

A Christmas Sermon

I. Where Did Christmas Originate?

Christ·mas

- Suggests some connection to Christ
 - Name from 'Christes Masse'
 - Later shortened to Christmas [XMAS]
- Not in NT. 2 Pt.1:3
 - Only Matthew & Luke record His birth; neither gives day or month
 - Found only in secular traditions
 - 7-4 BC [Dionysius Exiguus calendar]

Christ-mas

Only secular traditions

“The observance of Christmas is not of divine appointment, nor is it of N.T. origin. The day of Christ’s birth cannot be ascertained from the N.T., or, indeed, from any other source. The fathers of the first three centuries do not speak of any special observance of the nativity” ... “The Eastern Church finally adopted the Christmas festival from the Western (about A.D. 380)” –McClintock-Strong, Vol. III, p.276.

Christ-mas

'Then why was Dec. 25 chosen?'

“No one knows exactly when Jesus was born Scholars do not know the exact date of Christ’s birth. . . .

In AD 354, Bishop Liberius of Rome ordered the people to celebrate on December 25” – World Book, 409, 416.

McClintock-Strong

“The Egyptians placed it in Jan.; Wagensell in Feb.; Bochart in March; some mentioned by Clement of Alexandria, in April; some others in May; Epiphanius speaks of some who placed it in June, and of others who supposed it to have been in July; Wagensell, who was not sure of Feb., fixed it probably in August; Lightfoot on the 15th of September; Scaliger, Casaubon, and Calvisius in Oct.; others in Nov.; and the Latin church in December” – Vol.VI, 861.

Deep doubts about Dec.25

“...But the exact time of his birth is unknown; there is no way to ascertain it. By different learned men it has been fixed at each month in the year. Nor is it of consequence to ‘know’ the time; if it were, God would have preserved the record of it. Matters of moment are clearly revealed; those which ‘he’ regards as of no importance are concealed” – Albert Barnes, Luke 2:8.

Deep doubts about Dec.25

“The day of the Nativity. The only indication of the season of our Savior’s birth is the fact that the shepherds were watching their flocks in the fields at that time, Lk.2:8. This fact points to any other season rather than winter & is therefore not favorable to the traditional date...” – Philip Schaff, -Vol. I, 127.

I. Where Did Christmas Originate?

II. What Does The
Bible Say?

Important memorials

1. Baptism: form of His death, burial, resurrection, Ro.6:3-4.
2. First day of week: memorial of His resurrection, Mt., Mk., Lk., Jn.
3. Lord's supper: memorial of His death, Ac.20:7.

What memorial was set up to observe His birth?

What does Bible say about His birth?

1. Virgin birth, Mt.1:...25.
2. Visit of shepherds (same night, at manger), Lk.2:8-20.
3. Visit of wise men, Mt.2:1-12.
 - a. They are not shepherds.
 - b. They came to house, NOT manger.
 - c. They are not numbered.
 - d. Jesus is from 40 days to 2 yrs. old.

What does Bible say about His birth?

1. Virgin birth, Mt.1:...25.
2. Visit of shepherds (same night, at manger), Lk.2:8-20.
3. Visit of wise men, Mt.2:1-12.
4. Journey to Egypt, Mt.2:13-15.
5. Male children killed, Mt.2:16-18.
6. Return to Nazareth, Mt.2:19-23;
Lk.2:39.

“We need to keep Christ in XMAS”

1. Impossible to keep Him where He never was.
2. Lord's church does not observe pagan / Catholic holy day.
3. Plea proves many have quit celebrating it religiously – merely a national holiday.

I. Where Did Christmas Originate?

II. What Does The Bible Say?

**III. What Should I
Do With XMAS?**

Everyone is affected by XMAS in some way

1. Job
2. Family
3. School holiday
4. Get-togethers

What is right attitude toward these things?

The Basics

1. CANNOT recognize it as His birthday
2. CANNOT participate in mass / holy day (Gal.4:10-11)
3. CANNOT avoid some attention to the day (national holiday, as New Years; July 4; Presidents' Day, et al.)

'During the first three centuries of the Christian Era there was considerable opposition in the church to the pagan custom of celebrating birthdays' – Colliers.

Parallels

- Most observe Saturday as day of rest, not Sabbath.
- Many right things become wrong when they turn religious –
 - Stargazing –astronomy or astrology?
 - Cleanliness, Mk.7:1-8.
 - Birthdays, Gn.40:20-22; Mk.6.
 - Eating food, 1 Co.11.
 - Thanksgiving, Ph.4:6.

Terms are not the problem

- 'Christmas' no longer conveys only a religious connotation.
 - Days of the week
 - Cities
 - Pentecost: Ac.20:16; 1 Co.16:8
- 'But I want nothing to do with XMAS'
 - Ro.14:5, 6, 23...