



"No matter how big the lie, repeat it often enough and the masses will regard it as the truth."

—John F. Kennedy

25-Dec-15

The Crazy in Christmas

Many years ago, while talking to an acquaintance, the subject of [Christmas](#) came up. I told him up front, "I don't celebrate Christmas." He replied, "What? Are you crazy?" But the question should be, "Who is really believing something crazy?"

When we moved into our new neighborhood, our neighbors came over to present us with Christmas gifts. My wife and I at first tried to be gracious and discreet about our beliefs, but as we talked to the couple, she started looking around the house, asking, "Where is your Christmas tree? Where are all your decorations?"

We immediately confessed that we do not celebrate Christmas, and the neighbors were stunned! "What?" they asked. "Don't you believe in [God](#)?" The neighbor's wife had never heard of such a thing! They did not stay any longer than they had to. The secret was now out in our new neighborhood; we were officially peculiar. The last thing she said as they drove away was, "I'll pray for you!"

[Jesus](#) Himself tells us in [John 4:24](#) that we must [worship God](#) in spirit and truth. Where is the truth in Christmas? For that matter, what is the Christmas spirit and where does it come from? People try to point to the first chapters of Matthew and Luke for authority to celebrate it, but nowhere in God's Word is there any command to celebrate Jesus' birth. He specifically tells us to commemorate His death ([I Corinthians 11:23-26](#)), but do most [Christians](#) keep the [Passover](#)?

My normal reply to someone who asks me why I do not celebrate Christmas is, "Why do you celebrate it?" Nine times out of ten, people will answer that it is Christ's birthday. "Okay," I reply, "if it is Christ's birthday, why do you give gifts to everyone but Him?" Is that not normal birthday etiquette? The wise men who followed the star to the house where Joseph and Mary were staying brought Jesus gifts ([Matthew 2:9-11](#)). The magi did not come to see Him and exchange their gifts with each another! This seems like a logical argument to me, but normally, the response I get is something like, "That's crazy! That doesn't make any sense."

About Christmas, *Harper's Bible Dictionary* reads: ". . . the annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus, celebrated on December 25 in all churches except the Church of Armenia, for which it is January 6. . . . The actual date of Jesus' birth is unknown. There is no evidence of celebrating the nativity before the third century." Nothing is offered in the way of Scripture to support any sort of command to celebrate Christ's birth. There is no proof offered to support even His being born in December.

In contrast, under "feasts" in the same dictionary, scripture after scripture is listed to support the commands to observe the feasts of God. Further, those scriptures tell us how and when to keep these feasts with the specific months, days, and duration. This contrast should indicate to us that the spirit Christmas comes from is not God's. Christmas has been added to Christianity by this spirit as one of his tools to continue to deceive the whole world ([Revelation 12:9](#)).

What about some of the traditional Christmas practices that people use in their celebrations? Just who is on the wrong side of the truth?

One of the more obvious lies associated with Christmas is Santa Claus making gifts at the North Pole and delivering them down people's chimneys on Christmas eve. These gifts are said to be made by elves and delivered by flying reindeer in a single night to the entire world! Even though adults know that this tall tale is a lie, they say, "It's okay. It's all in fun."

The modern portrayal of Santa is that he listens to children's wishes and then brings gifts to the "good children." My parents were not called into God's church until I was a teenager, so I had a few years in which I believed in this character. Funny thing is, I do not remember one kid in our neighborhood who did not get something for Christmas—and I know for a fact that they were not all good kids! This sounds a lot like easy grace and ignoring God's law and judgment.

Probably the most widely used object in the celebration of Christmas is the evergreen tree. It is plain after even a little research that this tradition has its roots in pagan practices. Numerous websites devoted to pre-Christian religions contain this paragraph on the Christmas tree:

The Christmas tree has its origins in the practice of bringing a live tree into the home so the wood spirits would have a place to keep warm during the cold winter months. Bells were hung in the limbs so you could tell when an appreciative spirit was present. Food and treats were hung on the branches for the spirits to eat and a five-pointed star, the pentagram, symbol of the five elements, was placed atop the tree.

A different origin story is that a monk, preaching in Germany in the seventh and eighth centuries, concluded that, since the tree had a triangular shape, it represented the [trinity](#). Another idea is that a tree decorated with roses in Latvia in the 1500s was associated with the Virgin Mary. Notably absent from all these ideas is any authority from the Bible.

God says in [Amos 5:1](#), 21: "Hear this word which I take up against you, a lamentation, O house of Israel: . . . I hate, I despise your feast days, and I do not savor your sacred assemblies." Verse 21 certainly pertains to God's [holy days](#), as He laid them out in Leviticus and other places. The people of modern Israel have profaned these days by rejecting them altogether.

But the phrase "your feast days" can also include festivals instituted by humans, holidays such as Christmas, [Easter](#), and [Halloween](#), in which people try to mix the worship of God and Christ with pagan traditions. A popular sign put up by churches in the days preceding Christmas is "Keep Christ in Christmas," but the fact is that He was never in it. If He had ever been in it, the Bible would endorse it. Far from endorsing it, the Bible warns us not to add anything to its instruction ([Deuteronomy 4:2](#); [12:32](#); [Revelation 22:18](#)).

It is obvious that Christmas is not a biblical festival, and in fact, has its origins in paganism. On subjects like these, we must test the spirit from which these things come ([I John 4:1](#)), and we do it by comparing it to the truth found in God's Word. God's Spirit and His truth cannot be separated; they work hand in hand. A person or practice that has the wrong spirit will not reflect the truth, and something that is false will not come from God's Spirit.

[Psalm 33:4](#) conveys an important principle: "For the word of the LORD is right, and all His work is done in truth." Christmas fails this test. It does not contain the truth of God, so it cannot be a work of God. If you do not keep Christmas because you follow the truth, you are by no means crazy.

- Ronny H. Graham

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[What's Wrong With Christmas?](#)

by Martin G. Collins

A certain commentator admits the pagan origins of Christmas and its contribution to religious confusion, and yet wants to salvage the holiday anyway, even though it totally scuttles the truth. Human nature would rather indulge in pagan lies and idolatry, taking pleasure in unrighteousness, rather than be corrected or guided by truth. Christmas thrives in this syncretistic culture, having adopted the Roman Brumalia-Saturnalia festival, celebrating the birth of the invincible sun. The Roman Catholic Church carefully

blended a little truth with a lot of falsehood in order to have the birthday of the Son of God coincide with the birth of the invincible sun. This shameless syncretism does not have God's endorsement. God does not approve of false ministers who try to appropriate God's words to promote their selfish ends, turning peoples' hearts away from Him. Pagan customs cannot be assimilated into the truth, as our forebears learned that worshipping a golden calf does not coincide with worshipping God. Christians need to extricate themselves from the worshiping of Satan. Regarding our beliefs, we must always start with God, not man, and that we regard the Bible, not human reason as our ultimate authority. Christmas seems to thrive on covetousness and the way of get, while God's holy days encourage the way of give.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Christmas, Syncretism, and Presumption](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

Many who consider themselves Christians believe celebrating Christmas honors Jesus Christ, even though the holiday has no biblical support. While it is attractive and appealing, Christmas is actually a spiritual trap because it is not true. John Ritenbaugh explains that it is highly presumptuous to believe that such a syncretized holiday, blended liberally with heathen customs, could please God.

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