatically. I realized the Speaker was saying she had paid a serious price politically for allowing the Christmas celebration to go on. She obviously took some political heat for it. For that, Nancy Pelosi deserves to be commended, and I made sure I did so."

Schenck also said, "The fact that Nancy Pelosi said she was assailed for allowing a Christmas observance at the US Capitol confirms the war against Christmas is not a figment of the so-called religious right's imagination. If one of the most liberal, arguably left-wing political leaders in our country, the woman third in succession to the presidency, is getting pummeled for lighting a Christmas tree and allowing Christmas carols on the lawn of the Capitol, that would qualify as a war against Christmas."

Mr. Schenck is available for further comment at 202- 546-8329, ext 104, or mobile 202-236-0953.

So maybe all those Christmas nay-sayers will eventually get their way via of political action! :-o

Have a blessed holiday (Holy Day!)

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by hulsej (), on: 2008/12/10 10:25

Quote:

-----At Walmart doesn't Christmas time start on July 5th? ...lol

Basically yes...lol, but the music started shortly before halloween. :-)

Re:, on: 2008/12/10 11:04

Quote:

-----Krispy, A lot has been said on this thread since your comment on having deer in the freezer....I just thought of something...If anyone complains that Santa may not be bringing the desired gifts at Christmas, one could tell them that you have a friend in NC who loves to hunt and he just may have killed some of Santa reindeer, so now Santa is lacking reindeer to get the delivery done....

I've had everything in my freezer from elk to bear to rattlesnake... but have never tasted of reindeer.

Oooo! That gives me an idea!

If anyone is looking for me on Christmas Eve, I'll be sitting up on the ridge of my roof in my utilities with my .410 and a thermos of hot chocolate!

(You might be a redneck if...)

Krispy