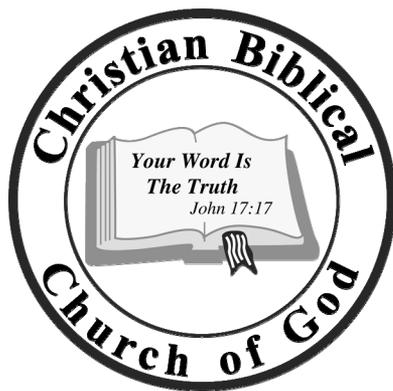


CHRISTMAS



*The Greatest
Story NEVER
Told*



© 1997, 2010, 2012, 2014

All Scriptural references and quotes are from The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, Second Edition 2009, York Publishing Company.

*Christian Biblical Church of God
P.O. Box 1442
Hollister, CA 95024-1442*

All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without the written permission of the copyright owner. This includes electronic and mechanical photocopying or recording, as well as the use of information storage and retrieval systems.

Table of Contents

Preface	<i>i</i>
Introduction	<i>v</i>
<i>Chapter One.</i>	
The Birth of Christ	1
What Day was Christ’s Birth?	
<i>Chapter Two:</i>	
Christmas Began When?	3
Pagan Origins	
The Early Church	
The Nativity—Role of Sun Worship in Choosing December 25	
A Simple Solution	
<i>Chapter Three:</i>	
The Christmas Trail	9
Yule Logs	
Mistletoe	
What Is the Christmas Tree All About?	
Was Christ Born in a Cave?	
The Christmas Parties and Decorations	
Giving of Gifts	
<i>Chapter Four:</i>	
Santa Claus	14
<i>Chapter Five:</i>	
Mother and Child	17
<i>Chapter Six:</i>	
The Christmas Spirit: Angelic or Demonic?	19
Satan’s Deliberate Deceit	
<i>Chapter Seven:</i>	
Our Forefathers Knew Better!	23
Put Christ Back into Christmas	

Chapter Eight:
God Issues a Strong Warning 25
 Do We Honor God?

Chapter Nine:
The Next Step: More Courage! More Study! 27

Chapter Ten:
Conclusion: Repentance! 30

Preface

**“The true worshipers shall worship the Father
in spirit and in truth: for the Father is
indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner.
God is Spirit, and those who worship Him
must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24).**

Perhaps you have never heard the true story, *Christmas—the Greatest Story Never Told*. As astounding as it may seem, what the religions of the world have told you about Christmas is not true!

If you celebrate and love Christmas, as the world celebrates and loves Christmas, the information in this booklet will be most revealing. Most people who celebrate Christmas believe they are honoring God the Father and Jesus Christ. But the truth is that they are not. As you read this booklet, you will have to ask yourself some difficult questions:

“If Christmas does not honor God, who does it honor?” Most people claim that they desire to worship the true God of creation, but they have been deluded into accepting practices that, in fact, worship false gods. So we must ask ourselves, “Do we want to worship the God of creation, or the gods which men have created for themselves? Do we want to be justified by God, or do we want to justify our own human ways, and thoughts?”

In order to solve this dilemma, we need to do as the Scriptures admonish and prove what is “good and acceptable before God” (I Tim 5:4). Indeed, if we desire to follow and honor God, we should be willing to follow the example of Jesus Christ. Notice what Jesus said: “ ‘The Father has not left Me alone because **I always do the things that please Him.**’ As he spoke these things, many believed in Him... ‘If you continue in My word, you are truly My disciples. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free’ ” (John 8:29-32). We must be willing to search the Scriptures and history to find the real truth about Christmas. We must find out from the word of God whether the celebration of Christmas is pleasing to God or not.

However, in the world in which we live, too many people feel that if they have good intentions in whatever they are doing, then, in their view, everything is right. As many religious people may say, “What’s really important is what’s in my heart.” Some claim that the origin of the celebration of Christmas on December 25 is of no importance. You may have heard it said, “We will make it acceptable to God as long as we put Christ into the celebration with a renewed and deep spiritual meaning!”

Preface

So that we are not misled by our feelings, let's see God's righteous view about the human heart. In Genesis 8:21 it is recorded: "The imagination of man's heart is evil **from his youth...**" (emphasis ours throughout). Human rationale is most deceptive because it seems so right. "There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12). God inspired Jeremiah to write about the human heart of man, "The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah. 17:9). Although we may think that our hearts are pure, and our intentions right, we must not rely on our own deceitful reasonings, but we must rely solely on the Truth of the Word of God.

Moreover, Jesus Christ clearly denounced the religious traditions of men as vain. "But in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:7). Since Christmas is a tradition of men, in celebrating it, do we worship God in vain? Listen, to what Jesus also said about the observation of human traditions. "Full well do you reject the commandments of God, so that you may observe your *own* traditions" (verse 9).

You need to carefully read this booklet and ask yourself, "Am I rejecting God by observing the tradition of Christmas?" You are encouraged to look up all the scripture references used in this booklet. Then you need to follow the example of the Bereans who "examined the Scriptures daily *to see* if these things were so" (Acts 17:11).

It's also important to dispel the misconception that the Old Testament is old news— not applicable to us today. We need to realize that most of the scriptures the apostles of Jesus Christ directly quoted and wrote about are the ones we call "the Old Testament."

Furthermore, as each of the Gospels and epistles were written, they were accepted by the New Testament church as inspired, carrying the scriptural authority of Jesus Christ (II Peter 3:16). Notice what the apostle Paul wrote about the scriptures we now call the "Old Testament." He considered them the inspired Word of God which we are to use today. "All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:16-17). Remember, neither God the Father nor Jesus Christ referred to the Scriptures as "Old Testament" and "New Testament." These names were given later, by men.

Even knowing that, many may think, and with conviction, "I just don't see how all these churches could be wrong about Christmas—it just doesn't make sense!" But remember, it is well known by the facts of history and science that a majority of people also held beliefs which were later proven to be wrong. How many people believed that the

Preface

world was flat? How many believed that the sun revolved around the earth? As you read this booklet, you will come to understand that those who celebrate Christmas, have been led to believe and practice the lying traditions of men while intending to do good.

Notice what Jesus Christ said about those well-intended religious practices done in His name! “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day [the day of judgment], ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?’ And then I will confess to them, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness’ ” (Matthew 7:21-23).

We hope that God has given you the desire to read this booklet to find out if Christmas worships Christ or if not Christ, then whom? This is “*The Greatest Story Never Told.*”

Deuteronomy 12:30-31

“Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?’ You shall not do so to the LORD your God, for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates, they have done to their gods; even their sons and their daughters they have burned in the fire to their gods.”

Jeremiah 10:2-5

Thus says the LORD, “Do not learn the way of the heathen, and do not be terrified at the signs of the heavens; for the nations are terrified at them. For the customs of the people *are* vain; for one cuts a tree out of the forest with the axe, the work of the hands of the workman. They adorn it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers, so that it will not move. They *are* upright as the palm tree, but cannot speak. They must surely be carried because they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them; for they cannot do evil nor good, for it is not in them.”

Matthew 15:9

“But they worship Me in vain, teaching *for* doctrine *the* commandments of men.”

John 4:24

“God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

II Corinthians 11:13-15

For such *are* false apostles—deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore, *it is* no great thing if his servants also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness—whose end shall be according to their works.

Introduction

The muffled sounds from the TV were only a camouflage. Nathan's mom and dad were busily putting toys together, wrapping presents and putting them under the tree, eating the cookies the kids had put out for Santa Claus, and sneaking a quick kiss under the mistletoe. They were as excited as the kids on this special night. They felt a warm glow as they carried on the traditions that had been so much fun for them when they were children.

At the other end of the house, Nathan was too excited to sleep. It was Christmas Eve and he couldn't stop thinking, "What will Santa bring me?" Nathan had visited Santa at the mall earlier in December and told him what he wanted. On his list was the latest and greatest video game because his parents said they couldn't afford it. He knew it was getting late, but he couldn't resist one more peek to look for Santa in his bright red suit flying to his house. As he looked, he wondered how it was possible for Santa to get to all those houses in one night. Well, no matter, Mom and Dad said he could, so it must be true. He worried a little. He had been pretty mean to his little sister lately. But he always got presents anyway, so maybe that didn't count to Santa. Presents! Yeah!

Grandma and Grandpa were coming too. More presents! Those would have to wait until after Grandma went to church, even though it wasn't Sunday! Dad just said, "Grandma is old fashioned." Grandma said, "Christmas is special because that was the day Christ was born." "We don't go to church on my birthday," he thought. Anyway, the people at the store had told Dad, "Christmas is for the children. That's what it's all about."

And so it goes. A similar scenario is played out in countless homes around the world with activities planned and anticipated throughout the year. Most often they are carried out without a thought given to the one whose life it claims to celebrate. Although children are interested in the activity and the presents, Christians who really study their Bible will have nagging questions: How do Christmas traditions really celebrate the birthday of Jesus? Where is the observance of Christ's birth taught in the Bible? How did Santa Claus get involved with the birth of Christ? Where did we get Christmas trees, Yule logs, wreaths, and mistletoe? Jesus was born on December 25, *wasn't He?* Christmas is one of the most important Christian holidays, isn't it?

We live in a world filled with customs that most people grow up practicing without question. The majority participates in the observance of Christmas, believing it to be one of the principal teachings of the New Testament. Since we look to Christ as the author of our salva-

Introduction

tion, maybe we should take a deeper look into the celebration of his birth. This booklet will answer those questions. We can know the origins of these customs, and just how these traditions became associated with Christmas.

The Bible Commands the Observance of Christmas — *Doesn't It?*

The story of Christ's miraculous birth is one of the most widely known and popularly embellished stories from the Bible. Few realize that "Christmas" is never mentioned in the Bible. How can it be determined whether or not the origins of Christmas are important to Christians? If we uncover evidence that proves Christmas is actually the unrighteous worship of Baal, or any false god, it is imperative that we withdraw from such abominable traditions. We would not want Christ to utter to us the words he spoke to the scribes and Pharisees, "Hypocrites! Isaiah has prophesied well concerning you, saying, 'THESE PEOPLE HAVE DRAWN NEAR TO ME WITH THEIR MOUTHS, AND WITH THEIR LIPS THEY HONOR ME; BUT THEIR HEARTS ARE FAR AWAY FROM ME. BUT THEY WORSHIP ME IN VAIN, TEACHING *FOR* DOCTRINE *THE* COMMANDMENTS OF MEN' " (Matthew 15:7-9). If we consider ourselves Christians, our worship must be to God the Father through Christ alone. (See I Kings 18:21) We cannot rely on our human intellect, feelings or emotions because as Proverbs 14:12, states, "There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the way of death." We must rely on the truth of God and His Word is accessible to us. We may have great peace of mind in knowing that God provides for us, in the Bible, the godly way to worship Him in a manner in which He approves and delights.

Finally, did you know there is not one word in the New Testament, nor for that matter, anywhere in the whole Bible telling us that we should observe Christmas? The Christians of the first century, under the inspired teachings of Paul and Peter and the other apostles, *never* observed it. Just what do we really know about Christmas? You will be surprised, maybe shocked! It just may be **The Greatest Story Never Told!**

Chapter One

The Birth of Christ

A great and important event occurred nearly 2000 years ago in ancient Palestine. It was the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. We have all heard of the story told in the gospels. Joseph and Mary had gone to Bethlehem at the decree of Caesar Augustus. "...And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of *the city of Nazareth*, into Judea, to *the city of David* which is called Bethlehem ... to register himself with Mary, who was betrothed to him as wife, *and was great with child*" (Luke 2:1-5).

We remember, of course, there was no room at the inn; they spent the night in what we would call a barn, and there Mary gave birth to Jesus. His bed was a manger filled with hay.

Out of town, in the open fields around Bethlehem, shepherds were spending the night with their flocks. As the shepherds watched their flocks, suddenly they saw angels appear in the sky, and "...an angel of *the Lord* stood by them, and *the glory of the Lord* shined round about them; and they were seized *with great fear*. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for behold, I am announcing to you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for today, in *the city of David*, a Savior was born to you, Who is Christ *the Lord*. Now this is the sign for you; you shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger' " (Luke 2:8-11).

This is the story of Christ's birth. Those shepherds rejoiced that night, so we should also rejoice because Christ, the Messiah, the Savior was born—that same Christ through Whom we have salvation!

What Day Was Christ's Birth?

When did this event take place? The actual date can only be estimated (Write for our booklet, *When Was Jesus Christ Born?*). While people all over the world commemorate His birth on December 25th, one thing we can know for sure is that it WAS NOT in winter. The Bible states in the Song of Solomon 2:11, and Ezra 10:9&13, that winter was a rainy season not allowing shepherds to remain in open fields at night. The evidence of the shepherds in the field shows it could not have been during the cold, rainy season of December and January.

From the *Adam Clark Commentary*, Volume 5, page 347, we learn "[i]t was an ancient custom among the Jews of those days to send their sheep to the fields and deserts about Passover (early spring) and

Chapter One

bring them home at commencement of the first rain.” The authority continues, “during the time they were out, the shepherds watched them night and day, as ... the first rains began early in the month of Marchesvan, which answers to part of our October and November (begins mid-October), we find that the sheep were kept out in the open country during the whole summer, and as these shepherds had not yet brought home their flocks, it is a presumptive argument that October had not yet commenced, and consequently, our Lord was not born on the 25th of December, when no flocks were out in the fields by night. On this very ground, the nativity in December should be given up.”

This is a profound statement of truth. Nevertheless, it seems that the majority of people are willing to ignore the facts. In all too many cases, when they do stumble onto the truth, instead of believing it, they just get up, dust themselves off and continue to believe all the same old myths and fables they have always believed—content in their deception.

Chapter Two

Christmas Began When!?

We often hear the slogan: “Let’s put Christ back into Christmas!” Let’s look at just how Christ got into Christmas in the first place.

Earls W. Count, Professor of Anthropology at Hamilton College, in his book *4,000 Years of Christmas*, states:

“We do not know when the Christ child it (Christmas) venerates was born: or exactly how it was that, over the centuries, a bishop saint of Asia Minor, and a pagan god of the Germans merged to become Santa Claus.

“Although the Christmas story centers on the Christ child of Bethlehem, it begins so long before his coming that we find its hero arriving on the scene after more than half the time of the story has gone by. Christmas began over 4,000 years ago, as the festival which renewed the world for another year. The twelve days of Christmas, the bright fires and probably the Yule log; the giving of presents; the carnivals with their floats; the merry makings and clownings; the mummers who sing and play from house to house; the feastings the church processions with their lights and song all these began three centuries before Christ was born. And they celebrated the arrival of the New Year” (*ibid.* page 18).

“Taken altogether, the coincidences of the Christian with the heathen festivals are too close and too numerous to be accidental. They mark the compromise which the church in the hour of its triumph was compelled to make with its vanquished yet still dangerous rivals. The inflexible Protestantism of the primitive missionaries, with their fiery denunciations of heathendom, had been exchanged for the supple policy, the easy tolerance, the comprehensive charity of shrewd ecclesiastics, who clearly perceived that **if Christianity was to conquer the world it could do so only by relaxing the too rigid principles of its Founder, by widening a little the narrow gate which leads to salvation**” (*The Golden Bough*, page 419, by Sir James George Frazer, emphasis added).

Chapter Two

It is important to note that the “Founder” of Christianity, referred to by Sir Frazer, is Almighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, by whose authority we enter into salvation. By accepting and promulgating these pagan celebrations those “shrewd ecclesiastics” declared God’s principles (by which we enter into His Kingdom) to be too rigid, and His gate too narrow. Let us remember that Christ Himself said, “Enter in through the narrow gate: for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it; for narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it” (Matthew 7:13-14).

Pagan Origins

Most Bible scholars agree that Christmas, as celebrated today, is of pagan origin. This is documented in a broad variety of sources. William Muir Auld adds, “The heathen contributions now are precisely those which lend to Christmas much of its warm color and human charm.” Auld goes into great depth showing the connections of the festival of Saturnalia, or Sacaea, which were ancient celebrations in honor of the pagan sun god Nimrod/Tammuz. He tracks its observance from Babylonian Mystery Religion through the Roman Empire where it eventually became connected with their worship of Mithra. “Schools were closed, war was never declared on this day, and the practice of giving gifts and receiving presents was almost as common then as it is now at Christmas ... a sense of brotherhood prevailed” (*Christmas Traditions*, page 45).

No, the warm feelings that they enjoyed did not alter the debauchery that was the real attraction for the celebrations. “For many a day the Church fought bitterly their excesses (the pagan’s spirited festivities) and superstitions, especially those bound up with the Kalends and Yule.... But burning denunciations and threats of excommunication failed to wean the barbarians from their heathen modes of rejoicing. It was discovered they were far more ready to abandon their gods and the dates of their festivals than to change their habits and manners.... Christianizing work went on. What it could not extricate itself from, it nobly sought to consecrate” (*ibid.* page 45).

The research becomes complicated as these pagan festivals traveled from country to country. The names and customs were adapted into yet other pagan religions. From the Roman Empire, Auld shows the gradual acceptance of the festivities starting in England in 592, and Germany in 813, from the Synod of Mainz. It was as late as the tenth century that King Hakon the Good introduced these pagan festivals to Norway.

Christmas Began When?

The Early Church

So we ask, “How did this pagan custom get into Christian professing churches?” Most recognized authorities show us that Christmas was not observed by the early church for the first two or three hundred years, a period longer than the United States has existed as a nation. It first appears in the western segment of the Roman Church in the fourth century AD. However, it was not until the fifth century that the Roman Church ordered it to be celebrated as an official Christian festival.

Compton’s Encyclopedia comments, “Many of the customs now associated with Christmas go back thousands of years to a time when the people of Europe worshipped pagan gods. The early Christian Church took the ancient festival time and gave new meaning to it—the religious meaning of Christianity—and made it a holy season. Many of the customs can be traced back to the pagan midwinter festival of the Teutonic people of Northern Europe.” The *World Book Encyclopedia* tells us, “Bishop Liberius of Rome ordered the people to celebrate on December 25. He probably chose this date because the people of Rome already observed it as the Feast of Saturn (Saturnalia), celebrating the birthday of the sun.” This great compromise was made easy by the fact that the real date of Jesus’ birth wasn’t known.

The *Encyclopedia Americana* and others show how these customs became a part of Catholicism. Indeed the name “Christmas” comes from the Mass of Christ, instituted by the Catholic Church which, after failing to eradicate the former heathen customs, tried to remake them into church celebrations.

Since it has come to us through the Catholic Church, why not examine the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, published by that church? Under the caption “Christmas” we find: “Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the church! ... The first evidence of the feast is from Egypt. It also remarks that, “in the scriptures sinners alone, not saints celebrate their birthdays.” (The three Biblical examples of birthday celebrations are in fact—all evil! You read these accounts in Gen. 40:20-22; Job 1:4-5; Matthew 14:6-11). “Pagan customs centering around the January Calends gravitated to Christmas.” This truth is further acknowledged in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *Compton’s*, and *Americana* (which adds that it was “not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian Church, as the Christian’s usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth”). The New Testament Passover was personally instituted by Jesus Christ as a memorial of His death. The *Encyclopedia Americana* continues, “A feast was established in memory of this event (Christ’s birth) in the fourth century, and in the fifth century the Western church ordered it to be celebrated forever on the

Chapter Two

day of the old Roman feast of the birth of Sol, as no certain knowledge of the day of Christ's birth existed."

The Nativity— Sun Worship's Role in Choosing December 25

The date of the **Nativity of the Unconquered Sun**, however, was well known. We learn, again from the Catholic *Encyclopedia*, that it was already being celebrated as the feast honoring the sun god Mithra. or Baal, in which the pagan priest announced "the Virgin has brought forth!" during the midnight Mass on the eve of December 25. The encyclopedia goes on to say this celebration "has a strong claim on the responsibility for our December date." The pagans, who were devoted to Mithraism, called their celebration *DIES NATALIS SOLIS INVICTI*. The Catholic Church even kept part of the name: "Natalis or Nativity." The cult that kept this "birthday of the invincible sun" was very strong in Rome. To gain the acceptance and supposed conversion of these people to Christianity, the [Catholic] Church fathers were referring to Christ as the "**Sun of Justice**" by the beginning of the third century.

A Simple Solution

The Roman Catholic Church's order to celebrate the "Nativity of the Sun," came in response to the hoards of pagans coming into the church, bringing with them their old idols and customs. This fact is recorded in the *Encyclopedia Americana* and in many other sources. The church could not allow the open worship of the pagan sun-god, but at the same time did not wish to offend their new "converts." They found a simple solution—simple, that is, to an apostate church: Substitute Christ's birth for that of the pagan sun-god. In other words, compromise the truth of God!

The church had already reasoned that it was all right to accept many old pagan festivals, IF they renamed them and made them appear Christian. In this way the heathens could be "converted" en masse, without the tremendous problems of teaching them the true Word of God, and demanding, AS GOD COMMANDS, that they repent and give up their false deities. The Roman Church was interested in gaining numbers, NOT the SPIRIT of GOD! Apparently the Catholic "fathers" had never read Paul's warning in Galatians 1:8-11 when he asked those around him if he sought to please God or man by his teachings. Paul plainly states if he sought to please man, then he WOULD NOT BE A SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST! Further, he pronounces a CURSE on

Christmas Began When?

anyone who would pervert the worship of Christ! The Catholic Church clearly has sought to please man, rather than God.

If that is not enough to convince us of the pagan origins and influence, the *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia* offers this: “The pagan Brumalia (December 25th) following the Saturnalia (December 17-24), and celebrating the shortest day of the year and the ‘new sun’ ...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 to have an excuse to continue its celebration with little change in spirit and manner. Christian teachers of the West and Near East protested against the unseemly frivolity, while Christians of Mesopotamia accused their western brethren of idolatry and sun worship for adopting as Christian the pagan festival.”

The Book of Christmas Folklore, by Tristram Potter Coffin says the Saxons attempted to hold out against the Holy Roman Empire. Though they called it “converted,” Emperor Charlemagne and the church conquered the last and most powerful holdout of the German tribes by the eighth century. In LeRay E. Froom’s book, *Prophetic Faith of our Fathers Vol. 1*, we may be educated concerning Pope Gregory’s instruction to Augustine in 596 AD regarding conversion of the pagan Saxons in Britain. The direction was: “to retain the customs of the heathen, idol temples ... rededicated as Christian Churches and heathen festivals renamed as those of Christian Saints.”

Louis Laravoire Morrow, Bishop of Krishnagar, says in his book *My Catholic Faith*, “In the history of the church we find that she often **Christened pagan festivals, making use of dates and ceremonies and endowing them with an entirely new and Christian significance**” (page 416).

William Walsh in the *Story of Santa Claus*, reveals, “This was no mere accident. It was a necessary measure at a time when the new religion was forcing itself upon a deeply superstitious people. In order to reconcile fresh converts to the new faith, and to make the breaking of old ties as painless as possible, these relics of paganism were retained under modified forms, in the same way that antique columns, transferred from pagan temples, became parts of the new church built by Christians in honor of their god and his saints” (page 61).

This was made even more acceptable to the superstitious sun-worshipping “new converts of Christianity” by the non-Christian idea that their beloved sun gods were one in the same with Christ the Son of God. This idea was encouraged by Emperor Constantine, who, while sending out his armies under the symbol of the cross, memorialized his victories with monuments to pagan gods.

Chapter Two

It is interesting to note that some of the most documented and thorough history, supplied by the Catholic Church, proves that the celebration of Christmas, including the Dec. 25 date, is a pagan abomination. Reading the material that they have recorded through the ages is enough to make us utter a repentant prayer, “O merciful God, forgive me for my prior ignorant participation in falsehood. Fill my heart with understanding and desire for your true holy seasons. Let me abhor any inclination to return to Babylon, serving false gods. May it never be again!”

Chapter Three

The Christmas Trail

Over the centuries, the origins of the Christmas festivities that are so much fun and make us “feel” so good have become more and more obscure. People in the 20th century give little thought to the origin of the popular celebration, but rather take it for granted. Since the truth of God’s Word is important, we can’t allow “feel-good” sentiments to keep us in the darkness of deception. Let’s seek out the origins of many time-honored customs of the Christmas season.

Yule Logs

The Yule log is in reality the “sun log.” Yule means “wheel,” in this case, the pagan symbol of the sun. It was a symbol, cut out of the trees sacred to the worship of Nimrod, to be burned for a while on each of the **twelve nights** of celebration culminating in his miraculous rebirth in the form of a tree that appears on the twelfth night. These fires, and others in the form of candles, represent his power in fire and light. Today, professing Christians speak of the sacred Yuletide season. The only place it is sacred is in the ancient Babylonian religions and her descendant pagan religions. There is nothing sacred about it to God! The symbols come from rank heathenism.

Mistletoe

In *The Two Babylons*, Alexander Hislop takes a look at the practice of kissing under the mistletoe. “That mistletoe bough in the Druidic superstition, derived from Babylon, was a representation of their Messiah, ‘the Man the branch.’ [This is Nimrod, whose Yule log was put into the fire to celebrate the sun god’s birth]. The mistletoe was regarded as a divine branch, a branch that came from heaven and grew upon a tree that sprang out of the earth. Thus by the engrafting of the celestial branch into the earthly tree, heaven and earth, which sin had severed, were joined together.”

Around the world, in many eras, this plant was considered magical, sacred, or of the gods, because it grew between the earth and heaven with no roots. When its deciduous hosts were bare and brown, the mistletoe was green! Today, we understand the reason. Mistletoe is a parasite. Also, it was thought to have extraordinary healing powers which, according to recent medical research, have proven unfounded.

Chapter Three

How appropriate that Satan should dupe professing Christians with symbolism that so accurately depicts his very character—parasitic with false claims of healing! He attaches his destructive heresies, in what we assume to be Biblical practices, and robs us of true spiritual nourishment, which the keeping of God's true holy days provides (Leviticus 23).

What Is the Christmas Tree all About?

If Christmas came from the Roman Catholics and they got it from paganism, where then did the pagans get it? What was the origin of the Christmas tree? Would you believe its roots begin just after the flood?

Nimrod, the grandson of Ham and the great-grandson of Noah, was the real founder of the Babylonian system that has gripped the earth ever since. It was a system of organized competition, of man-ruled governments and empires, based on the competitive and profit-making economic system.

Ancient writings speak of this man, Nimrod, who started a great, organized world apostasy against God, which continues to dominate the world to this day. In Genesis 10:8-9, the Hebrew word translated "mighty" is *GIBBOR* which means "tyrant" over the people. The Hebrew word translated "before" in verse nine is *PANIYAM* which actually means "against." When properly translated, these verses clearly reveal that Nimrod was a "tyrant against God, ruling over the people."

He was so wicked, it is said, that he married his own mother, Semiramis. After Nimrod was killed, his mother-wife propagated the doctrine of the survival of Nimrod as a spirit-being. She claimed a full-grown evergreen tree sprang over-night from a dead tree stump which symbolized the springing forth into new life of the dead Nimrod. On each anniversary of his birth, she claimed Nimrod would visit the evergreen and leave gifts upon it. December 25th was the supposed birthday of Nimrod. This is the real origin of the Christmas tree!

Even in our current era of open and graphic talk about sex, it is surprising to learn that the male reproductive organ was of tremendous importance in the Mystery Religions representing, no doubt, power and fertility. Trees were common phallic symbols connected with the sun god. Ball ornaments, representing the womb as well as the sun and moon, were hung all around the phallus. (Many sources, from which we will spare you, actually boast as they expound on the details concerning these symbolic representations which they practiced in their religious beliefs!) Today, families gather together in breathless anticipation and delight when the obelisk (tree-top ornament) is placed in its position of

The Christmas Trail

honor. When you learn that it represents the sexual union between the Babylonian mother-goddess and her sun-god, son/husband, it becomes an object of disgust. (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14th edition, 1973.)

When we learn the stark reality concerning the origin of the Christmas tree, we must squarely face and admit to ourselves that we must not take part in this tradition. Those who set up and adorn a Christmas tree, though they may have the best of intentions and most wonderful feelings, they are actually bowing down and worshipping Satan at the foot of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil!

Hear what God says in Deuteronomy 12:30-31:

“Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods that I may do likewise? You shall not do so to the LORD your God, for every abomination to the LORD, **which He hates**, they have done to their gods.”

Yet, even with that warning it seems the children of Israel carried the worship of the tree with them out of Egypt. God specifically warned them again in Jeremiah 10:2-4:

“Thus says the LORD, ‘Do not learn the way of the heathen ... for the customs of the people are vain (**futile!**); for one cuts a tree out of the forest with the axe, the work of the hands of the workman. They adorn it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers, so that it will not move.”

Did you see that? Not only is God condemning participation in any pagan custom and in particular this tree worship—just in case you’ve been under the misconception that anything you choose to dedicate to God is acceptable to him. He is telling you that this kind of worship is vain, futile, useless! **And He Hates It!**

Now we can see how it stands to reason that God pronounced the destruction of “Babylon the Great,” meaning the whole world system at the end of this age. He inspired the Apostle John to write: “Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen...” (Revelation 18:2).

Was Christ Born in a Cave?

Every year, near Christmas, documentaries are broadcast showing alternative explanations to the Biblical accounts surrounding

Chapter Three

Christ's birth. They attempt to give equal weight and authority to ancient folk lore and traditions which have definite connections with ancient pagan myths.

One example that continues to surface is an alternate possible site of Christ's birth in a cave. While the Bible is specific in the New Testament as well as in prophecy that Bethlehem would be the birthplace of the Messiah, the legend that Christ may have been born in a cave in Jerusalem continues. It was in a cave, myth has it, that the worshipped and much loved sun god, Mithra was supposed to have been born of a "virgin goddess." Since we have seen how the Catholic Church renamed other gods and their rituals to bring in converts, it is not surprising to find that caves dedicated to various gods have been rededicated to Christ. One such cave is in Jerusalem. Formerly dedicated to Tammuz (Nimrod), it is now presented as the birthplace of Christ. Another, on Vatican Hill, was rededicated to Christ when Catholics attempted to thwart the worship of Mithra in 376 AD. When do you suppose the rededication took place? Why, of course, the day the sun-god worshippers were accustomed to celebrating the rebirth of the sun December 25th!

The Christmas Parties and Decorations

Alfred Carl Hottes wrote in his book, *1001 Christmas Facts and Fancies*, about a winter celebration going by two different festival names in the third and fourth centuries BC. They were called *Bacchanalia* and *Saturnalia*. The names may not be familiar, but many of the traditions would be. "The people gave themselves up to wild joy." Part of their revelry included processions, singing, lighting candles, decorating their houses with green trees, drinking, partying, and giving presents. Sound familiar?

When these practices first appeared in Rome, they were met with great opposition. *Ancient Roman Religion*, by Grant, tells us that the Roman Senate tried to eradicate it by having 7,000 of its adherents killed. However, not to miss out on the gaiety of the celebrations, Julius Caesar reintroduced it, but it was combined with another pagan festival, the Kalends, from which we get many of our popular Christmas customs.

Today, many believe that the Apostle Peter was speaking of the Saturnalia when he wrote: "For the past time of our lives *is* sufficient to have worked out the will of the Gentiles, when we ourselves walked in licentiousness *and* lusts, *and were* debauched with wine, carousing, drinking and wanton idolatries. In *seeing* this *difference in your behavior*, they are astonished *that* you do not rush with *them* into the same overflowing debauchery, *and* they revile you" (I Peter 4:3-4).

The Christmas Trail

The Giving of Gifts

From *The New Standard Encyclopedia's* entry on Christmas we find "[t]he custom of giving gifts at Christmas time can be associated with the wise men (*notice "THE" wise men, not "THREE", wise men*) of the East giving gifts to Christ. The wise men did give their gifts to Christ. But in reality, at least so far as the English speaking people are concerned, it [giving gifts at Christmas] is derived from an old heathen custom."

As discussed in the introduction, the wise men did give gifts to Christ, but they did not exchange gifts with each other in the presence of our Lord! Neither is it recorded anywhere that they presented gifts to anyone else or received gifts themselves. *The Adam Clarke Commentary* explains it well: "He [CHRIST] was a king and the people of the East never approached the presence of a king without a present in their hands."

Notice this account in Matthew: "...behold, Magi from *the* east arrived at Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and have come to worship Him' " (Matthew 2:1-2). This was not a new custom being introduced by the wise men to establish a Christmas tradition. They were merely following a custom of presenting gifts to a king when coming into his presence.

Today, the greed of commercialism has especially contributed to shoving Christmas down the throats of people worldwide. Our country's economy rises and wanes with the Christmas season. We read of it every year. Businesses make it or break it as a result of their Christmas profits or losses. Add to that the psychology of "keeping up with the Jones's," and it is no wonder that the merchants start advertising Christmas in October.

Merchandising religion was also important in Paul's day. There was a great hue and cry by the craftsmen who profited from the sale of idols that had been dedicated to the worship of pagan gods. The truth of the gospel was turning people away from idol worship, not only in Jerusalem but in all Asia. The conversion of thousands was a threat to their livelihood. This is another example of commercialism before truth. Are we willing to follow the truth of God or the lies of this world?

Chapter Four

Santa Claus

For those who even contemplate a reason for the connection of Santa Claus to Christ's birth, the most common belief about Santa Claus is as the historic good old Saint Nick, the patron saint of children. Since the story comes from the Catholic Church, we should find documentation of him in their records. However, in fact we find the exact opposite. Pope Paul VI, in 1969, approved a report discrediting the sainthood of Nicholas. Since that time the church has not obligated Catholics to honor a man who they now say probably never existed.

Nevertheless, many traditions associated with him would be immediately recognizable to us today. Do you wonder why Santa comes down the chimney? This is connected with Hertha, a Germanic goddess of the hearth, the German version of Isis, the "virgin" sister/mother of Osiris. Santa's sleigh is a representation of Babylon's chariot pulling the sun god through the sky, but it was originally pulled by winged griffins. Over time, stags, so venerated in the Babylonian Mysteries, replaced the winged griffins. Eventually, the old chariot and mythical animals were softened to the sleigh and cute little reindeer we are all so familiar with today.

"From the German people were to come those most universal of Christmas customs: the portly beneficent Kris Kringle, known as Santa Claus. Gradually the Presbyterians, Quakers, and Puritans accepted such customs as the Christmas tree, the giving of small gifts, and the Christmas feast. But they spoke violently against the corruption of the Christkindl (the Christ Child) into Kris Kringle. After Kris Kringle was fully assimilated, there was much concern among all religious groups about the non-religious trend of the holiday" (*Christmas Day.- the Complete Book of American Holidays* - Myers, p. 316).

By now it is apparent that this is just another example of the Catholic Church bringing the already popular religious customs of their new "converts" into their Church. That influence carried over into nearly all other Christian-professing denominations as well. Imagine the uproar and non-compliance of people in your town if told they could no longer celebrate Christmas? Think of all the customs you enjoy so much. Well, that's how our superstitious pagan ancestors felt about their festivals. Over the centuries and around the world, their traditions were not changed or eliminated but were only renamed. Hence, the people of the world's pagan religions were united in the Roman Church. Together with the promises of acceptance by God and the power of the

Santa Claus

“Vicar of Christ,” the conversion of millions of these “Christianized” pagans into the Catholic Church was not difficult. Their old traditions were shared and assimilated into the melting pot of traditions that we call Christmas.

“All of this is ancient history,” many may say. What is the real danger in teaching children to believe in Santa? Well, first of all, notice in the Scriptures that God does not say, “You shall not lie—except *when it’s fun. Little white lies are okay; after all, we are doing a good thing. The end justifies the means.*” In Proverbs 6:16 &19, we learn that God hates false witnesses who speak with lying tongues; indeed, they are an abomination to Him! We see with absolute clarity the seriousness of the matter when we read in Rev. 21:8, “**...and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.**”

It is all too easy for some people to reason, “Well, I’m just using Santa to bring my children to Christ and to learn to do what is right. I’m teaching that God rewards us when we do the right things—and I teach them to always tell Mommy and Daddy the truth! That’s why I sing the song: *Santa Claus is Coming to Town.*

Let’s look at the lyrics:

“You better watch out, You better not cry,
You better not pout, I’m telling you why,
Santa Claus is coming to town!
He’s makin’ a list, He’s checkin’ it twice,
Gonna find out who’s naughty and nice,
Santa Claus is coming to town!
He knows when you’ve been sleeping,
He knows when you’re awake,
He knows if you’ve been bad or good,
So be good for goodness sake.”
(*or you won’t get any toys, you little brats!*)

If you think we should lighten up and get with the spirit of the tradition, think again! Look at those lyrics again. Santa has been placed on the very throne of God, in His stead, and with authority of supreme judgment! God did not place him there—of that we can be sure! Humanity did, and the results can be disastrous!

Here is the reason: We all know this from personal experience. Tragically, it is repeated in the lives of millions of children every year. Somewhere, generally between the ages of six and twelve, children begin to use the powers of reasoning. They no longer just accept everything they’re told as absolute fact. They are learning about animals in school, from this and their own observations they conclude, “It’s not

Chapter Four

possible for reindeer to fly!” Even in their own lives they can’t fit all the things that they want to do in one day. Then they begin to realize, “Santa couldn’t possibly go to every house in the world where good little boys and good little girls live in just one night!” Then there’s the problem of houses with no chimneys, locked doors and steel bars.

What about that snack everyone leaves out for Santa? After eating all those snacks from thousands of houses, even a skinny man couldn’t fit back up through a narrow chimney—even if he could have come down it in the first place. After they think out these details or an older child tells them the truth, they realize something that probably has never occurred to them before: Their parents are lying to them! Their trust has been destroyed! This is devastating to a child. Worse yet, “If my parents taught me to believe in Santa, that he knows every good or bad thing I’ve done or thought or said, and he’s not real....”

Do you see where this leads? Don’t parents likewise teach their children that God knows everything about them? Here is someone they can’t see, hear, or touch, with a magical image, who rewards for good behavior (eternal life) and punishes for bad behavior (eternal death). AND, by the way children, God is spirit and lives forever—just like Santa (nobody worries about Santa getting too old and forced to retire! He’s ageless!). “They sound like the same lie,” thinks the child. “I can’t believe in God either. They probably made him up so I’ll think somebody’s watching me, or so that I won’t be afraid to die.” This loss of belief in God is confirmed in their minds each time a parental lie is uncovered: the Easter Bunny, the Tooth Fairy.... Think about it!

It is plain to see, there is nothing innocent or harmless about this ungodly practice of giving children false hopes through deception. The loss YOU suffer when your children no longer trust you, and the loss your children suffer when God is no longer real to them, are voids that nothing else can fill.

Take heed that you do not trivialize the great seriousness of this matter. Remember, God commands, “You shall not bear false witness” (Exodus 20:16).

Chapter Five

Mother and Child

Just as those customs which we have reviewed thus far are pagan and not Biblical, other elements of this celebration, religious as they sound, are also counterfeits. For instance, where did all the focus and worship of the “Mother and Child” come from? The US Post Office seems to issue a new stamp with this image every year. Would Mary be pleased to know that her son Jesus is always pictured as a helpless babe in her arms, that she is pictured as radiant and awesome, while God the Father is hardly mentioned whatsoever concerning the birth of Christ?

Did Christ and the apostles teach Mary-worship? Did she remain a perpetual virgin? Was she, as the Catholic church states, guarded from sin by divine grace? Was she taken up into heaven when her life was finished?

Once again, to find the historical origin of these practices that are made so visible at Christmas time, we must travel to ancient Babylon. The Babylonian religion first and foremost worshipped a goddess mother and a son. This popular religion, with pictures and statues of this infant in his mother’s arms, have spread worldwide. In Egypt, the mother is Isis and the child is Osiris (you may heard these names used in children’s cartoons). In India they still worship Isi and Iswara. In Asia, they are called Cyble and Deoius. Pagan Rome, China and Japan all have religious histories which include a counterfeit Messiah born of Mary, a virgin. Alexander Hislop’s book, *The Two Babylons*, contains excellent details of the Madonna and child in its pre-Christian era.

Neither Christ nor the apostles ever spoke of worshipping Mary. In fact, she is only mentioned four more times after Christ’s ministry began! In one account, mentioned in both Matthew 12:46-50 and Mark 3:31-35, Christ’s mother and brothers are seeking to speak with him. He receives the message and explains to those around him that they, those who do God’s will, are his mother and brothers and sisters! If indeed Mary was worthy of worship, could Christ have replied in this manner? Mary was a woman of humble character, faithfully obedient to God and obviously an excellent parent (chosen from among all women ever of the line of Judah to bear the Messiah)—but she was fully human! Scripture does not bear witness to anything that indicates otherwise.

Did she remain a virgin after the birth of Christ? No! God made no such requirement. Matthew 1:24-25 states, “Joseph ... took his wife

Chapter Five

to *wed*; but he did not have sexual relations *with* her until *after* she had given birth to her son, the firstborn.” Matthew 13:55-56 and Mark 6:3 indicate that Mary and Joseph had a number of children, as does Luke 2:41-49. Every large family has at least one hilarious tale of leaving a child in a gas station restroom or at the bowling alley—because it’s hard to keep track of so many. It was very similar with Jesus’ family. “But when they departed after completing the days, the child Jesus re-mained behind in Jerusalem, and Joseph and His mother did not know *it*.” (Parents don’t forget an only child!)

Furthermore, is Mary in heaven? The apostle John wrote, “No one has ascended into heaven, except He Who came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man, Who is in heaven” (John 3:13). You may think that this is because Jesus had not yet died. Let’s see what happened after the death and resurrection of Christ.

In Acts 2:34, Peter affirms that King David of ancient Israel still hasn’t reached heaven! The Bible teaches that there will be a resurrection of the dead. No one has gone to heaven except Jesus Christ. In I Corinthians 15:50-55 we read that we shall “put on” immortality at the last trump. I Thessalonians 4:13-18 speaks clearly concerning the resurrection of the dead. It happens at Christ’s second coming, “Because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a* shout of command, with *the* voice of an archangel and with *the* trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first;” (verse 16) —*except for Mary who is the Queen of Heaven and never rested in the grave—No!* It doesn’t say that!

Finally, the belief that she was perfect and sinless, not needing the grace of God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and all of the fables mentioned above, have come from the pre-Christian, Babylonian counterfeit Madonna/Child system of worship. Once again, we must grievously concede, “Alas, Babylon, harlot of deception and falsehoods.”

Chapter Six

The Christmas Spirit: Angelic or Demonic?

*If we embrace the spirit of Christmas,
what spirit are we embracing?*

Just what is the Christmas spirit? Is it joyous? Is it jolly? Does it bring out the best in people, good will and peace? Let's take an honest look at some rather familiar, albeit unpleasant, scenarios.

The Shopping, The Mall, and The Traffic

Every year, friends, family, and even casual acquaintances tell us how lucky we are that we don't celebrate Christmas! They dread the shopping, and who can blame them? How many times have grown women all but get into a knock-down, drag-out fight over the last item on the shelf or racing to be first in line. People bark at the poor cashiers, make terrible scenes, and then get in their cars—angry! They drive off in a huff and straight into a traffic jam. If they can manage to keep their minds on the road instead of their fury, just maybe they'll avoid one of the many accidents in the Christmas rush. But horns are blaring, vulgar gestures and inaudible rantings are shooting like arrows from one vehicle to another. Did you see "Peace on earth and mercy mild" here? We didn't.

In another sad commentary, how do many people pay for all these gifts they can't afford, but by going into debt with their charge cards? Then, in addition to the debt, they pay high interest charges all year long. Others, who may already be in deep financial trouble even before the holidays, purchase gifts on charge cards, knowing they will soon file for bankruptcy. "Do not steal" Christ reminds us in Luke 12:20—the eighth commandment. Some people stoop, in desperation, to the out-and-out theft of toys for their children. Where is the Christmas Spirit in these acts?

Then there are the get-togethers and gift exchanges with people we just don't like or get along with very well. We feel like hypocrites. That assessment is accurate. We can't wait till the party's over, even before it's begun. Will certain family members be able to keep a civil tongue? After a few eggnogs or glasses of champagne, inhibitions fall and tongues start wagging. Family gatherings sometimes end in tears, or worse—there are always a few accounts of family fights

Chapter Six

while someone is in the process of carving the Christmas ham.

“This is a little extreme, don’t you think? We don’t have drunkenness or fights, much less murder in our house,” you say indignantly! No? Are you sure? How many people unknowingly murder at Christmas? It is true, as Hebrews 9:28 and 10:10 clearly show, that Christ died once for all, so that we could be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). But how, then, can you participate in such sinful practices, works of the flesh, and idolatry and not “spiritually” murder Christ? Is it not ironic to celebrate his birth by requiring his death?

Picture this: A person enters a hospital nursery and sings “Happy Birthday” to a newborn baby, then proceeds to thrust a knife into the helpless and innocent child. The world would be aghast and outraged! Those same people who could not tolerate such obvious evil, don’t put much thought into their own holiday plans—whether they are pure and godly or not! The Christmas party at work is often a miserable example of sleazy conduct: drunkenness, even leading to sexual immorality. Is this the Christmas spirit?

A boyfriend or girlfriend tries to figure out the perfect gift and decides on Christmas Eve in a hotel room for an exciting night of fornication. Is this the Christmas Spirit? We once knew a man who said he was ready to break up with his girlfriend, but he sure wouldn’t do it before Christmas! Was it because he didn’t want to ruin her holidays? NO—not really! He wanted the beautiful pair of snow skis she had bought him for Christmas. He wanted to get the skis first—before he dropped her! Now there’s the Christmas Spirit!

These are but a few of the unfortunate but not so uncommon examples of hypocrisy, stealing, drunkenness, wicked plans, adultery, fornication, party-spirit, unbridled tongue and yes, murder. As Hebrews 6:4-6 reads, “For *it is impossible* for those *who were* once enlightened ... And who have tasted *the good Word of God...* if they have fallen away, to renew *them* again unto repentance; ***seeing that they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding Him in contempt.***” Murder is not so uncommon after all; our sins are the nails which crucified our Lord, Jesus Christ!

If Christ is really the center and purpose of the holiday season, then surely the Christmas spirit should be evident in the tithes and offerings to the various churches. People should feel such gratitude for the gift of Christ, that they want to give something back by supporting their “house of worship.” Sadly though, churches of all denominations suffer great financial hardship during the Christmas season. It is the time when people give the **least**. Financially strapped from fulfilling all their holiday dreams, the Christmas Spirit is reflected in that most churches are financially abandoned, like a fatherless child. “I have no

The Christmas Spirit: Angelic or Demonic?

gift to bring, ba rum pa ta tum....”

“But, lots of people give money, food, clothing and toys to poor families so that they may also experience the joy of Christmas. This is certainly following the words of Christ in Matthew 25:35-40, which state that when you feed and clothe and otherwise care for the least of the brethren, it is as though you did these things for Christ.” This time you’re sure you’ve won the argument for keeping Christmas! Well, of course, some good will come from feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. But, it’s too bad people don’t continue the charity all year.

Let’s closely examine what really happens. At Christmas time, people get a little nervous and feel a lot of guilt about things like giving to charity and going to church faithfully. —Well okay, Christmas and Easter. They then decide to make up for the whole year, so that they “look good” before God and men. Do good! Be recognized! Feel good about yourself! That’s the ticket! Good deeds are seldom anonymous. That “Christmas charity” is in the paper, on the television and radio news, with stories and pictures of glowing philanthropists basking in the praise they receive (plus the tax deduction). Is this what Christ meant? For the purpose of self-examination and furthering your spiritual growth, try doing a good deed for someone and then don’t tell a single soul! You may find yourself embarrassed if it’s a difficult secret to keep. The Holy Spirit of God works quite differently than the Christmas spirit of this world.

Let’s read Matthew 6:1-4,

“Beware *that* you do not bestow your alms (charitable deeds) in the sight of men in order to be seen by them: otherwise **you have no reward with your Father** Who *is* in heaven. Therefore, when you give *your* alms, do not sound the trumpet before you (*telling everyone of the wonderful things you’ve done!*), as the **hypocrites** do in the synagogues and in the streets, so **that they may have glory from men**. Truly I say to you, they have their reward. But *when* you give your alms, **do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing**, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall Himself reward you openly.”

The words of Christ are plain enough! If you can’t resist declaring your own charitable deed, then you are guilty of soliciting vain glory! Your priority and your purpose is self-serving. When you are given a benevolent opportunity, why should you desire recognition?

Chapter Six

Instead of seeking praise from others, we should be praising God for inspiring us and giving us the ability to serve another human being.

The examples of the Christmas spirit in this section reveal the lack of Christ-like attitudes and actions. Instead, they reveal the spirit of carnality. “Christmas is the joy of giving,” cleverly disguises Satan’s attempt to have us exalt ourselves—rather than look to Christ’s example of humble generosity.

Satan’s Deliberate Deceit

Satan could never deceive the world with customs that contained obvious evils. Christmas is therefore filled with seemingly wonderful and exciting customs. In this way Satan is transformed into an angel of light (II Corinthians 11:14). Satan is entirely dedicated to the effort of deceiving the very elect (Matthew 24:24). Few people are suspicious of a holiday which bears the name of Christ. Neither do most people seem to notice Satan’s success in depicting Christ as either a helpless little baby or dead (hopeless) on a cross. He does not want our focus to be on an Almighty Savior who is “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Revelation 19:16) and Who is “alive for evermore” (Revelation 1:18).

This is not the Christ the world pictures. Notice: “The assimilation of Christ into the sun god, as sun of righteousness, was widespread in the fourth century and was furthered by Constantine’s legislation on Sunday, which is not unrelated to the fact that the sun god was the tutelar [guardian /protector] divinity of his family” (*A History of The Christian Church: Revised* - Walker, Section 13 pages 154-155). However, in this so-called modern age, the Babylonian Mystery Religion is forgotten history and is one of Satan’s best kept secrets. His intent is to keep mankind from having an eternal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. “And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is deceiving the whole world” (Revelation 12:9). So good is this deception that it is certain that many missionaries attempting to do a noble work would be shocked to realize they did not bring Christianity to the world, but instead they have affixed Christ’s name on the superstitions of the Babylonian Mystery Religion.

Chapter Seven

Our Forefathers Knew Better!

There is no doubt that our forefathers understood the Christmas festivities for what they truly are. They realized the seriousness of the abridgment of God's commands concerning the worshipping of idols. Their practices and the laws on their books are a testimony which have been preserved for us in historical writings and law books. Christmas had become a rowdy, frivolous excuse for abandoning good sense and behavior. It had no ground in true Christianity. In fact such practices mock Jesus Christ by abandoning the principals that He taught and propagating the exact things He denounced.

"The Calvinists (in England) declared that observing Christ's birthday was a human invention. They disapproved of it not only because of [its pagan origin but also because of the excesses to which too many Christmas celebrants went." When the Puritans came to power in 1642, the Calvinists preached strongly against Xmas observance, rightly calling it a heathen practice. They continued to preach strongly against it until as recent as the early part of this present century. "They asserted that Christ would not have approved of it, for it merely furnished excuse for wrong doing. England's Parliament outlawed Christmas along with Easter in 1643. This comes to us from Mayme R. Krythe's book, All About Christmas. She adds, "Town criers went around and called out loudly so that all might hear, 'No Christmas! No Christmas!"

From the *New International Encyclopedia* we gather insight into the Scotch Presbyterian and English Nonconformists who "generally rejected all religious observance of the day as a 'human invention' and savouring too much of papistry.

In 1659, thirteen years after England outlawed Christmas, the Puritans of Massachusetts (whom we know as pilgrims) passed a law outlawing the observance of Christmas, in what was to become the United States. That law remained on the books for some time. It read: "Whosoever shall be found observing any such day as Christmas or the like either by forbearing of labor, feasting, or in any other way, shall be fined 5 shillings." Even after the holiday again became lawful, the Puritans still insisted on calling Christmas 'Superstitious Man's Idol Day' or 'The Old Heathen's Festivity Day.'

Alfred C. Hottes, whom we have already quoted, gives us a peek into the thoughts of our early colonists, "The Quakers near

Chapter Seven

Philadelphia were not given to observing holidays, and in New England the whole idea of Christmas was frowned upon.” He goes on to say that “the Puritans were bitterly opposed to it, but being in the minority, their practices were not liked by their fellow citizens.” However, Robert H. Schauffler, in his book, Christmas tells us that when Puritanism was on the rise the very existence of Christmas was threatened. Later, *Collier’s Encyclopedia* credits the large wave of Irish and German immigrants, in the 19th century, for importing a renewed enthusiasm for the feast into the United States.

Many books have been filled with examples and histories of the development of and the fight against keeping Christmas in the United States and Britain. Following Christ has never been the motivation behind the keeping of Christmas. Our forefathers knew it. And now so do you.

Put Christ Back Into Christmas?

Don’t be deceived. It’s impossible! Christmas is a borrowed heirloom that was practiced by pagan heathens thousands of years before Christ was born. It was taken from the heathen scene to be injected into an apostate “Christianity” some 300 years after Jesus ascended into heaven. Christ was **never in the festival, nor has He ever condoned it!**

Chapter Eight

God Issues a Strong Warning

Many centuries ago, God issued a strong warning to Israel about inquiring after and serving heathen gods. We repeat it here because of its importance. “Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?’ You shall not do so to the LORD your God, for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates, they have done to their gods.... Whatsoever things that I command you, be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it” (Deuteronomy 12:30-32). We would be foolish to ignore such an admonition!

Jesus told his apostles to go to the people of all nations “teaching them to observe all things that I **have commanded you**” (Matthew 28:19-20). In John 13:15 Jesus tells us, “For I have given you an example, *to show* that you also should do exactly as I have done to you.” In Leviticus 23, we find the holy days that God commanded to be kept *forever*. Christ and his apostles observed these holy days, and so did the early New Testament Church. Christ kept the Passover with the apostles (John 13). He preached at the Feast of Tabernacles and on the Last Great Day (John 7).

Even after the death of Christ, the epistles of Paul showed us that the early church *continued to observe* these annual holy days. Check these examples: I Corinthians 5, “For this reason, let us keep the feast” (of Unleavened Bread); Acts 2:1, “Now when the day *of Pentecost*, the fiftieth day, was being fulfilled, they were all with one accord in the same place.” This is the record of the New Testament Church being founded on one of God’s holy days!; Acts 20:16, “[Paul] hastened in order to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, if possible.”; I Corinthian’s 16:8, “But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost.”; I Corinthians 11:26, gives directions concerning the true Passover. Jesus says, “You *solemnly* proclaim the death of the Lord **until He comes.**”; Acts 27:9, Paul says, “the *annual fast day* had already passed,” speaking about Atonement; in Acts 18:21 he says, “I must by all means keep the feast that is coming at Jerusalem.” Nowhere in all the Scriptures will you find any command by Jesus to observe his birth, or Christmas. Actually, he commands us to observe his death, by keeping the Passover, as shown in Matthew 26:26-30, and John 13:1-17. Mankind has

Chapter Eight

forgotten the holy days of God, choosing to worship with the ancient festivals of their former gods.

As history reveals, Catholicism gradually infiltrated what had been the true churches of God. A few realized they must flee from the doctrine of Balaam. (Acts 5:29); others thought it would be possible to remain within their congregations and privately keep the truth. They did try for a while—but, how can one sit at both the table of the Lord and the table of demons (I Corinthians 10:14-22)? In due time, most of them fell prey to the apostate teachers, forgetting the knowledge of the Lord and embracing the doctrine of doom (II Peter 2:15-22)! Those who had courageously followed the Lamb (Revelation 14:4), soon became a very small and persecuted minority. The church of Rome sought to exterminate the few who remained loyal to God, and succeeded in the martyrdom of many. People don't like being told that their religion is wrong, especially those who have set themselves in exalted religious positions. But God's promise is to those who repent and endure. You can read about that in God's letters to the churches in the book of Revelation, chapters two and three.

Do We Honor God?

Once we put away the false practices and traditions of the Christian professing world, then we can learn about the true plan of God. His plan is wonderfully illustrated, through the knowledge of His true scriptural Holy Days and commandments, to bring us His spiritual knowledge. His true Holy Days are virtually unknown to those who think that they know the Lord and Savior. Remember, the only name by which we are saved is the name Jesus Christ! It is not realistic to think we can ignore what He says and still have the knowledge that comes from what He teaches.

Please reader, don't be among those who, with all good intentions, come to Christ expecting his praise and eternal life, only to hear Christ declare (as God warns in Matthew 7:23), "I NEVER KNEW YOU. **Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness!**"

Let's do the right thing and take Christ OUT of Christmas—actually .. in reality—Xmas! Xmas and a host of other holidays have come directly from paganism, but the annual Holy Days of Leviticus 23 have come directly from God. Let's forsake the pagan holidays of the world and observe the true holy days laid out for us by God.

Chapter Nine

The Next Step: More Courage! More Study!

What we have tried to accomplish in this booklet is to help those who question commonly practiced religious customs. In the quest for true worship of the true God our Father and Christ our only Savior, you have by now become disillusioned with Xmas. Still, you may not be completely convinced, and we hope you will further research the subject. We applaud you for not taking our word, or any man's word; but do as the Bereans did in Acts 17: 10-11—**prove all things whether they be so.**

We have, for this purpose, quoted excerpts from many publications so that you would know where more detailed information could be found. A word of warning must be given. The authors have noticed, in the last few years, the unsettling practice of changing history! That is to say, newer encyclopedias have removed many of the unpleasant origins of holidays that are supposedly Christian and replaced them with inoffensive, sweet or attractive beginnings. The best thing we can advise is to go down in the basement and drag out those old, dusty boxes with that old set you've been told to believe is "out-of-date" and "useless." (You may find old encyclopedias at library sales, used bookstores, or your local flea market—Cheap!)

But, even with the information you have received here, you may say, "The pagan origins don't bother me! I think it's great that Christianity has been able to cross cultural bounds and incorporate the customs of different peoples' beliefs to unite people around the world. No other religion does this. It helps people to draw near to Christ. You must receive Christ to be saved!" It certainly is true that through Christ alone we may be saved (John 14:6). But, is any form and manner of worship acceptable to God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son? Does the end justify the means? Can you ever reach that destination by taking any road that suits you? As you may recall, Cain thought that God ought to accept and even appreciate his offering. Worshipping God in the way of Cain seemed sufficient to Cain. But notice what the New Testament says about "the way of Cain": (Jude 11) "Woe unto them! For they have walked in the way of Cain." Regardless of how Cain felt, his ways were unrighteous before God (I John 3:12 and Genesis 4:7).

If "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet," as Shakespeare said, then the more ominous is also true. A wolf in sheep's cloth-

Chapter Nine

ing is still a wolf. It will devour you! **If your worship includes all of the rites of Baal, whom do you serve?** It doesn't matter what name you place on the celebration (Christmas); it's still Baal you serve! If you celebrate the feasts of other gods instead of the Feasts of the Lord, how can you say that you worship God or know Jesus? Is it your desire merely to appear religious or do you desire to worship in spirit and truth? Leviticus 23:2: "The appointed feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, even these are My appointed feasts." Once again, let's look to the Bible to lead us into all truth (John 17:17).

In Deuteronomy 12:2-4, we learn that the will of God, for each of us personally, is that we must completely destroy the images, altars, names and ways of other gods in our lives. In verse 8 we read, "You shall not do according to all that we do here today, each doing whatever *is* right in his own eyes." Continuing in verse 30, "do not ask about their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods that I may do likewise?' "

Many will attempt, at this point, to reason that God was only talking to the Israelites—not us! But this is simply not so; in Galatians 3:29 it is written, "And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to *the* promise." Even more to the heart of the matter, I Corinthians 10:11 speaks specifically of the Old Testament as examples for us. Read carefully and see what God says, "Now all these things ... were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages are come." Similarly, in 1 Timothy 3:16-17 we find, "**All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness**; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work."

Furthermore, the apostle Paul makes it absolutely clear, "But that which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God: and I do not wish you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink *the* cup of *the* Lord, and *the* cup of demons. You cannot partake of *the* table of *the* Lord, and *the* table of demons. Now do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?" (I Corinthians 10:20-22).

Does Christ change his mind? Hebrews 13:8 leaves no guess work: "Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever." I Peter 4:1-3 leaves no doubt as to our instruction. We must live for the will of God, not continuing in our former way of life (practicing the will of the Gentiles), which included abominable idolatries!

Now that you've learned that just because something is found in the Old Testament, doesn't mean it should be thrown out along with the garbage, let's turn back to Deuteronomy 30:17-20: "But if your heart

The Next Step: More Courage! More Study!

turn away so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I denounce to you this day that you shall surely perish ... I call heaven and earth to record this day against you *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing... That thou may **love** the LORD your God, *and* may **obey** His voice, and may **cleave** to Him; **for He is your life.**”

Please focus in on God’s message for you. Loving the Lord is obeying Him and cleaving to His ways! This is restated in I John 5:3! His ways are life! What did Jesus say was the greatest commandment? “ ‘YOU SHALL LOVE *THE* LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ THIS IS *THE* FIRST AND GREATEST COMMANDMENT. AND *THE* SECOND *ONE IS* LIKE IT; ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ **ON THESE TWO COMMANDMENTS HANG ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.**” (Matthew 22:37-40).

Chapter Ten

Conclusion: Repentance!

It may seem difficult to the point of dread, the very thought of explaining to so many people that you can no longer partake of the Xmas festivities. “Maybe it will be easier if I put it off until next year,” you may consider. But James 4:13-17 says, “Now listen, those of you who say, ‘Today and tomorrow we will go into such a city, and we spend a year, and we will conduct business and make a profit.’ You do not even know what *will happen* tomorrow! For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little while, and then disappears. Instead, you *ought* to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live, and will do this or that.’ But now you boast in your own arrogance. All such boasting is evil. Therefore, *if* anyone knows to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin.” This scripture explains the danger of procrastination. None of us knows how long we shall live. You could die tomorrow. More importantly, we must realize one thing: **planned future repentance, is nothing less than deliberate, present rebellion!**

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.” (Revelation 3:19) Harsh words indeed, but sometimes the truth is both painful and ugly—the truth that is, concerning our human nature. God’s truth is beautiful and brings great joy! As Luke 15:7&10 plainly reveal, there is tremendous joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, more than there would be over ninety-nine which don’t need to repent. **Be encouraged!** The Spirit of God will strengthen you in your Christian walk! Pray that God directs your steps and you will surely be blessed, in that you will know Him!

“For this cause we also, from the day that we heard *of it*, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthily of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and growing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light: Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love” (Colossians 1:9-13).

A List of Myths, Fables and Lies Perpetuated by the Counterfeit Christmas Story

1. The Celebration of Christmas is Biblical.
2. The Place of Christ's Birth May Not Have Been in Bethlehem
3. The Number and Occupation of the "Wise Men" That Brought Gifts to Jesus
4. The Date Of Christ's Birth is the 25th of December
5. The Yule Logs
6. Twelve Nights of the Yuletide Season
7. Kissing Under the Mistletoe for Luck
8. The Christmas Tree and Ornaments
9. The Bible is Not the Ultimate Authority On God's Will
10. Drinking Parties Somehow Honor the Birth of Our Savior
11. Exchanging Gifts Imitates the Gifts of the Wise Men to Christ
12. Three Kings of the Orient Brought Gifts to the Infant Jesus
13. Santa Claus and All the Lies Associated With Him
 - Lives at the North Pole
 - Elves To Do All His Work
 - Knows All Children
 - Knows Who Does Bad or Good
 - Flies Around the World Delivering Gifts To All the Children In One Night
 - Eats Treats At Each House
 - Goes Up and Down the Chimney
 - Flying Reindeer
 - Magic Sleigh
17. Mary, as Christ's Mother, is Worthy of Worship
18. Mary Remained a Virgin
19. Mary is Perfect and Sinless and Ascended to Heaven Without Dying
20. We Can Put Christ "Back Into Christmas"
21. The Motives For and the Sources Behind the Celebration of Christmas
22. **THE BIGGEST LIE OF ALL:**

THE LIE THAT SAYS WE CAN WORSHIP IN ANY DECEITFUL, SELF-RIGHTEOUS, SELF-SERVING OR PAGAN WAY WE CHOOSE AND GOD WILL ACCEPT IT AS HONORING HIM!

If you believe any of these lies, we suggest you read this booklet and read THE Book, the source for the truth, the Holy Bible.

An Important Note

One of the first things we need to understand about God is that God does not lie—EVER! Furthermore, “God cannot lie” (Titus 1:2). The Scriptures state, “It is impossible for God to lie!” (Hebrews 6:8). The same thing is also true of Jesus Christ, who was God before coming in the flesh as the “Son of God.”

The Passover night before He was crucified, Jesus Christ emphatically taught His disciples a profound truth! Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Jesus Christ not only taught the truth of God’s Word, but He is “THE TRUTH!” He is the Truth personified, just as He is the “Word of God” personified. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God” (John 1:1-3).

The Word of God, which is the truth, and the gospel of Jesus Christ, Who is THE TRUTH, do not need the support of cleverly concocted myths, fables and lies about the so-called Christmas story to convey the truth about Jesus Christ’s birth. The apostle John further reinforced the fact that we are to believe and follow the truth of God and that not a single lie comes from the Truth of God! John wrote, “I did not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and you know that not any lie comes from the Truth” (1 John 2:21, Ibid). That being so, it is clearly evident that the Truth of God can never be supported by lies. Myths, fables and lies about God, Christ and Christianity come from the father of lies—Satan the devil! (John 8:44). What can the lies of Christmas possibly add to our understanding and love of our God who is Truth? Is God’s truth not sufficient for us? What an insult to God!

For further study, on this and other subjects concerning Christianity and Biblical doctrine, request these additional booklets:

When Was Jesus Christ Born?
Is it possible for us to know when He was born?

Statement of Beliefs
of the
Christian Biblical Church of God

Christian Biblical Church of God Offices:

United States

Post Office Box 1442
Hollister, California 95024-1442

Canada

Post Office Box 125
Brockville, Ontario
K6V 5V2 Canada

Australia

GPO 1574
Sydney 2001
Australia

United Kingdom

Post Office Box 8224
Witham CM8 1WZ
United Kingdom

New Zealand

Post Office Box 73
Pokeno 2473
New Zealand

Republic of South Africa

Post Office Box 494
Frankfort 9830
Rep. of South Africa

Iglesia de Dios Cristiana y Bíblica

www.iglesiadedioscristianaybiblica.org
PO Box 831241
San Antonio, TX 78283

www.cbcg.org
www.churchathome.org
www.theoriginalbiberestored.org
www.afaithfulversion.org