



Daily Verse and Comment

[John 4:23-24](#)

(23) But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. (24) God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

King James Version

Several years ago, WorldNetDaily published a controversial exposé that spotlighted one of the more frequent skirmishes in our current culture war. Written by Joe Kovacs, "[Christmas](#) in America becomes battleground" reveals the pagan origins of this esteemed tradition and demonstrates why increasing numbers of "fundamentalist Christians" are realizing that one cannot "put Christ" back into something in which He never was.

Apologist C.S. Lewis, in his book *Mere Christianity*, asserts that one of Satan's most common ploys is to "send error into [the world](#) in pairs"—pairs of opposites—"and then he encourages us to spend a lot of time thinking, Which is the worst?" [Satan](#) persuades us to argue over two options, or two points of view, neither one of which is true. Regardless of which side carries the argument, Satan wins the day.

In the current war over Christmas and religious symbols, Satan has pitted the secular humanists, who want to blot out Christianity and encourage almost any other form of worship, against mainstream Christians, who are fighting for the right to worship as they see fit by putting evergreen trees in schools per [Jeremiah 10:2-5](#). Atheists and agnostics arrayed against Christmas-bent "Christians"—for whom do we root?

The truth of the matter is that Satan is the real winner regardless of the outcome.

As Mr. Kovacs' article shows, the truth about the pagan origins of Christmas is easily researched. Any good encyclopedia will show that the timing and trappings of this celebration long predate Christianity. December 25 has been a focal point of sun-worship for millennia. The pagan origins of this day are so well-documented that the real question is, "What business do Christians have in trying to "Christianize" something that has been blatantly anti-[God](#) from the very beginning?" Is this worshipping God in spirit and in truth?

God was so concerned that ancient Israel would begin adopting the pagan ways of the Canaanites—even under the auspices of worshipping the true God—that He gave the children of Israel a categorical warning:

When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, 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; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; *you shall not add to it nor take away from it.* ([Deuteronomy 12:29-32](#))

God is very specific in the way that He wants to be worshipped! He has **not** given us permission to worship Him in just any way that seems right to us. He warns His people specifically in these verses, as well as in [Revelation 22:18-19](#), not to add to His instructions, nor to take away from them, and this is clearly within the context of adopting pagan practices in conjunction with worshipping Him. Christmas may not involve physical child-sacrifice—although in spirit millions of children are being sacrificed on the altar of materialism—but the stench of this celebration is odious nonetheless because it is still idolatry: replacing the true worship of God with a false one.

The Bible does not specify when [Jesus Christ](#) was born (although the best deduction is that it was in the autumn—see "[When Was Jesus Born?](#)" [Forerunner](#), December 1994). More importantly, the Bible does not give any instruction in celebrating His birth, nor any example of the [first-century](#)

[church](#) doing so, nor any indication that the celebration of birthdays is pleasing to God at all! Even this idea has come from paganism, rather than from God's Instruction Book for mankind. Is this, then, worshipping God in spirit and in truth?

Is it any wonder that our Savior says, "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And *in vain they worship Me*, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" ([Matthew 15:8-9](#)); and "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that *you may keep your tradition*" ([Mark 7:9](#)); and "[you make] the word of God of no effect through *your tradition* which you have handed down. And many such things you do" ([Mark 7:13](#))? Human nature has the rebellious proclivity to do only what it wants to do, even when told by God Himself to do things differently ([Romans 8:7](#))!

We see, then, that on one pole are the secularists, who believe the lie that God should not be a part of their lives. On the other pole are mainstream Christians, who believe the lie that syncretism is an acceptable form of worship. But in either case, the trail of lies indicates who the *real* "holiday spirit" is.

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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