

KEEPING HOLIDAYS

THE PRACTICE OF MAKING DAYS HOLY

*"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.
I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain."*

~ Galatians 4:10-11

1. Holy Days in the Bible

- a. We are talking about religious days not family, culture, vacation days
- b. There were 7 feast days (high holy days) defined for Israel – Leviticus 23
- c. Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy – Exo 20:8-11, Numbers 15:32-36
- d. But now, we are not under the law which was contrary to us – Col 2:10-14

2. Holy Days NOT in the Bible

- a. Most religious days come from a blend of pagan religion, Judaism, or Catholicism
- b. It is well accepted that Dec 25th is the ancient pagan feast day Saturnalia
- c. Christ-Mass is Catholic, and non-Catholics knew it in the 1800s
- d. Few worship their Christmas tree, but fewer honor Christ
- e. Santa is a pernicious lie warmed over by 19th century consumerism – bah, humbug!
- f. Valentines day originated with pagan Lupercalia (cupid, love lotteries, fertility)
- g. Easter is not Passover – Acts 12:4 (Lev 23:5-6)
- h. What do bunnies, eggs, and ham have to do with Christ? A: nothing.
- i. Meat offered to idols is nothing - 1 Cor 8:4; and flee idolatry - 1 Cor 10:14-17

3. What Grace Teaches

- a. Religious holidays are controversial b/c they are the most practiced by the world
- b. The biggest outrage has been over paganism / secularism (no Christ) / commercialism
- c. The biggest problem = diversion/distraction/distortion of the true preaching of Christ
- d. Grace of God has appeared... deny ungodliness and worldly lusts - Titus 2:11-12
- e. Let no man judge you or put you back under bondage – Col 2:14-17; Gal 5:1
- f. Hold the Head which is Christ according to the mystery (body) – Col 2:19-23
 - i. His resurrection and the fellowship of the mystery – 2 Tim 2:8, Col 1:27
- g. Observing days is weak and beggarly, as is the law – Gal 4:9-11; Rom 14:1-7
 - i. Spirituality = instead of putting chains on your flesh, reckon it dead – 2Cor 4:16
 - ii. Religion loves symbols, but faith comes from clear words not symbols
- h. To fellow Christians we ask, why misrepresent? Why lie? Why hide it? Water down?

4. How to Respond Minister to Others

- a. Be fully persuaded in your own mind, esteem what is right – Rom 14:5, Phil 2:3
- b. Discern who you are speaking to (believer, unbeliever), when, and where
- c. Address and remove the religious veils and dependence on circumstances/feelings
- d. You have nothing to fear – take opportunity to glorify Christ and his cross – Gal 6:14

1822 - Clement Moore – Twas the Night Before Christmas... wrote a description of Santa Claus
1890 – Thomas Nast – Harper’s weekly – political cartoonist – Norman Rockwell – Saturday Evening Post
1865 – Christmas and Easter were still Catholic holidays (and Lutheran, Episcopalian)
1931 – Haddon Sunblom – Coca Cola – the modern depiction

This was found in the New York Daily Times on December 26th, 1865:

“The churches of the Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists were not open on December 25 except where some mission schools had a celebration. They do not accept the day as a holy one, but the Episcopalian, Catholic and German churches were all open. Inside they were decked with evergreens.”

Humbug. noun – 1) deceptive or false talk or behaviour. 2) a hypocrite. definition from the Oxford English dictionary

“When it can be proved that the observance of Christmas, Whitsuntide, and other Popish festivals was ever instituted by a divine statute, we also will attend to them, but not till then.” – Charles Haddon Spurgeon

We have no superstitious regard for times and seasons. Certainly we do not believe in the present ecclesiastical arrangement called Christmas: first, because we do not believe in the mass at all, but abhor it, whether it be said or sung in Latin or in English; and, secondly, because we find no Scriptural warrant whatever for observing any day as the birthday of the Savior; and, consequently, its observance is a superstition, because not of divine authority. (Charles Spurgeon, Sermon on Dec. 24, 1871).