



Christmas Investigated

It's reasonable, don't you think, that the Bible should be the first place to begin such an investigation?

Happy Christmas

Christmas Investigated

Introduction

It's reasonable, don't you think, that no one should adhere to a belief or be influenced to become involved in a matter without having sound, convincing reasons for doing so?

Of course it is. It is only natural that a person would hesitate to take part in something in which the security of his future would be involved without knowing all the details and having a clear understanding of the matter.

It is only logical that one would want to ask questions about and take time to investigate the soundness of a scheme or proposition before he would readily invest his life's savings in it, even though he was assured that practically everyone else was subscribing to it. Don't you think so?

It is normal, logical, and basically sound that we should hesitate to act or to believe a certain way without asking questions and being fully persuaded about the validity of the proposal. We just do not do important things without having good reasons. We do not jump into or go along with an idea or proposition just because someone says we should, or because the one sponsoring or promoting an undertaking or theory seems to be sincere.

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Suppose someone should come and tell you that a friend of yours had been in an auto wreck. Would you be satisfied with that information, or would you immediately question: "How, where, and when did it happen? How badly was he injured? Where is he now?"

And so it is in the Christian life. Every Christian owes it to himself (or herself) to know why he believes as he does and why he responds as he does to his convictions. He should seek to know what the Bible says about the way he thinks and acts, because it is the Christian's final authority.

As we come into the month of December each year, one cannot help but be impressed with the idea that something very momentous is in the offing, and that everyone should be enthusiastic about it. Why? Because all about us there is evidence of gala activity developing and a festive mood being promoted by practically everyone—by Christians and non-Christians alike.

One does not have to look far or ask very many people until he has discovered that this "something" is Christmas, and that it is just about universally believed in and observed as being one of the most sacred days of the year.

The question that should naturally follow is: "Well, what is Christmas, that it should have such an effect upon the world?"

It is only normal that one's curiosity should be aroused—excited to the point of wanting to know: "Why is it so enthusiastically celebrated? How did it begin? And what is

the proper way to observe this special day?"

At this point another question should immediately come to mind: "Where in the Bible are to be found the answers to these questions?" for as we observe the activity and trend of conversation on the street corner, over the telephone, in the publications, over the radio, and from the pulpits, there is conclusive indication that the observance of Christmas is held to be one of the principal teachings of the New Testament, and that the Bible sets it aside as one of the major of Christian festivals.

Surely if Christmas is so honored by Christendom, it is Biblically defensible. But is it? or is it possible that its popularity is attributable to the tendency to follow custom? We do so much without really knowing why. We are born into a world filled with practices which regulate social and religious life. We grow up participating in them, many times never taking the time or trouble to investigate why we do so. We are prone to take things for granted, persuaded that we are walking circumspectly before our heavenly Father; but since we find in Proverbs 14:12, that

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death,

it would be a good safeguard to re-examine our thinking once in a while.

We therefore shall undertake to make a thorough investigation of the matter. If we are going to observe this season of the

year, and one particular day of it, in such deep regard and reverence, it seems logical that we should know as much as there is to know about it.

It pays to know the answers to why we respond as we do. The Bible bears this out when it states: "... be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

We also find this statement in the Bible: "... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). God does not seem to accept our response if it is based solely on the thinking or actions of others.

In the Bible we find answers to the reason for our hope and how we can obtain salvation. Christians like to point out passages in it to substantiate their convictions and to show reasons for their conduct. If asked why he believes in Christ, a Christian would probably answer something like this: "Because I believe in the Bible," and then he would probably cite many Scriptures to support his belief, such as:

Matthew 5:17, Romans 5:6-8, Galatians 1:4, 1 John 3:5, John 6:38, 1 John 2:1, 2, and John 3:15, 16, which states that if we believe in Him we can have eternal life.

If asked why he did not curse, steal, worship idols, kill, attend wild parties, and indulge in other sinful practices, the Bible-believing Christian would no doubt say that these things are condemned in the Word of God. He would probably refer his questioner to the

Ten Commandments, to the verse in 1 Thessalonians 5:22, which states, "*Abstain from all appearance of evil*," and to other texts which show what has resulted and what will happen if we do such things. He would not say that he refrained from these practices just because others did.

If you (who are following the Lord) were asked: "Why do you pray?" you would doubtless point out that it is because the Bible instructs you to do so and tell the benefits to be received from it, and testify to personal prayer experiences. You'd likely cite many passages of Scripture, including 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "*Pray without ceasing*"; Luke 18:13: "... *men ought always to pray, and not to faint*"; and the sixth chapter of Matthew where Christ taught how to pray. You would not likely say, "I pray because most everyone else does," or "I would be looked down upon and accused of being odd if I didn't."

There is so much that we should believe and do, and there are so many things which will bring us into condemnation with God, if we have part in them, that we owe it to ourselves to know the *whys*. We need to have good, solid answers—a "*thus saith the Lord*," for our actions and convictions, such as we have mentioned concerning why Christians believe in Christ, do not curse, steal, kill, and why they pray.

The Bible Our Starting Point

Thus it is only natural that we would first

turn to the Bible for our information and instruction concerning this day with all of its attendant customs and practices. It is here that we would expect to find teachings and directions concerning it, stated and set forth just as definitely as it informs us about believing in Christ, stealing, cursing, killing, and praying. Why? Because Christmas is professed to be Biblically endorsed.

So we begin searching the Word, but after we have diligently examined every chapter, we fail to find any record, or even a hint, about Christmas. We might reason, though, that the fact that the word "Christmas" is not in the Bible is not surprising, that it is like such words or expressions as "revival meeting," "sermon," "pulpit," "Sabbath school," or "superintendent," which also are not in the Bible. Perhaps we should not expect to find the word itself in the Bible. Perhaps it is only a word coined to designate a Biblical principle or teaching. In this case it would be that which is involved in the celebrating of the birth of Christ. So we continue searching.

And our search is rewarding, for we do find a record of the birth of Christ. A beautiful and inspiring account is found in Matthew 1:18-25 and in Luke 1:26-36 and 2:1-20, but there is no hint given in any of these passages as to the time of His birth; nor is there any indication that He wanted His birth to be remembered, let alone celebrated. We do find, though, that the Bible record of Christ's birth,

coupled with historic facts, crases all possibility of His having been born on December 25th, or anywhere near that date. Luke, in speaking of the occasion of His birth, stated:

...there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night (Luke 2:8).

Climate Unfavorable to December Birth

According to facts concerning the weather of the land of Palestine, this never could have happened there in the month of December. The shepherds always corralled and brought their flocks from the mountain-sides and fields not later than October 15th in order to protect them from the cold, rainy season that followed that date.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica (vol. 5, page 794, 1892 edition) states this concerning the birth of Christ:

"Christmas Day... a festival of the Christian church, observed on the 25th of December, in memory of the birth of Jesus Christ. There is, however, a difficulty in accepting this as the date of the Nativity, December being the height of the rainy season in Judea, when neither flocks nor shepherds could have been at night in the fields of Bethlehem."

All other qualified reference works give the same facts concerning the matter.

Although we find that the Bible does not

give any direct information about the time of the birth of Christ, or that any significance should be attached to it, we reason that there must be something to be found relative to this universally observed day. So we continue the search.

How About the Christmas Tree?

How about the Christmas tree which is so deeply rooted in the observance of this day? Surely there is mention of it! And surely enough there is an account that might well be about the Christmas tree, although there is no mention of this decorative piece by the commonly designated name. Now maybe we are getting some place! Let us note this account in Jeremiah 10:2-5:

Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax.

They deck it with silver and with gold;

There is, however, a very conclusive way of establishing the approximate time of Christ's birth, which reveals that it was at least two and a half months prior to December 25. This method of calculating the time of the birth of Christ is clearly and fully explained in a tract entitled, "When Was Christ Born?" Write to the publishers for a free copy.

they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not; they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good.

If this is a Biblical record of the Christmas tree it does not seem that we could construe these verses to indicate approval of this yuletide symbol, for the Lord says that such is vain and of heathen origin. By no stretch of the imagination can we associate this account with the birth of Christ.

Still we have found nothing in the Bible positively pertaining to Christmas or to any of the activities and customs in connection with it. However, we have not yet looked for Santa Claus and his reindeer, holly wreaths, mistletoe, the yule log, Christmas cards, or Christmas carols. How about these?

We search, but again we must conclude that the Bible is silent in regard to these. There is just no trace of mention about them. The nearest we find is in Luke 2:13, 14, where the angels and a multitude of the heavenly hosts praised God and said,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Some might associate this with the singing of carols, but notice that it does not say that the angels sang the afore-quoted words. They spoke them, and there is no indication that the shepherds joined in with them

by repeating the same, nor were they instructed or encouraged to do so.

Giving of the Gifts

There is another custom associated with Christmas—the exchanging of gifts. Surely this very commendable practice has Biblical sanction. Yes, we do find a record about gifts having been given at a time soon after the birth of Christ. The account is found in Matthew 2:1, 2, and 11, and this is the only place we find mention of it. These three verses are as follows:

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him . . .

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Yes, the wise men did give gifts to Christ, but they did not exchange gifts among themselves; and they did not give gifts to Christ because it was His birthday, for they came several days afterward. This is a good indication that we are not expected to honor

Him on the day of His birth. We could not if we wanted to, for it is not known.

We do have the fact, though, that the wise men did give gifts to Christ. Thus if we are to take this for an example, we would confine our giving to contributing to Christ—giving to promote the plan of salvation which He died to perfect. We would give any time we had the substance to give, to show appreciation for what Christ did, and is doing for us, and to let others know He can and will do the same for them.

There is another reason, however, why the wise men gave gifts to Christ, and it had nothing whatsoever to do with His birth. Note that these men said, "*Where is he that is born King of the Jews?*" Now read this quotation from *Clarke's Commentary* (vol. 5, page 45), and you will see the reason for their giving gifts:

"The people of the East never approach the presence of kings and great personages without a present in their hands. The custom is often noticed in the Old Testament, and still prevails in the East, and in some of the newly discovered South Sea Islands."

So these wise men were not instituting a NEW Christian custom of exchanging gifts with friends in honor of Christ's birthday. They were merely following an old and ancient eastern custom of presenting gifts to a KING when coming into his presence. These men were approaching a King in person—Christ who was "*born King of the Jews.*"

No Scripture for Christmas— Then Where?

Where does this leave us? If Christmas, with all of its attendant customs and practices, is not Biblical, and we have failed to find that it is, where and how did this world-wide time of celebration originate, and why do people place so much emphasis—and religious emphasis at that—upon it?

As we have discovered, the answers to our questions are not given in the Bible, but they can easily and readily be found by anyone who will take the time to do a little research in histories, commentaries, encyclopedias, and other works. We have checked many of these sources of information, and would at this point like to present a few excerpts from them. First we quote from *The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia* under the heading, "Christmas":

"How much the date of the festival depended upon the pagan Brumalia following the Saturnalia (December 17-24) and celebrating the shortest day in the year and the 'New sun' . . . cannot be accurately determined. The pagan Saturnalia and Brumalia were too deeply entrenched in popular custom to be set aside by Christian influence. . . . The pagan festival with its riot and merry-making was so popular that Christians were glad of an excuse to continue its celebration with little change in spirit and in manner.

"Christian preachers of the West and of the Near East protested against the unseemly frivolity with which Christ's birth-

day was celebrated, while Christians of Mesopotamia accused their western brethren of idolatry and sun worship for adopting as Christian this pagan festival."

Now we quote from *The Source Book*—an international encyclopedic authority—under the heading, "Christmas" (vol. 2):

"Just when this festival originated is a matter of uncertainty, but references to it occur as early as the third century. Some diversity existed in the early Church as to the day for observing Christ's nativity; the Eastern Church celebrated the festival on the sixth of January.

"By the time of Chrysostom (fourth century) the Western Church had fixed on the 25th of December, and this date was gradually adopted by the Eastern Church.

"Among the factors determining the selection of the month of December was the prevailing custom of celebrating heathen festivals about this time of the year.

"The German and Celtic tribes, for instance, held their Yule feast in the winter solstice, to celebrate the return of the fiery sun-wheel. Many objects inseparably connected with the Christian festival had their origin in paganism, such as the holly, the mistletoe and the Yule log.

"The Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran churches especially emphasize Christmas as a religious festival, and Catholic priests can celebrate three masses at this time."

Next we cite a passage from *The New Standard Encyclopedia* under the article, "Christmas":

"Among the Romans, certain practices were adopted from an older pagan feast in honor of the birth of the sun, or Sol.

"The prejudice against Christmas observance, as too strongly tinged with the heathen traditions, was so strong in Scotland that, until recently, children in Presbyterian families had no Christmas. Even yet it is not a popular holiday in Scotland.

"The custom of making presents at Christmas time is associated with the gifts presented to Christ by the wise men of the East; but, in reality, at least so far as English-speaking people are concerned, it is derived from an old heathen usage.

"Many of the usages of the Germans and Romans were adopted from heathenism to Christianity."

The Bibliotheca Sara (vol. 12, pages 153-155) reveals this information:

"The interchange of presents between friends is alike characteristic of Christmas and the Saturnalia, and must have been adopted by Christians from the Pagans, as the admonition of Tertullian plainly shows."

As a last reference, we turn to *The Encyclopedia Americana* under the same heading:

"Christmas . . . was, according to many authorities, not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian church, as the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons, rather than their birth. [The Lord's Supper, which is instituted by New Testament authority, is a memorial of the death of Christ.]

"A feast was established in memory of this event [Christ's birth] in the fourth century. In the fifth century the Western church ordered it to be celebrated forever on the day of the old Roman feast of the birth of Sol, as no certain knowledge of the day of Christ's birth existed."

Christmas Stems from Paganism

This is where, how, and why Christmas came into existence, and it was not a product of Biblical practice, example, teaching, or inference. It was purely the result of "sugar-coatings," with Christian-sounding terms, a lot of heaven-abhorred heathen rites and practices. It all stems from paganism. The word *Christmas* means "the mass of Christ," but Christ never was in Christmas.

When the heathen found that all they would have to do in order to become a part of the prevailing church of the time was to accept different names for their rites and modes of worship, they became ready "converts." This strengthened the church numerically, physically, and financially, but most certainly it did not profit it spiritually.

There is still the tendency today for churches to solicit and accept new members without being much concerned about scruples. Numbers never did have weight with God. Gideon with 300 consecrated men turned to flight a great host of ungodly men (see Judges 7).

This would-be Christian celebration is nothing more than a camouflaged counterpart of the chief custom of the corrupt sys-

tem denounced all through Bible prophecies and teachings under the name of "Babylon." It originated in ancient Babylon of Nimrod's time. He was the son of Cush and the grandson of Ham, son of Noah.

Nimrod is credited with being the real founder of the Babylonish system that has gripped the world ever since—the system of organized competition, of man-ruled governments and empires, based upon a competitive and profit-making, economic system. From many ancient writings much is learned of this man who started the great organized apostasy away from God that has dominated this world until now.

It is said that Nimrod was so evil that he married his own mother, Semiramis, who bore him a child. After his untimely death, his mother propagated the evil doctrine of the survival of Nimrod as a spirit being. She claimed that a full-grown, evergreen tree sprang overnight from a dead tree stump, which symbolized the springing forth unto new life of the dead Nimrod.

On each anniversary of his birth, so she claimed, Nimrod would visit the evergreen tree and leave gifts upon it. December 25 was the birthday of Nimrod, and this is where the Christmas tree originated, as well as the supposed date for the birth of Christ. It also happened to be the time when the pagans celebrated the return of the sun—or birth of the sun—following the shortest days of the year. This was also an influencing factor in the selecting of this day as the birthday of Jesus.

Through her scheming and designing, Semiramis became the Babylonian "Queen of Heaven," and Nimrod, under various names, became the "Divine Son of Heaven." Through the generations, in this idolatrous worship, Nimrod became the false Messiah, son of Baal, the sun god. In this false, Babylonish system the "mother and child" (Semiramis and Nimrod) became chief objects of worship, and this worship spread over the world.

The Chaldean mysteries founded by Semiramis came down to us from the pagan religions by way of the Catholic church. Today much of the Protestant world accepts them without question and observes them according to the custom of the day.

It was during the fourth and fifth centuries that the pagans of the Roman world began accepting the new, popular "Christianity" by hundreds of thousands and millions, carrying their old pagan customs and beliefs along with them, merely permitting them to be cloaked with Christian-sounding names. The *Madonna* (mother and child idea) also became popularized, especially at Christmas time.

These are facts which can also be gleaned from good reference books.

The Christmas Spirit

"Well," one might say, "what if we did get Christmas from the pagans; isn't the Christmas spirit good? What's wrong with honoring the birth of Christ, and isn't the

exchanging of gifts commendable? Is there anything wrong in making children happy?"

Yes, there is some good (from a worldly standpoint) in these things, but they have no part in the life of a Christian, for the simple reason that the Bible gives much about what has happened in the past to those who forsook God and His commandments and adopted the ways of the heathen—idol worship, etc. And we are plainly warned about following after pagan ways in such passages of Scripture as are recorded in Leviticus 26, 2 Kings 17 and 21, Ezekiel 11 and 23, and Revelation 18.

We would have you notice especially the following verses from the aforementioned chapters:

And ye shall know that I am the Lord: for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the manners of the heathen that are round about you (Ezek. 11:12).

I will do these things unto thee, because thou hast gone a whoring after the heathen, and because thou art polluted with their idols (Ezek. 23:30).

...I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her [Babylon, vv. 3, 4] my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues (Rev. 18:4).

We do not believe that it can be considered that we have "come out of her" (this corrupt,

Babylonish, paganistic, God-forsaken system) if we continue to adhere to rituals originating in it, even though we do so in the name of Christ and benevolence and with Bible-sounding expressions.

That some good is done at Christmas time cannot be denied. Much charity, kindness, and special consideration for others is exhibited, but let us consider this seasonal showing of good will and generosity.

First, there is the Christmas spirit. One must have that in order to show proper respect for the occasion and in order to get a blessing from it (so we are led to believe), but what results are manifest from this spirit? In the main it is that which induces people to have an unrestrained good time—spending lots of money (mainly on these who are not in need), enjoying hilarious entertainment with lots of intoxicating liquor, while the real cause of Christ and the Church goes begging.

January is the most difficult month for survival in most of the churches, for people have had so much Christmas spirit that they have spent all their money treating and giving themselves and others a good time. The consequence is that there is little, if any, left for their churches which are trying to promote the gospel of Christ.

Put Christ Back Into Christmas?

Then we hear it being pleaded that we should put Christ back into Christmas, which,

on the face of it, shows a recognition of something being wrong with the response given to this occasion. This would be commendable if it were an attempt to restore the Saviour to a rightful place from which He has been displaced, but the truth is that He never was in or a part of the Christmas festival. Thus it would be impossible to put Him back into it.

How could Christ be in something which is permeated with the overpowering urge to benefit self? The *Christmas spirit* prompts men to launch a massive, concerted drive for material gain. Every conceivable ruse and trick of advertising is used to influence people to buy everything from liquor to automobiles for gifts. Why? Because they want to honor Christ and help others to become acquainted with Him? No! It's all for the purpose of trying to gratify the selfish desire for monetary gain, with which to satisfy fleshly ambitions. The Spirit of Christ just does not produce such carnality.

There is a far greater need today than trying to put Christ where He never was and to associate Him with that which is heathenish from start to finish. Where Christ needs to be put back is into our lives and into the Church. He has been neglected and offended so much that He has withdrawn Himself. Instead of being filled with the heathen spirit of Christmas, we need to be filled (or perhaps I should say, refilled) with the Spirit of Christ, for then we shall have hope of glory (see Col. 1:27).

Giving Gifts to Honor Christ

The exchanging of gifts, as we have pointed out, does not honor Christ or in any way help the cause for which He lived in deprivation and died for ignominiously. People say they love Christ, and then they give to one another. What would we think of someone if he (or she) said, "I love you very much, so I am going to spend a lot of money on others and have a grand time myself? I am of the mind that we would question the sincerity of such an one. Yet people say they love Christ, and then bestow their gifts and affection on one another. At this point someone might think of Matthew 25:34-46 and question our saying that people do not love Christ when they give to one another. Christ did say: "*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me*" (v. 40). But notice that He said, "*unto one of the least*," and to show what He meant by "*least*" we have only to notice whom He had been talking about: those who are hungry, thirsty, strangers, in need of clothing, sick, and in prison.

Most surely when we minister to such ones we can know that Christ is considering it as though we were giving to Him, but in the main this is not what prompts giving at Christmas time. Most of the giving is done to those who are not in need. This is what we are talking about.

Most of the giving of gifts at Christmas is based on the law of "give to get." The

general practice is to give to those whom it is thought will be able to give in return. Giving is stimulated by such thoughts as, "He gave to me, so I'll have to give to him, but I hope I will get back something worth more than I give."

Then we hear such remarks as, "He did not give me anything last year, so I will not give him anything this time." Giving is not giving, and will not be accepted as of any value by the Lord, unless the act is prompted by love and the sheer desire to help someone in need. Our liberality must be extended in this way if we are to follow the example of Christ.

Follow Christ's Example of Giving

We find that He was befriending and benefiting people without any thought of getting anything of a material nature in return. He gave His life for us, not because He was trying to pay us back for respect paid to and benevolence bestowed upon Him, for the Word states: "... while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). How could such an act be repaid? It is impossible. His giving was motivated by love, and He had compassion when He saw people in need. If we are going to attempt to honor Christ by giving gifts, it must be for the same reason that His heart was enlarged toward us.

And speaking of honoring Christ, the Bible is replete with ways of doing so. In the main, it is by following His example and instructions and not by adhering to

man-made traditions and practices.

Christ did not limit His benevolence to a certain time of the year and neither can we, if we are going to honor Him and His way of doing things. We think that it is wonderful for people to become concerned about the poor and needy and the underprivileged children at Christmas time, and it is, but how about these same people the rest of the year? This is where we see that the Christmas spirit is not the Spirit of Christ; for the Christmas spirit only lasts a short time, while those who have the Spirit of Christ feel a constant burden for the needy—both for their physical and spiritual needs.

It is just another ruse of Satan's which he uses to deceive people into thinking that a little show of spirituality and generosity is sufficient. It is the same type of delusion as when people are made to feel quite satisfied with themselves for having made one sizeable contribution to the church during the year, or having managed to attend church a few times.

Is It Wrong to Make Children Happy?

Then there is the question: "Is there anything wrong with making children happy?" We would answer: "Of course not, providing the right means are used to do so; but when it involves lying to them, it is wrong."

Throughout the year parents try to instill into their children the virtue of truthfulness and even punish them for telling lies. Then

Christmas time with its Christmas spirit comes along, and parents begin telling their children the infamous lie about Santa Claus. Is it any wonder that many of them, when they grow up and learn the truth about this myth, begin to believe God is a myth also?

We are reminded of the lad who had the Santa Claus lie instilled into him. One day, after he was old enough to understand, his parents decided they should tell him the truth about the matter. The father said, "Son, it is time you knew that there is no Santa Claus: he's just your Daddy and Mother."

The little fellow, stunned and mentally upset, reflected a moment and then replied, "Well, then, I am going to look into this Jesus Christ story, too."

Then, also, if making some children happy results in making others unhappy and causes them to feel their meagerness more deeply than ever, there is reason to question the good that is done. And this is just what happens. Children who have parents of means get many gifts and goodies, while children in poor homes get nothing. The next day "after," these youngsters meet, and one says to another, "Look what I got for Christmas! What did Santa bring you?" You can well imagine how the one questioned would feel if he had not received anything.

In Conclusion

Having now presented the facts about

this pagan-instigated festival, and shown that it is an observance for which there is no Scriptural justification, it is reasonable, don't you think, that we should have no part in it? It is like investing in something which we have found to be unsound—a swindle or a racket—knowing that by so doing our future security would be in jeopardy. We should be more careful and more concerned about the way we invest our lives than we are about the use of our money.

Giving a heathen holiday a Bible-sounding name does not remove the God-abhorred, heathen stigma any more than putting a label on a whisky bottle, reading, "Angel's Nectar," would make its fetid body- and brain-wrecking contents safe to use.

When God's condemnation and wrath have been on people in the past (Ezekiel 11, for instance) who followed after the ways of the heathen, and when God says, "*I am the Lord, I change not*," it would seem only the safe and reasonable thing to conclude that He would still be of the same mind regarding following after heathen inventions and practices.

We do not have to go outside the Bible to find ways of honoring and worshiping the Lord and directing others to do the same. We do not have to hunt outside the precious Word for ways to keep ourselves occupied in trying to serve and honor our Lord and Master. We'll do well and have more than enough if we adhere to all we find in the Bible.

Let us get back to the Bible! There is where we shall find light, the Spirit that we need, and the way to please God and be found acceptable in His sight.

It's reasonable, don't you think?

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Can You Afford to Take the Chance?	16
World History Foretold	34
Palestine, Jews and Bible Prophecy	24
Which Day Is the Lord's Day?	32
The 1,000-Year Reign with Christ	16
The Destiny of the Earth	16
. Destroyed or Restored?	16
If a Man Die, Does He Still Live?	24
The Punishment of the Wicked	32
The Rich Man and Lazarus	26
The New Birth	24
Is the Bible True?	4
Adam's Apple	4
Bible Baptism	4
The Devil on the Spot	6
Legal Advice from Heaven	4
A Real Love Story	4
World History Foretold	4
The Return of the Jews and Jerusalem	4
The Ten Commandments	8
What Must I Do to Be Saved?	4
Two Appointments You Must Meet	4
Faith and Repentance	4
Jesus Is Coming Again	4
Religious Surgery	8
Keeping Fit Spiritually	8
The Doctrinal Beliefs of the	8
Church of God (Seventh Day)	32

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