

Holy Days or Holiday's?

It bewilders me more and more each year as I witness the abject marketing push to buy something to celebrate Christmas. The advertising starts earlier each year and I begin to wonder just how long it will take for Christmas ads to run the day after Labor Day. Fourth of July, perhaps? This view that giving requires buying has taken Christ out of the celebration and put retail in His place. Yes, I realize these observations so far have been offered previously by others in the past but please allow me to continue. I truly wish to know why it has been so easy for Christ to disappear from our observation of His birthday in the last 50 years. There are untold stories of people crafting gifts for their children and buying very few things during the 1800's. This continued to be the trend until prosperity hit our society and the lower class started to compare themselves to those who had wealth and then strove to acquire what were once luxuries and make them common. I do not remember in my early childhood my parents running around, worried about getting me or my siblings exactly what we wanted. I often got what I needed and seldom what I wanted. Granted if I had got that which I wanted, the satisfaction would have been short-lived and left me wanting more. Until I was in my teens most of my gifts contained socks, pants, shirts, underwear, and any other needed clothing items. But yes, my teenage years hit during the 80's and the commercialism bug bit my mom and I saw her suffer the burden of trying to satisfy the demands and desires of her children. The stress that she would endure I can now see built up resentment between her and my father and led her to justify her actions several years later. Why do we not see just what the effect our errant perceptions of Christmas have burdened us with: debt, disappointment, sleep deprivation, chasing a sale, and a myriad of other things.

Christ did not come to this earth so that we could cast Him aside and worship ourselves and the things that we buy. He came so that we might have peace with God through His blood that we would not suffer the wrath of God which we truly deserve. It is written and testified throughout history by our actions that no one can say he is without sin and God being holy and perfect cannot have sin in His presence and remain God. There had to be a price paid to buy us back from the depths of our iniquity that could only be paid by God Himself in taking the form of His creation in the likeness of man but remaining fully God. This is exactly who Jesus is and what He did. He lowered Himself to be born in the lowest of conditions to the most inconsequential family and given what was then a common name. This is why the Heavens broke open over that hillside and announced to mere shepherds that God was now amongst men. Celebration was required to just make note of how miraculous the event was. This is why Christians celebrate His birth. The magnitude of God's work requires it.

With all of this now illustrated, the question must be answered both by individuals and the collective Church; Why have we allowed the observance of Christmas to become what it has? Why do we tolerate the rampant distortion and the elimination of His gift to mankind from the focus of celebration? We are now guilty of celebrating the celebration, which is akin to worshipping the creation and not the Creator. Shame on us. We ought to do better, tolerance is not letting others walk all over us but agreeing to disagree and continuing to give God the glory He is due for all things and in all things. If those who hate Christ want us to tolerate them they should return the favor and not demand that they do not see or hear us in our celebration.

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