

Should Christians Celebrate Christmas?

Arthur Barry

This is a good but thorny question that we deal with every year at this time. Here are some thoughts and some questions. I leave you to answer them for yourself.

- Should anyone celebrate Christmas?
- What do we mean by *celebrate*?
- What is *Christmas*?

Christmas = Biblical truth cloaked in pagan rituals.

- Biblical truth: God's incarnation via the birth of His son.
- Pagan rituals: Fixed on calendar; Physical decoration and gift giving, partying.
- Christmas for some is just a time of celebration with no particular attachment. Perhaps family gatherings are more meaningful but millions of non-Christians *celebrate* in some way.

Christmas is commonly defined as a *Christian festival*. That is wrong. It is a worldly festival that has capitalized on, and bastardized, the nativity. The Church has no authority, neither has it any need, to follow the culture. But must Christians ignore Christmas? Is there any positive effect on society? Do people really think about Jesus?

- Would it be better if there were no such thing as Christmas?
- Is Christmas an obstacle to the gospel, or an opportunity?
- Can a Christian participate in a worldly festival that has a distorted connection with Christ?

I make a distinction between the meeting place and the market place. We come together to break bread, not celebrate Christmas. Beyond that, we each must test ourselves regarding every aspect of our lives. How many routine activities are we involved in that have worldly connections and no biblical authority? Birthdays, anniversaries, Sports, TV, Internet...

Should Paul have gone to the Areopagus? (Acts 17:19-32) He became all things to all men that he might win some (1 Corinthians 9:22). That was not his excuse for indulging himself. It was his defense to those who maintained their personal piety by cutting themselves off from sinners. Were the scribes and pharisees right in accusing Jesus as one who receives sinners and eats with them? (Luke 15:2). Did Jesus violate His personal piety when He came in to this ugly, sinful world that was ruled by Satan?



That meets at 701 South Wilbur, Sayre, PA 18840
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December 9, 2018

WELCOME!

<u>Sunday</u>	Bible Class- 9:30 a.m. Worship- 10:30 a.m.
<u>Tuesday</u>	Ladies Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.
<u>Wednesday</u>	Bible Study-6:30 p.m.

All the churches of Christ greet you.

Romans 16:16

Today's Sermon: *Heaven's Bells*

Sermons are recorded and are available for listening on the church website.

Bulletins are archived on the website.

valleycitieschurchofchrist.org
aicoc.org (Antioch Initiative)

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Scripture: Luke 1:5-25

ANNOUNCEMENTS / UPCOMING EVENTS...

- **Ladies Class: This Tuesday, December 11th. Place TBA. Our lesson will be Day 3 of Lesson 7.**
- **Wednesday Evening Bible Class:** December 12th. Arthur will be teaching an introduction to Ephesians.
- **Holiday Gathering:** December 16th following worship with singing and games. We will enjoy our usual 3rd Sunday potluck until this time.
- **Next Regional Singing-** December 30th here at Valley Cities.
- **Sojourners** here- July 8-18.

**Next Potluck: December 16th at the
Holiday Gathering
NEXT WEEK.**



- **Introduction to Ephesians, Wednesday evening Bible class @ 6:30!**
- **We are thankful for all the guests that have been coming our way in the last few weeks and look forward to sharing the gospel message with them all.**



PRAYERS...

- Pray for the family and friends of **Nicole Baker**, the young woman who was scheduled to be taken off life support last Wednesday. At this point we are not sure of her condition. Her family and her boyfriend, Jeffrey, and her children need prayer at this difficult time.
- **Vicki Joice** has had cataract surgery on one eye, which went well, and will be having surgery on the other eye next week.
- **Marilynn Patrick**, who many of us know from the Endwell and Horseheads churches, has been diagnosed with inoperable colon cancer, which has recurred from a previous bout.
- **Ronnie Jones** is recovering at home in Jacksonville, FL, following his stroke.
- **Ted** has had cataract surgery, only needed in one eye. Pray for his future surgery to correct the problem of bleeding behind the eye caused by a stroke in that eye.
- Pray that **Jackie** will have a smooth move from her home in Endicott to her new place in Athens.
- **Pat Gutherie** had surgery last week to remove lymph nodes from between his lungs for biopsy to see if he has cancer in the left lung as well as the right one.
- Prayers for Tim's friend **Carolyn** from work, who was involved in a traffic accident last week.
- Pray for **Andrea Lentz** – lung cancer.
- Pray for **Lori Kashorek** – lung cancer.
- Pray for Sandy and Arthur's neighbor, **Erin Beiber** who has metastatic breast cancer.
- **Patty and Ruthie's cousin Cathy's husband Bruce** has been told there is no longer any sign of kidney cancer! They are continuing to monitor two small spots on his lungs, which have shown no change. He is suffering severe headaches in the temple area, which is a cause for some concern.
- Help us to all stay **encouraged** throughout the holiday season and into the new year.

If you have any prayers or news that you would like included in the bulletin, please contact Sandy at barncat7237@gmail.com or text or call (607) 261-0911.