

# The Truth about Christmas

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Date: 25 December 2012

[0:00] So the truth about Christmas, it's something we think about this time of year and it's something we should be thoughtful about.

! Christmas is the reason for the season. They think that he's the one that Christmas is all about. Christmas tried to put Christ into Christmas, but really was he ever there? Christmas, what does it mean? A definition of Christmas, Christmas comes from the Old English *Christus Mesa*, the mass of Christmas.

It's first found in 1038. Christmas means Christ's mass or the mass of Christ. It's really a special Catholic mass to celebrate Christ's birth.

One of the telling things about Christmas is the date. The date. December 25th is the most familiar to us. There's also a date in January that the Orthodox Church uses.

[1:20] December 25th. December 25th. The question is which date is right? If this celebration is celebrating the birth of Christ, there's a big question about the date.

As we see this first quote here. We can be fairly certain that it was not December 25th that Christ was born. And the second quote. It's important to note that the date of 25th December is totally devoid of biblical meaning and is grossly inaccurate as far as the actual time of Christ's birth.

So, it's a big question mark on the date. Based on the biblical passages, someone has said that many scholars reject December 25th as the date when Christ was born.

The Bible appears to indicate that the Lord Jesus was born likely late September. Although that's again just supposition. We're not entirely clear on that. Some connect it with the Feast of Tabernacles.

In John 1 we know that he came and he tabernacled amongst us. So, it could well be that is the date in that time. The early church. What the early church believed about Christmas is important to us today.

[2:31] Because shouldn't we want to take heed of what the early church practiced and taught about the truth that they observed. And it's been said that the fathers, so called of the first three centuries, do not speak of any special observance of the Nativity.

And the second quote. In the first two centuries of the church, Christmas was not a feast day. None of the list of feast days that were compiled included Christmas. So, again, it's conspicuously missing.

Conspicuously absent. The early church. It's been said there's no historical evidence that our Saviour's birthday was celebrated during the apostolic or the early post-apostolic times.

There's no record of December 25th being the celebration of the birth of Christ until in Rome, 336 in Alexandria, 400 in Jerusalem, 425.

So, again, it's very telling that the celebration or the recognition of Christmas was conspicuously absent in the early church times. Again, there's no indication that in the first two centuries the early church ever celebrated Christ's birth.

[3:50] The event widely celebrated was the death and resurrection of Christ at the annual Passover. Within the Christian church there was no such festival as Christmas that was ever heard of until the third century.

It was not until the fourth century, it was far advanced, that it gained much observance. The day Christmas was not one of the early feasts of the Christian church.

In fact, the observance of birthdays was condemned as a heathen custom, repugnant to Christians. So, why December 25th? Why was this date picked out of all the 365 days of the year?

Why December 25th? December 25th, again, was not incorporated into Christianity until 354 AD.

The pagan feast of the Deis Natalis Solus in Victi, the birthday of the Invincible Sun, was held on that day. It was a pagan feast, December 25th.

[4:54] In the 5th century, the Western church ordered that it celebrate forever this day, the old Roman feast of the birth of Sol, of the Sun.

And Bishop Liberius of Rome ordered the people to celebrate on December 25th. He probably chose this date because the people of Rome already observed it as the feast of Saturn, the birthday of the Sun.

These are many quotes from many sources. Another quote, prior to the celebration of Christmas, December 25th, in the Roman world, the Natalis Solus in Victi, the birthday of the Inconquerable Sun, was historically the feast that was celebrated in honour of the Sun God, Mithras.

Why December 25th? It was the birthday of Helios, taken over by Christians as the birthday of the Christ. The bottom line is that reliable historical documents would place, no reliable documents would place the birth of Christ on December 25th.

In fact, the overwhelming documentation is that it was the birthday of many of the Sun Gods, of the pagan gods of antiquity, that were recognised as December 25th.

[6:13] Before Christmas was ever invented, December 25th was known as the birthday of the Unconquered Sun, the birthday of pagan gods, gods so-called, such as Mithras, Attis, Sol, Dionysus and others.

So why are we in the Western world, in the Christian so-called world, using December 25th, the same date as the pagans?

Through subsequent centuries, traditions from ancient pagan religions, non-Christian religions, became entwined with those of Christian faith.

And depending on one's point of view, either paganism was Christianised, or Christianity became paganised. These are historical facts.

Certain popular historical holidays, such as Yule, were centred around the lighting of candles, of offering small sacrifices under certain holy trees.

[7:23] And these things were given new meanings when Christmas was adopted by the church at large of its time, as on the homes of very many people around the streets of where we live today.

And in 375 AD, the church allowed some of these light-hearted traditions, these celebrations, these customs of the older celebrations of what was called Saturn earlier, again connected with the worship of Saturn, such as feasting, dancing and exchanging of gifts.

These are historical truths. I'm not telling you something that is some extreme view that I pulled out of my hand. These are historical facts.

December 25th was celebrated by the pagans as the rebirth of the unconquered sun, as the solar divinity, so-called Mithras. And it was taken over, adopted by the Christians of their time.

The largest pagan cult which fostered the celebration of December 25th was the pagan sun worship of Mithraism. And the winter festival was called the Nativity, the Nativity of the Sun.

[8:36] Also, December 25th marks the births of the Egyptian Osiris, the Grecian Bacchus, or the god of wine, and Mithra of the Persians.

So these mystic births were, again, very much connected with this very same date. Why are we in the Christian church using the same pagan dates to celebrate the birth of our Lord, when we know it's definitely not His birthday?

Why is this happening? Again, another quote, this birthday of the Roman Empire was the birthday of the unconquered sun. The winter solstice, according to the Julian calendar, it again was this date that was the birthday of the sun.

The Syrian god, Baal, is another god that's connected. And the second quote talks again of the birthday of the sun, where supposedly the sun dies and is reborn.

And it supposedly reflects these pagan beliefs. Another quote, and not only was Mithra, the sun god of Mithraism, said to be born at this time of the year, but Osiris, Horus, Hercules, Bacchus, Odanus, Jupiter, Tammus.

[9:58] These sun gods were supposedly born at this very same time that we in the Western world call Christmas today, the winter solstice.

Today we see in the Roman Catholic church system that Madonna and child is worshipped. They put halos or sunbursts around their heads, which again is a pagan symbol.

Number four, Nimrod's wife was Semiramis, the first deified queen of Babylon. She's also known as Diana, Epaphrodite, Astarte, Rhea and Venus.

And her son was called Tamas, also called Bacchus, Adonis and Osiris. He was supposed to be the reincarnation of Nimrod. Now we don't want to learn the ways of the heathen as such, but these are needful truths, because people are ignorant of these things in our time, in these days today.

And this supposed reincarnated Nimrod came back to life when the dead Yule log was cast into the fire and the evergreen tree appeared as the slain king deity was reborn at the winter solstice.

[11:09] These are the historic truths of Christmas, people today. Again, in India, the Hindus have Krishna, of whom they write Vishnu was born as Krishna, of the virgin Divaki, on the 25th of December.

What a coincidence! It's amazing, isn't it? Why the same date? Why the same date as the pagans? Apollo, Dionysus, they were considered by ancient writers as being the different forms of the same god.

You know, there's all kinds of names I've already mentioned. All kinds of names. The common feature is, by and large, they have this connection to December the 25th.

Horus was, as the morning sun, born every day. Born on December the 25th. And the winter solstice, again, another quote saying the same thing.

Horus, the Egyptian god, was again born on this birthday of the new sun. So what is going on today? We think of Christmas trees at this time of year.

[12:18] Christmas trees. Now, some of this stuff is a bit horrific for some of you, I know. I know, even for me, I've laid some of this kind of, it rocks your socks really, doesn't it?

It kind of, it shakes you in your boots to think, well, this is something that I've been a part of in some way. Think of this, for example, the Christmas tree. The Christmas tree, so-called.

In pagan Rome and pagan Egypt, they had these trees. Whether palm trees or fir trees. And the palm tree denoted the pagan Messiah, Baal Tamar.

And the fir referred to him as Baal Berith. Of course, we know where Baal is in here. He's the enemy of God's people. Right through the pages of scripture, Baal, the sun god.

And we see that mystically, he's supposed to have this connection with a tree. So why the preoccupation with Christmas trees we could ask today?

[13:16] Friends, these are honest questions we ought to ask of ourselves. The Christmas tree. Tree worship is well attested for all the great European families. It was something common through Europe.

Amongst the Celts, amongst the Druids, they had oak tree worship. Sacred groves were something common amongst the ancient Germans. And December the 25th was observed in Rome.

Also, the Christmas tree is called Nimrod Redivivus. The slain god comes to life again. Now friends, I don't know about you, but Christmas trees are very common place.

And for many of you here today, it might be something you think nothing much of. I know there's a church down the road that's got a Christmas tree inside their church.

That they have a Santa stage. And they think nothing of such a thing. And I know I saw a photo of the Influencers church, so called. A paradise where it had Merry Christmas and blazing in big letters and all kinds of stars and lights and Christmas trees and merry-go-rounds and you name it.

[14:23] Sometimes people don't think anything of it. They think, oh, it's all just innocent, harmless fun. But is it? Is it, people, tonight?

The Christmas tree, in many countries it was believed that evergreens could keep away witches, ghosts and evil spirits and illness. Early Romans marked the solstice with this feast called Saturnalia in honour of Saturn, the god of agriculture.

And the Romans decorated their homes and temples with evergreen boughs. The mysterious Druids, likewise, the ancient Celts, they used this evergreen tree as a symbol of everlasting life.

Even the fierce Vikings in Scandinavia thought that evergreens were a special plant of the sun god, their sun god, Valdur. What about gift exchanges?

People exchange gifts at this time of year. That's another bit of harmless fun, surely. The interchange of presents stems back to Saturnalia, again this feast of the pagans, and it was adopted by the Christians from the pagans.

[15:32] Tertullian, one of the early Christian writers, made that statement about them. So, the question is, wait a second. I thought giving gifts at Christmas time came from the story of the three kings who brought gifts to the newborn baby Jesus in the manger, right?

The newborn baby. Think again. Wrong. The story of the three kings around the manger is highly inaccurate. Let's clear up a few details when we actually read Matthew 2, verse 11.

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

And when they were coming into the house, they saw the young child.

It was wise men. It does not say kings in the scriptures. It was wise men who came to worship the young child, not a newborn baby. Amen. They came to worship the Lord as a young child, as a young boy, not as a newborn baby.

[16:51] And the Lord Jesus was in a house. He was in a house, not a manger, not an inn, but in a house. Amen. And so it was a different occasion. That's why King Herod didn't just have the male newborns killed, but all the male children under the age of two.

Historical facts. Historical facts. The real story of the Magi. So why did the Magi give Jesus gifts? Wasn't it for his birthday?

Or wasn't it some kind of Christmas presents? Adam Clarke, a commentator, says the people of the East never approached the presence of kings and great personages without a present in their hands, without a gift.

It was the custom through the Old Testament and still a custom in the East today. It was the custom to give gifts to someone of importance. Modern Christmas gift giving does not come from the wise man who came to worship the young child, Jesus.

It comes from the gift giving of the season of the pagans, Saturnalia. The festival was celebrated with similar customs, gift giving and feasting that are done to celebrate Christmas today.

[18:08] Friends, are we saying today it's wrong to give gifts to people that you want to give them to? Of course not. You can give gifts to people all year round. The question is, are we exchanging gifts like the heathens, like the pagans around the winter solstice?

Are we exchanging gifts? Instead of giving a gift that's dictated by a calendar or pagan traditions, as Christians we ought to give gifts willingly out of our heart, not expecting anything in return.

Okay, now if you believe in Santa, leave now. What about Santa? What about Santa, you ask?

The tradition about Santa is a mixture of a lot of traditions about a bishop saint, about Father Christmas, about the Norse and mythological god, Thor, who is described as elderly, jolly, with white hair and deer, the friend of the common people, living in the Northland, travelling in the sky, in a chariot pulled by goats.

As God of fire, he liked chimneys and fireplaces. That's where Santa comes from. It's not from the Bible. So, looking back through history, we think about the people who were God's people through history.

Now, the Puritans weren't necessarily perfect Christians, but we know that they loved the Scriptures by and large. The Puritans had a love for the Word of God. And you could witness that, I think, by and large by their lives.

[19:40] So, we could consider how did the Puritans deal with Christmas, for one, just as an example of a bunch of Christian people. It was only in the fourth century that the church officially observed Christmas at December 25th.

For Puritans, they pointed it out, and pointed it out often, that Christmas was nothing more than a pagan festival covered with a Christian veneer. And back in America's history, when the colonists came, some of whom were godly men and women, during the 17th and 18th centuries, many loathed Christmas.

They hated Christmas. They considered it an abomination that others observed this occasion as a religious feast, because they knew it was not biblical.

Simply that, it was not biblical. So, here's another quote. The Puritans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Quakers, they opposed this observance of Christmas historically, but members of the Church of England, the Dutch Reform, the Lutheran, the Roman Catholic, some German sects, they observed it.

So, we see that those who you could consider were more attuned to the Bible would have nothing to do with what we call Christmas today. In England, the Puritans would not tolerate this unbiblical occasion.

[21:03] The Parliament of 1643 outlawed the Feast of Christmas, Easter, Whitsuntide and the Saints' Days, because they knew they were not scriptural events.

So, what is acceptable to God today? What is acceptable to God today? That's a fair question. That's a question we ought to all ask today, to see where celebrations come from and what they represent.

What does that Bible say? Even, it doesn't matter what popular culture says, it doesn't matter what the crowd wants to do. Sun worship is clearly forbidden. And we see that blatant sun worship has been Christianised, as we see, for example, at Christmas time.

Does God disapprove of this? In John 14, 15, our Lord says, if you love me, keep my commandments. God makes the rules.

It's God who makes the rules. It's God who tells us what to believe. He gives us his truth to follow. He doesn't want us to change the truth for our own traditions.

[22:10] If we love him, we'll keep his commandments. So, in summary thus far, Christmas is not in the Bible. And Christ's birth is not something that the Bible instructs us to celebrate.

Certainly the early church did not. After the third century, Christians then started adopting these pagan celebrations and made them Christian, so-called.

God has some commands. He commands that, thou shalt have no other gods before me. Some will say, well, we're not worshipping pagan gods.

But if we're adopting pagan forms of worship, we need to look out and take heed. When the commandments were given, Moses came down and Aaron was there with a golden calf.

It was beautiful. And they saw they had the most artistic creation that their human minds could devise of this golden calf. And they built an altar to it.

[23:18] And Aaron made a proclamation. He said, tomorrow is a feast to the Lord, to Yahweh. It's a feast. They were using pagan practices.

What could be more clear cut than this molten golden calf? Yet they were using it as a feast to the true God. Friends, we must be careful not to worship in ways that God does not approve of.

It's called syncretism. Syncretism where there's a blending, a mishmash, a mixing together. Where there's the worship of the golden calf is considered a feast unto the living God.

Whereas really, it's a worship of an Egyptian God. We see many occasions where false worship occurred. We see Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10. They just grabbed some fire.

It seemed like the right thing to do. It seemed like a nice enough piece of fire to play with. But they were playing with fire. Because they weren't using the fire that came from the brazen altar.

[24:19] And fire came out from the Lord and devoured them. And they died before the Lord. Why? Because they were worshipping against and contrary to God's directions.

Cain and Abel, same story. Cain offered his sacrifice of the fruit of the ground. But it was not God's way.

Instead of admitting that he was wrong, we know what happened. Cain went out and murdered his brother Abel. Saul and the Amalekites. Saul was instructed to kill the Amalekites and their animals. But he spared some in 1 Samuel 15. He used the excuse, well we can worship God with some of these nice animals. But he was told it was better to obey than sacrifice.

At Mount Carmel when Elijah met the prophets of Baal. The people weren't sure what to do. There was such a mixing together of error and truth.

[25:21] And Elijah said, Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. Whether the God of Baal or the God Almighty.

What does God say in his word? He says, Learn not the way of the heathens. This is Jeremiah 10. Now, I'm not saying this is necessarily a Christmas tree that's talked about here.

In Jeremiah 10, it's not necessarily a proven fact. But Jeremiah 10 does talk about the customs of the heathen.

The signs of the heathen. Of one cutting a tree. Of decking it with silver and gold. Of placing it in their home. Cutting down a tree and putting it in our home is a vain custom.

What's the point? Why would you do such a thing? Whether it's shaped like an idol. Or whether it's just a decorated tree. What's the point? It's adopting something that has pagan connections.

[26:21] And so, we ought to be questioning such things. This is one writer's viewpoint. He says, The Lord commands the people not to engage in the customs of the heathen. The pagan festival of Saturnalia.

The birthday of Tamas of ancient Babylon. The heathens have celebrated this pagan holiday for over 3,000 years. It's the modern holiday of Christmas.

And the reference of Jeremiah 10 tells of cutting down and decorating trees for the feast of Tamas. It could be construed there is a connection with Tamas. Of course, Tamas are the people I'm told they used to make a sign of the tea.

The sign of the Tamas. The sign of the cross. Which we see in the Roman Catholic institution today. And we know even the cross itself is not necessarily a Christian symbol.

So, these are things we ought to consider very carefully. What does the Bible say about abominations? It says, detest them. It's a cursive thing. Pagan sun worship is not what Christmas means to me, you might say.

[27:26] And it's certainly not what I've ever intended it to mean. I've always been a bit cautious about the matter. But I've been more enlightened of late to consider where does it come from?

Why December 25th? And who's behind all of this? It doesn't matter what it means to you. It doesn't matter what it means to me.

It matters what God decides. It matters what God says, how we are to worship Him. How He wants us to worship Him. We know our Lord says that men were coming near with their lips, but their hearts were far from Him.

Teaching man-made rules. Jesus is not the reason for the season. I'm running out of time. The evidence is clear. December 25th has nothing to do with Christianity.

The Bible tells us about lies. It tells us about false ways. The psalmist in Psalm 119 verse 128, he says, I hate every false way.

[28:31] In 1 Thessalonians 5, 21, Paul says, Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good. And otherwise test them. Things should stand up to scrutiny to the test.

What does God say about lies? He tells us of lies. He tells us our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no prophet. The Bible tells us against lying.

It's one of the Ten Commandments after all. Thou shalt not lie. What could be plainer than that? But even more than Santa is all of the paraphernalia that is traditionally Christmas today.

Aren't we to worship God in the same vein as the pagans of old? Or aren't we to worship God as we prayerfully seek to, led by His word?

Isaiah 55 to close, the Lord says, My thoughts are higher than your thoughts. My ways are higher than your ways. What is your guide?

[29:37] What will the guide be? For some, it's a catechism. It's tradition. It's man's formulas and traditions and rituals and sacraments and such.

For Bible believing Christians, this is the authority. The authority. This is the authority. The Bible. And friends, just to close, I prayerfully exhort that people would just prayerfully consider these things at this time.

It's taken me a long time to come straight out with this tonight. Because I know there's some in our number who might be offended by this. That's the last thing I want to do is to offend people tonight. But my prayer is that we'll be enlightened about the pagan origins of Christmas. I think that's needful for us to be enlightened to that.

So that then we can make up our mind, what do we do at this time of year? And as I mentioned before, we can use this time of year as a time of witness. There's many that give out leaflets or give witness when people might be possibly a little bit more receptive to the concept of Christ coming to planet Earth at this time of year.

[30:54] So as much as it's got a pagan origin, God can still use it for good by us being a witness for Christ. I know some churches have special occasions around this time of year.

But the question for the Bible-believing Christian is, what will I do that is going to honour my Lord? What will I do that will honour Him? And that's something you can only personally answer tonight. Let's close in prayer. Lord, we thank you for your word. We thank you, Lord, that your word tells us, learn not the way of the heathen. We pray, Lord, help us to see these things for what they are. Help us, Lord, to be a witness to our loved ones and friends at this time of year, those that might be perhaps more receptive. We pray that you might penetrate their hearts to see their great need of the King of Kings who has come in human flesh to come as the King of glory and reside with man as a tabernacled God in human flesh to be that mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

We thank you, Lord, for that truth that we can know today and that we can know in reality that you are the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings. And we honour you at this time as we honour you at every time that we consider who you are and what you have done.

[32:19] We pray for anyone present, if they know you not as the living Saviour, as their living God, that they will come in prayerful repentance and faith and trust you now for time and forever by your grace.

We pray for every believer here today as we face a new year coming soon, challenges of health and different situations of employment needs.

We pray, Lord, that you would grant your blessing and favour to each of your children here tonight. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.