

The Reason for the Season, Really?

by Doug Dingley

Reason For The Season.” As I drove by and saw it, I sadly wondered how many really still believed that.

Do people really still believe, that in a world where a fully-clad, four foot tall caricature of a plastic virgin mother hovering over her pure and innocent baby boy lying in a meager, manger, bed of wood and straw, is somehow far, far too offensive to put in a public place such as perhaps a shopping mall, but how at the same time, that so many and countless larger than life posters of air-brushed, hours-posed supermodels clad in the absolute scantiest of clothing permissible, peeking at passers-by from every possible angle in the same mall is somehow far more acceptable and proper, that Jesus is really still “the reason for the season?”

Does anybody really still believe that in a world where seemingly more and more people are

It’s early December. The message on the local denomination’s sign reads, “Jesus: The

arbitrarily pushing almighty God out of their lives every single day; where more and more people are claiming no church affiliation or desire for any whatsoever; and where most congregations are therefore suffering a graying and declining membership as the current and upcoming generations decide that God is neither wanted, needed, or relevant in their lives anymore... that Jesus is really still “the reason for the season?”

The fact is that Jesus never really was “the reason for the season” to begin with. Originally it was Catholicism. Today it is capitalism. Just imagine for a moment: In today’s moral, monetary, and societal climate, what would happen if all of the sudden, no one was allowed to make any money whatsoever on anything for Christmas. No presents, paper, or decorations for anyone or any reason could be purchased. No tax-exempt donations could be given or allowed for. What do you suppose would happen then? Would a pure and simple, overwhelming love amongst the masses for the Lord Jesus Christ – the supposed “reason for the season” – cause

Christmas celebrations and “season’s greetings” to go right on completely unabated and unaffected? You know as well as I do that it would probably be as outlawed as bible studies and morning prayers in public schools before you could say “Black Friday.”

If Jesus were, in reality, all that important to “John Q. Public,” he’d have spent enough time studying his bible to know that Jesus’ date of birth is never once mentioned therein (it could just as possibly have been November 3rd, April 10th, or any one of 364 days other than December 25th); that we don’t know how many “wise men” there were (all we know is that there was more than one – Matt. 2); and that the wise men NEVER actually came to the manger that night with the shepherds to see the newborn baby Jesus (Lk. 2:16), but that they came some time later on to see the young/little child Jesus, after Joseph and Mary had moved into a house (Matt. 2:11).

But of course, an obvious lack of biblical knowledge, adherence, and obedience – along with massive and countless contextual contradictions – are the one, glaring similarity that Christmas shopping at the mall and attending most man-made denominational churches share in common. Denominations which teach that one is saved by saying a so-called “prayer of faith” (which is NEVER once seen as the process by which any lost sinner had their sins forgiven and were thus saved and converted to Christ in the Scriptures); that one cannot “fall from grace” (when Gal. 5:4 and a multitude of other passages show that one can); and that baptism is not necessary for salvation when the Scriptures absolutely say it is (Acts 2:38, 22:16; 1 Ptr. 3:21), show their lack of biblical knowledge to be as glaring as that of any average – and/or even atheist – mall shopper... in any season! In fact, tragically, man-made denominations and their doctrines both deny and defy Scripture just by their very existence (See: Matt. 15:7-14; Mk. 7:5-13; Jn. 4:23-24, 17:20-23; Ro. 16:16-18; 1 Cor. 1:10-13, 4:17, 7:17, 11:16, 12:12-27, 16:1; Gal. 1:6-10, 3:26-29; Eph. 1:22-23, 4:4-6; Phil. 1:27; Col. 1:13-2:23; & etc...!). But, I digress...

Anyone to whom the Lord Jesus is truly top priority and therefore loved the way He’d ought to be, either will now, or will have, surely studied their bibles enough to know that while He NEVER commanded, hinted, or even remotely suggested that He was “the reason for this season” wherein we now thus celebrate His birth as so many biblically unknowledgeable believe they are actually and obediently doing on December 25th (Perhaps that’s the reason he never gave us the date?), He did very clearly, both inform and command us, as to exactly how He DOES want us to remember him (Lk. 22:17-20 – please particularly notice the latter part of verse 19); how often (Acts 20:7); and how important it is that we thus obey and remember His death – and not His birth per se (Lk. 6:46-49; Jn. 14:15-24).

In 2016, Christmas, the catholically originated and capitalistically celebrated holiday of December 25th, happens to fall right exactly on the final Lord’s Day of the year as it occasionally does. And when it does, where will you be? Will you, like so many other faithful Christians to whom the Lord is so all-important, perhaps open a few gifts from loved ones and/or enjoy a big dinner as you share precious time with beloved friends and family on either Friday, Saturday, Monday, or even New Year’s Day (because, after all, any other day could be set aside for that day) so that you can be in attendance with your blood-bought brethren to lovingly, gratefully, and obediently celebrate communion with your Lord and Savior along with them just as they have been doing during the other 51 Lord’s Days of the year? Because after all, this one will be no different or less important to Him than those were.

In closing, just let me say that God is indeed, the reason for this and every other season (Ps. 104). And as such, that we all should be “ready in season and out of season” (2 Tim. 4:2) “to reason,” with everybody about Him, His truth, and His Son Jesus (Acts 17:2-18:19), so that they too, may truly come to know, celebrate, and worship, “in spirit and truth” (Jn. 4:23-24)!

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Mission Works

Westhill Works

Benevolence Program

Local Works

Cherokee Children's Home - www.chc4kids.org

House to House, Heart to Heart

In Search of the Lord's Way

Preaching Students - Southwest School of Bible Studies

The Truth in Love - www.ttil.tv

WVBS Online School - school.wvbs.org

Prison Works

La Poynor Prison Ministry - Steve & Carrie Handley

Foreign Works

Four Seas Bible College, Singapore - Peter & Pooi Fun Chin

New Zealand Harvest Missions - James & Emily Cammock

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Cory Myers - 512.627.6672 (Youth & Family)

Tim Cooke - 903.641.5515 (Seniors)

Prayer List

Beverly Cooke's mother, Floy Simmons, passed away last Saturday. Her arrangements were held on Wednesday in Wilson, OK. Please pray for the Cooke family.

Bobbie Roberts' niece, LeAnn Curry, did not get a good report. She is undergoing treatments to try to extend her life expectancy. She needs our prayers.

Bryan Bearden is scheduled for thyroid surgery tomorrow in Waxahachie.

Cooper Webster is scheduled for dental surgery on Thursday pending his pre-op tomorrow.

Phil Pillans is scheduled to have double knee replacement on Dec. 30.

Sandra Brunson has been having knee trouble and will need surgery. She plans to schedule that at the first of the year.

Continue to Remember: Julie Dilbeck, Meagan Gould, Garnette Russell, Carolyn Bennett, Bud & Barbara Moore, Billie Murphy, Mary Johnson, Wanda Horner, Chris Garner, & Velma McDougald

Service Men: Clay Bayes, Jason Book, Alston Compton, Robert Johnson, Ryan Payne, Douglas Ramsey, Ryan Stewart

Announcements

Youth Group Christmas Party will be tonight Dec. 18th at the Roughton's immediately following the Sunday evening service. Bring a gift to exchange with a \$10 limit.

Christmas Day Sunday Service: NO SUNDAY AM CLASSES on Dec. 25. The morning worship will begin at 11 am. A short Devo Service and Lord's Supper will be available in the evening at 6 pm.

Youth Group, this year's lock-in will be on Friday night Dec. 30, and will end that Saturday morning.

Challenge Youth Conference (Winter Retreat) will be on Jan. 13-15. Money must be turned in by Wednesday, Dec. 21 to confirm lodging if you have RSVP'd. If you didn't RSVP then see Cory immediately if you are interested in going.

WOW Save The Date! WESTHILL LADIES DAY

Date: Saturday, January 28, 2017
Speaker: Donna Drain
Topic: When Life Gives You Lemons . . .

Thank You for your prayers, visits, cards and love shown in the loss of my mother. Your expression of love and support meant so much to Tim and I. We love you all. **Beverly Cooke**

Birthdays This Week

- December 18 - Jordan Banks, Hunter Hoffman, Jera O'Neal, & Gene Steinkraus
- December 20 - Jason Earles & Chris Garner
- December 21 - Dayanara Sosa
- December 23 - Kate Haden
- December 24 - Steely Southard

Next Week's Adult Class

"The Life of the Apostle Paul"

Records for December 11, 2016	
Bible Class	185
AM Worship.....	263
PM Worship.....	130
Wednesday	143
Special Contribution.....	\$15,280.39

Privileged to Serve

Song Leader	Cory Myers
Opening Prayer	Darwin Thomas
Communion Leader	Justin Williams
Communion Servers	
Jim Haden	Bronny Watson
Bryan Bearden	Wade Braly
Millard Dowdle	Jose, Jr. Sosa
Larry Rowden	David Shastid
Dalton Shastid	Austin Roughton
Eric Olsen	James Horn
Percell Milton	
Closing Prayer	Kyle Slaughter
Nursery	Debbie Wylie & Brenda Sosa
PM Song Leader	Justin Mahoney
PM Opening Prayer	Jose Sosa
PM Closing Prayer	Tim Cooke
Wed. Song Leader	Paul Ross
Wed. Devotional	Don Ivy
December Contact Elder	Paul Stewart